

Guardian Angels Roman Catholic Primary School, Bury

Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|---------------|
| Unique Reference Number | 105334 |
| Local Authority | Bury |
| Inspection number | 363695 |
| Inspection dates | 8–9 June 2011 |
| Reporting inspector | Brian Holmes |

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Voluntary aided |
| Age range of pupils | 3–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 240 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Mrs J Kernaghan |
| Headteacher | Mr J Harrison |
| Date of previous school inspection | 13 November 2007 |
| School address | Leigh Lane Bury Lancashire BL8 2RH |
| Telephone number | 0161 764 4014 |
| Fax number | 0161 764 5639 |
| Email address | guardianangels@bury.gov.uk |

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Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They visited 12 lessons and observed 10 teachers. Members of the team held meetings with parents and carers, groups of pupils, members of the governing body and staff. They also observed the school's work and looked at its assessment data, evidence of activities and events, information about the curriculum, and monitoring and evaluation documents. Inspectors analysed 128 questionnaires completed by parents and carers, 79 pupil questionnaires and 19 questionnaires returned by staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Whether pupils in Year 6 are attaining well above average, particularly in English.
- Whether all groups of pupils progress equally well in Key Stage 2.
- Whether the provision for pupils' personal development results in outstanding outcomes.
- Whether pupils are provided with sufficient opportunities to use and apply their writing, information and communication technology (ICT) and mathematical skills in all their subjects.
- Whether all leaders are fully involved in the school's self-evaluation processes and in measuring the impact of actions taken to bring about improvement.

Information about the school

Guardian Angels is an average-sized primary school. The large majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. There is a higher number of boys compared to girls. The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. The school has achieved Healthy School status, the Activemark and the International School Award (Intermediate Level).

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

This is an outstanding school. Excellent leadership and management at all levels, including from members of the governing body, have built on the strengths, and rigorously addressed the weakness, identified in the last inspection report. Because of this team effort the school has improved markedly in key aspects of its work. Pupils' achievement and enjoyment are outstanding, including the achievement of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The success of the school is reflected in the fact that it is increasingly popular and oversubscribed. The consistent improvement in the school's performance, particularly the raising of standards at the end of Key Stage 1 to consistently well above average, the high rate of attendance and the accurate evaluation of its own effectiveness demonstrate the school's outstanding capacity to improve even further.

Pupils thoroughly enjoy coming to school. They work and play in an exceptionally harmonious and happy school community of which they are rightly proud. Pupils feel exceptionally safe because the school provides them with outstanding levels of care, guidance and support. Parents and carers are extremely appreciative of this, typically commenting, 'my children look forward every day to going to this lovely, family- oriented school'. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. It reflects mature attitudes and high levels of respect which, together with their high levels of basic skills in English, mathematics and ICT, show that they are exceptionally well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Children get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage and make good progress in both Nursery and Reception. They are provided with a wide range of activities to promote effective learning, but staff do not always use assessment information effectively enough to identify next steps in learning. In Years 1 to 6 the consistently challenging teaching enables pupils to make excellent progress. Assessment is used well to plan learning and to give pupils feedback on their performance, although pupils are not given enough opportunities to evaluate their own work or that of others. The outstanding curriculum provides pupils with a wide range of stimulating and memorable experiences. Leaders and managers are driving the school forward with outstanding purpose. Rigorous monitoring and evaluation have enabled the school to identify its key priorities and take very effective action to address them. The school has forged outstandingly successful links with parents and carers and other partners to support pupils' learning and well-being. These partnerships have been used exceedingly well to promote community cohesion, as in the links forged with Kenya in partnership with another local school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the use of assessment to support learning by:

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- providing more regular opportunities for pupils to check their own, and other pupils' work
- ensuring that, in the Early Years Foundation Stage, the information gained from regular assessments of children's work is used to plan the next steps in learning for individual children.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Pupils' attitudes to learning are exceptionally positive. As they move up the school they develop a high regard for learning. They work very hard and with great concentration and enjoyment, as seen in a Year 6 lesson where pupils worked independently for a long period with little adult supervision. They are keen to contribute ideas, as seen in the Magic Box workshop in Year 5, and work extremely well together to share resources. Pupils take great pride in the presentation of their work, including in their use of information and communication technology (ICT) to enhance the quality of their work. When they start school the level of children's skills is broadly in line with the levels expected for their age, with weaknesses in children's early reading, writing and number skills. Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. In Years 1 to 6 the progress of all groups of pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, is outstanding because of the highly effective support that they receive. By the end of both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 attainment is well above average. This represents outstanding achievement.

