

The Rosary Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	115708
Local Authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	357802
Inspection dates	22–23 June 2011
Reporting inspector	David Carrington

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	174
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Andy Rozwadowski
Headteacher	Rosy Savory
Date of previous school inspection	17 June 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They observed 11 lessons led by eight teachers. Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior leaders and members of the governing body. The inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at school planning, assessment data, pupils' work, the school's checks on the quality of teaching and a number of policy documents. The team received 68 questionnaires from parents and carers and also evaluated others from pupils and the school staff.

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

- How far the school has improved pupils' achievement, especially in mathematics.
- Whether assessment to support learning is used consistently to raise achievement.
- The degree to which community cohesion is promoted consistently through local, United Kingdom and global partnerships.

Information about the school

The school is smaller than most primary schools. Most of the pupils come from the parishes of Stroud or Stonehouse, although some come from further afield. Just under two thirds are from Catholic families. Almost a fifth of pupils are from minority ethnic groups and an above-average proportion speaks English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is average. Most of those pupils have some form of learning difficulty or behavioural, emotional and social needs. The proportion of pupils known to be entitled to free school meals is average.

The school has been awarded Healthy Schools and Activemark status. There have been a number of staff changes since the previous inspection.

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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

The Rosary Catholic Primary is a good school. After a period in 2009 when pupils' achievement dipped, it has successfully restored pupils' attainment and progress, including in mathematics, to their historically good levels. Beyond that, it has made a number of significant improvements, including the quality of provision and children's learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Very few aspects of the school's work are less than good. There is firm drive and ambition from all staff, including the relatively new members, and the governing body to maintain brisk improvement of pupils' achievement and the quality of provision. Improvement priorities are grounded well in the robust school self-evaluation and they are completed within the allotted time span. There is good capacity to sustain improvement.

Staff, senior leaders and the governing body recognise that there are two key areas for emphasis in the school's work for improvement. Whilst senior and middle leaders have a clearly stated responsibility for whole-school or their subject performance, this does not yet extend to the full analysis of pupil progress data, the setting of challenging targets or checking and evaluating how well initiatives such as the development of marking are being adopted consistently. In fact, there is some very informative marking, although the usefulness of this varies from class to class, with the most consistently effective form found in Years 3 and 4. The second area for improvement is the promotion of community cohesion. Pupils have some very well-planned opportunities to contribute to and learn more about the local community. There is not yet the same degree of opportunity to find out about the lives of people from other communities in the United Kingdom and overseas.

The pupils enjoy school and work hard. Most attend regularly and pupils' behaviour is good. The few pupils with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties are managed well, which enables them to make the same good progress as the other pupils. Good care, guidance and support ensure that those who speak English as an additional language achieve well. The same holds for those who are known to be entitled to free school meals. Indeed, achievement data show that that group often exceeds the progress made by such pupils in other schools, keeping pace with the other pupils in their own school.

The school's Catholic heritage pervades the ethos for learning and life effectively. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good as a result. The pupils feel safe in school and their understanding of healthy lifestyles is good. The effective personal, social and health education contributes well to those accomplishments. It is a central plank of the curriculum, which builds well on the good partnership with parents, carers, local schools and outside agencies. Teaching quality is consistently good and there is some outstanding teaching, as seen when 'Bruce Cobbler' visited Year 2 and subsequently got lost in the Forest of Dean. The pupils were determined to find him and retrieve him safely, using geometrical measurement to do so.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Extend the involvement of senior and middle leaders in setting challenging targets, auditing pupils' progress and checking that improvement initiatives are adopted consistently and effectively.
- Broaden the scope of the promotion of community cohesion so that partnerships with other groups in the United Kingdom and overseas are as rich and exciting as those with local organisations.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

The pupils enjoy their time at The Rosary school and are keen to do well. They make good progress both in individual lessons and across longer time spans. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make the same good progress, often because of the sensitive, encouraging and enthusiastic support from teaching assistants. Those pupils from minority ethnic groups and those who speak English as an additional language also make good progress. Pupils' skills and knowledge are developed well, so that they have the tools to cope with the problems and the different forms of writing they will meet as they mature. The school has successfully raised achievement in both writing and mathematics. An earlier dip in achievement in these subjects was largely due to unreliable assessment, which has been overcome very successfully so that attainment is now above average. The good achievement evident in the school's progress data was evident during the Year 4 mathematics lesson observed. The pupils were able to sequence decimal numbers accurately due to the teacher's skill in asking questions that extended learning. The work was also matched well to the abilities of different groups in the class who organised themselves quickly for learning and progressed well in the session.