Pupils' excellent academic progress is matched by their personal development. This is best seen in the very high levels of respect they show towards adults and each other. It is also evident in their excellent behaviour which makes a very significant contribution to their successful learning in lessons. They say that they feel extremely safe, explaining that the school is a very friendly place and that staff are always willing to listen and to help if the need arises. Pupils have a good understanding of the importance of healthy lifestyles. Their understanding of the importance of exercise, as seen in their high take-up of a wider range of sporting activities, is stronger than their understanding of healthy eating. Pupils have many opportunities to take responsibility and make a contribution to the life of the school and the community. Year 4 and 5 pupils act as playground leaders for younger pupils, whilst Year 6 pupils take on the role of prefects. 'Good Life' ambassadors worked jointly with pupils from another local school recently to raise awareness and funds for an orphanage in Kenya. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is of the highest order; it is underpinned by the strong Christian ethos within school and a wide range of opportunities that have an extremely positive effect on pupils' respect and tolerance for other cultures and faiths.

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Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

| | |
|---|----------|
| Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning | 1 |
| Taking into account: | |
| Pupils' attainment ¹ | 1 |
| The quality of pupils' learning and their progress | 1 |
| The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress | 1 |
| The extent to which pupils feel safe | 1 |
| Pupils' behaviour | 1 |
| The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles | 2 |
| The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community | 1 |
| The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being | 1 |
| Taking into account: | |
| Pupils' attendance ¹ | 1 |
| The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 1 |

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

Teaching is characterised by meticulous planning, very good subject knowledge and high expectations which teachers use to excellent effect to make lessons extremely challenging and interesting for all groups of pupils. In the very best lessons pupils are inspired to produce their best work, as when Year 1 pupils wrote a letter about their stay on the Isle of Struay with Katie Morag. The team of skilled teaching assistants provides highly effective support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and for other targeted pupils. Assessment is used well during and at the end of lessons to check pupils' understanding. Marking makes clear to pupils what they have achieved and sets clear targets for what they need to do next. Pupils say that they find teachers' comments helpful in improving their work but they are not given enough planned opportunities in lessons to check their own work or that of other pupils.

The curriculum is exciting and underpins pupils' learning exceptionally well. In Key Stage 1 a focused approach to reading and writing has had a significant impact in raising pupils' attainment. The strengthening of links between subjects has resulted in excellent opportunities for pupils to apply their writing, mathematical and ICT skills across all their subjects. These approaches make the curriculum extremely relevant to pupils' needs and interests and they respond by taking responsibility for their own learning, as seen in the vibrant displays of work throughout the school. There is excellent enrichment of pupils' learning through the many different additional activities, particularly in music and sport.

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The school provides a rich range of cultural experiences for pupils through a wide variety of visits and visitors into school, for example, Smithills Hall and the Jewish Museum.

The school is highly inclusive and pupils are extremely well cared for. Pupils' welfare is at the heart of the school's ethos and staff know pupils extremely well, forming trusting and friendly relationships which are central to the provision. There are excellent systems to support pupils' differing needs. These result in both pupils and their parents and carers having high levels of confidence in the care provided. The development of the 'Pupil Loss' scheme is an excellent example of how the school strives to support the different needs of all pupils.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

| | |
|--|----------|
| The quality of teaching | 1 |
| Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning | 2 |
| The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships | 1 |
| The effectiveness of care, guidance and support | 1 |

How effective are leadership and management?

Leadership and management, led outstandingly well by the headteacher, are driving the school forward strongly. The clear vision of senior leaders, including governors, and outstanding teamwork by staff have resulted in high morale and a commitment by all those involved in the school to drive standards up. Since the last inspection several strategies for improvement have been skilfully introduced. For example: new appointments have been made; leadership roles have been restructured so that staff work in teams; the curriculum has been skilfully redesigned to strengthen links between subjects; and focused professional development has improved the knowledge and understanding of all staff to raise attainment. The combined impact of such initiatives has been sustained improvement to the quality of educational provision. The governing body understands the school's areas for development extremely well. Governors participate fully in the life of their school and offer exceptionally strong support and challenge for the school's work. The school's strong commitment to inclusion means that all pupils are integrated seamlessly into the life of the school. The fact that all pupils, regardless of background or ability, make outstanding progress confirms the school's success in promoting and achieving equality of opportunity.

Safeguarding procedures are good. The school adopts recommended good practice for its procedures and policies, training meets requirements, and there are very good links with outside agencies to provide specialist support when needed. This provision is effective in keeping pupils very safe, although the school is not yet a leader of high quality practice elsewhere. The school is strongly committed to the promotion of community cohesion and has worked hard to build on its strengths. The school community is very harmonious and cohesive. The school works extremely well with schools, both in the local area and in Kenya and China, to promote pupils' understanding at the national and global levels.

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Pupils have a strong understanding of other cultures and faiths and of where these fit within the world in which they live.

These are the grades for leadership and management

| | |
|--|----------|
| The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement | 1 |
| Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning | 1 |
| The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met | 1 |
| The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers | 1 |
| The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being | 1 |
| The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination | 1 |
| The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures | 2 |
| The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion | 1 |
| The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money | 1 |

Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Progress is good in all areas of learning from broadly average starting points. Outcomes are above average in most aspects of learning by the time children enter Year 1. Parents and carers are clear that their children enjoy the setting, particularly the trips to the allotment and the mini-beast workshop. Effective leadership has focused on developing good working relationships amongst all adults. Improvements have been made to the outdoor provision and the learning environment is bright and attractive. Children are well cared for and feel safe and secure. As a result, they are happy and settled and demonstrate excellent behaviour.