Pupils work together well and develop good team working, independence and collaborative skills that will assist them in their future education. Lessons are productive and purposeful, with good gains made in knowledge, skills and understanding. The pupils are insistent they enjoy school, which is apparent from observations in lessons too. The school's Healthy Schools and Activemark awards underline pupils' appreciation of the need for a healthy lifestyle. The pupils channel their energies well in out-of-school activities, as was seen in the girls' cricket coaching session.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

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?

As new members of staff have arrived, they have quickly become part of the effective team of teachers and teaching assistants. There is the necessary consistency in the quality of teaching from the Reception Year to Year 6. Key strengths include detailed planning that identifies clearly the different level of work for each ability group, the brisk pace to learning and the enthusiasm of staff, which infects the pupils' determination to do well. The use of assessment to support learning is much improved on earlier times. Crucially, assessment has become accurate and reliable due to regular and rigorous checks by external agencies. Thus, the school has a firm basis from which to judge pupils' progress as they move from class to class. The dependability of assessment enables also a more-systematic identification of the steps necessary for individual learning. Teachers encourage the pupils to self-evaluate their work and to check that of others. That gives them good understanding of how well they are doing and ways to improve their work. Such qualities are not yet established fully in all classes, but there is good capacity to develop the necessary consistency.

The curriculum is enriched by a good variety of out-of-school activities, including the residential visit and annual production by Year 6. They are anticipated with enthusiasm by the pupils. There are some effective cross-subject links that enable, for example, the development of writing skills to extend beyond literacy sessions. The curriculum has richness, is relevant and enjoyable. As yet, the pupils themselves do not have as much

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influence on the development of the curriculum, such as is found when a curriculum is judged to be outstanding. School leaders are determined to consult the pupils for their ideas about the themes and approaches to learning that would bring this about.

The quality of care, guidance and support is a significant strength of the school. It draws well on the talents of lunchtime supervisors and the volunteers who assist in classrooms. Those adults help motivate the pupils to positive learning habits, good behaviour and an enthusiastic response to school. Good attendance is promoted conscientiously, although a very few parents and carers do not respond wholeheartedly in the support of their children's full attendance. The school is robust in its approach to attendance below its agreed threshold. Pupils with barriers to learning are counselled effectively. Good behaviour is rewarded by a system that acknowledges both the improvement of behaviour for some pupils and the maintenance of excellent behaviour by others. The Golden Time sessions and Achievement Assemblies are where such initiatives come to the fore.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
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	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

There is effective collective drive and ambition for improvement amongst the staff and amongst members of the governing body. Targets for achievement are challenging and the evidence that they are met is convincing. The headteacher, senior leaders and the governing body realise that, as children's achievement in the Early Years Foundation Stage rises, the ambition for pupils' ultimate attainment must necessarily rise too. Thus, all in school are working to lift achievement further, so that attainment is high by the end of Year 6. There are things still to do to realise that aspiration, largely in relation to the role of middle leaders in assuring the consistency of provision, but existing progress data show that pupils' achievement is improving well.

The governing body ensures that all statutory requirements are met. That extends to the satisfactory promotion of safeguarding. The governing body is working to ensure that safeguarding in school 'goes the extra mile' in ensuring procedures are recorded as fully as possible. The governing body ensures also the promotion of community cohesion is appropriate, although it understands it has a key role in developing partnerships with groups in other parts of the United Kingdom and overseas that are as robust and rich as they are with local bodies. Members of the governing body are eager to draw on their own experience and expertise and that of parents, carers and others to make that aspect of school life an outstanding feature. The existing good partnerships with parents, carers and outside agencies give scope for such improvement.