A good range of activities and resources is used to plan activities which provide children with good opportunities to develop themselves personally and socially and to improve their speaking and listening skills. Children's curiosity is stimulated by a good balance of activities between those led by adults and those where they learn for themselves. They quickly gain confidence and develop their independence, registering themselves indoors or outdoors, organising break time and choosing their own activities. Ongoing assessment is used appropriately to plan but staff do not always use assessment information effectively enough to identify next steps in learning.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

| | |
|--|----------|
| Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage | 2 |
| Taking into account: | |
| Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage | 2 |
| The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage | 2 |
| The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage | 2 |

Views of parents and carers

The large majority of parents and carers who returned a questionnaire said that they are very happy with their children's experiences at school and feel that their children enjoy school and that the school keeps their children safe. The team has judged that pupils' enjoyment of school is outstanding, as is the quality of care, guidance and support. Parents and carers show strong support for all aspects of the school's work. Similarly, inspectors judge this to be an outstanding school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Guardian Angels Roman Catholic Primary School, Bury to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 128 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 240 pupils registered at the school.

| Statements | Strongly agree | | Agree | | Disagree | | Strongly disagree | |
|---|----------------|----|-------|----|----------|---|-------------------|---|
| | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % |
| My child enjoys school | 94 | 73 | 32 | 25 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| The school keeps my child safe | 106 | 83 | 21 | 16 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| My school informs me about my child's progress | 74 | 58 | 51 | 40 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| My child is making enough progress at this school | 80 | 63 | 44 | 34 | 4 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| The teaching is good at this school | 82 | 64 | 43 | 34 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| The school helps me to support my child's learning | 70 | 55 | 55 | 43 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle | 69 | 54 | 55 | 43 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment) | 77 | 60 | 48 | 38 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| The school meets my child's particular needs | 76 | 59 | 48 | 38 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour | 63 | 49 | 54 | 42 | 8 | 6 | 1 | 1 |
| The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns | 63 | 49 | 51 | 40 | 6 | 5 | 3 | 2 |
| The school is led and managed effectively | 71 | 55 | 53 | 41 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school | 87 | 68 | 37 | 29 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 1 |

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

| Grade | Judgement | Description |
|---------|--------------|--|
| Grade 1 | Outstanding | These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. |
| Grade 2 | Good | These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well. |
| Grade 3 | Satisfactory | These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils. |
| Grade 4 | Inadequate | These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves. |

Overall effectiveness of schools

| Type of school | Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools) | | | |
|----------------------|---|------|--------------|------------|
| | Outstanding | Good | Satisfactory | Inadequate |
| Nursery schools | 46 | 48 | 6 | 0 |
| Primary schools | 6 | 47 | 40 | 7 |
| Secondary schools | 12 | 39 | 38 | 11 |
| Sixth forms | 13 | 42 | 41 | 3 |
| Special schools | 28 | 49 | 19 | 4 |
| Pupil referral units | 14 | 45 | 31 | 10 |
| All schools | 10 | 46 | 37 | 7 |

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 December 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

Common terminology used by inspectors

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| Achievement: | the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training. |
| Attainment: | the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons. |
| Capacity to improve: | the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement. |
| Leadership and management: | the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school. |
| Learning: | how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners. |
| Overall effectiveness: | <p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support. |
| Progress: | the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started. |

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



10 June 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Guardian Angels Roman Catholic Primary School, Bury BL8 2RH

Thank you for being so polite, welcoming and friendly when we inspected your school recently. We enjoyed our time at Guardian Angels, particularly talking to you. We know that you are rightly proud of your school and enjoy being there.

Guardian Angels is an outstanding school with many strengths. You told us that the school has a friendly, family atmosphere. We were impressed by your excellent behaviour and understanding of how to stay safe, and by how well all the pupils get on with each other. Your teachers are outstanding, which means that you make excellent progress in your learning. This results in your attainment being very high by the end of Year 6. You are extremely well cared for and older pupils enjoy looking after younger pupils, for example, as playground leaders. You think that your learning is fun and you enjoy the many activities that are on offer, both in lessons and through all the extra-curricular activities that are provided. You make an excellent contribution to the school through the many jobs you do, such as playground leaders, physical education (PE) captains and Good Life ambassadors.

We are asking the school to improve your learning skills further by giving you more opportunities in lessons to check your own work and that of other pupils. In the Early Years Foundation Stage we are asking the school to make better use of the information that teachers gain from checking your work to plan next steps for individual children.

All of you can help by continuing to work hard, behaving well and doing your best to help the school improve further.

Very best wishes for the future

Yours sincerely

Brian Holmes

Lead inspector

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