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There is good promotion of equality of opportunity because pupils of all abilities and backgrounds are making good progress and the school tackles any potential underachievement effectively. There is no tolerance of discrimination or bullying and these things happen rarely. The pupils have confidence that matters of this nature will be dealt with fairly and thoroughly.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

There is improved provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The outside area is now used more imaginatively than formerly to promote children's investigations and build their initiative. The curriculum has been adjusted to ensure there is a greater proportion of child-chosen and managed activity. There is also more consistent and reliable continuous assessment of progress. Overall, the consistently good provision is enabling the children to make good progress. By the end of the Reception Year, attainment is above average. The phase is well led and has good potential for further improvement.

The activities and teaching approach ensure that all children, regardless of starting level, gain well in skills and knowledge. A particular strength is the early emphasis on children logging their own activity choice and in identifying the key learning points for the activity. The 'Bob's Job' approach is taken up enthusiastically by the children. During one session, 'Bob's Job' was to measure the length of different caterpillars and put them in order of length. The caterpillars in question came from 'The Hungry Caterpillar' illustrations. The children achieved it successfully. The following day, they were keen to explain that the real caterpillars in the jar were the same length as the ones in the book. They were excited that they had also found a centipede in the tyre outside 'it's got a hundred legs!'

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Partnerships with parents and carers are good. The lunch hosted for parents and carers of the new Reception-Year intake provided a very successful example of that. The arrangements for incoming children and those transferring to Year 1 are also effective.

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

Just over 40% of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire, which is above average. In general, parents and carers hold positive views, although as the following table shows, there are concerns amongst some of them. The concerns were amplified in written comments. Most of those applied to the management of behaviour, as it was suggested that the pupils who behave well were not rewarded, while some others were rewarded for not behaving badly. Senior leaders accept that the school needs to share its behaviour management techniques more explicitly with parents and carers. Inspectors judge behaviour to be good and that the rewards for good behaviour are applied to all, irrespective of their overall conduct. Inspectors found also that parents' and carers' concerns about their children's lack of progress were not borne out by the overwhelming evidence for good progress in school overall. A number of parents and carers praised the school for its very effective guidance and support of their children and for the work of staff to enable their children to do well.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at The Rosary Catholic Primary School 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 68 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 174 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	34	50	30	44	3	4	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	35	51	31	46	2	3	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	21	31	45	66	2	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	24	35	32	47	10	15	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	27	40	38	56	1	1	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	20	29	40	59	4	6	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	27	40	38	56	3	4	0	0
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)	33	49	31	46	1	1	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	23	34	39	57	2	3	2	3
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	22	32	28	41	9	13	7	10
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	19	28	33	49	8	12	5	7
The school is led and managed effectively	21	31	30	44	9	13	4	6
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	33	49	28	41	5	7	2	3

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

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	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.



24 June 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of The Rosary Catholic Primary School, Stroud GL5 4A B

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed talking with you and you helped us discover more about your school. We think The Rosary School provides you with a good education. It has a long list of strengths. The chief ones are:

- you make good progress and do well in your work, especially in literacy and numeracy
- You enjoy school in the Reception Year thoroughly. You had great fun finding the length of their caterpillars and then discovering a centipede outside.
- Your behaviour is good, you get on well with others and you help each other to work hard.
- You are well taught. Some lessons are really exciting, such as when 'Bruce Cobbler'[1] came to visit Year 2.
- All the adults in school take good care of you. You enjoy working and playing with them and the other pupils.
- Your school is well led and managed. The adults expect you to do well and you try hard to do so.

We have also included two main improvements for the future.

- All the staff who lead and organise the school could have more opportunities to check how well you are learning and what your lessons and work are like.
- You could have more chances to meet and talk with people from other parts of this country and overseas.

We know you will help your teachers make these improvements. You could start by making a list of what you enjoy in school and what helps you to learn these things more easily. Share your list with your parents, carers, teachers and friends.

Yours sincerely

David Carrington

Lead inspector (on behalf of the inspection team)

[1] Talk to each other about why his name is inside the speech marks.

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