

Immaculate Conception Catholic Primary

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number112899Local AuthorityDerbyshireInspection number378602

Inspection dates 6–7 December 2011

Reporting inspector Susan Walsh

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 pupils4-11Gender of pupilsMixedNumber of pupils on the school roll208

Appropriate authority

Chair

Peter McGuire

Headteacher

Mary Emmott

4 March 2009

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 Age group
 4-11

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Inspectors visited 16 lessons led by eight different teachers. Meetings were held with staff, members of the governing body and pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at development plans, records of pupils' progress, arrangements for safeguarding and minutes from meetings of the governing body, as well as other documents. They scrutinised 86 questionnaires returned by parents and carers, and questionnaires from pupils and staff.

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

- Are boys and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities making sufficient progress in English, particularly when they are in Key Stage 2?
- Are teachers able to make accurate assessments of the levels that pupils are working at, and is this information used effectively to set work that is well matched to pupils' needs as well as clear targets for areas of improvement?
- How well have monitoring and the sharing of good practice been used to improve the quality of teaching?
- Is self-evaluation accurate and is it informing development planning?

Information about the school

The school is slightly smaller than most primary schools. Pupils come from a wide geographical area. Relatively few pupils are known to be entitled to free school meals and few are of minority ethnic heritage. The proportion with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. The school has moved into a new building since the previous inspection and has several new staff. It has achieved the Basic Skills Quality Mark, Activemark and National Healthy School status. Several teachers were absent during the inspection including a member of staff with several key managerial responsibilities.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

Immaculate Conception Catholic Primary School is a satisfactory school. It is starting to improve because of the new systems for assessment, target setting and rewarding pupils that have been adopted by all staff. Pupils take pride in their school and are particularly pleased with the new building. They feel safe and are confident to talk to staff about their concerns. Behaviour is good, both in classes and around the school, and pupils' attendance is average. Parents and carers often talk about the 'family atmosphere' and 'caring staff' and feel that their children develop into confident young people.

Attainment by the end of Year 6 is average, but it is improving because the school is successfully addressing a recent dip in outcomes. Children get off to a good start as a result of the good provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Although progress is satisfactory overall, it is inconsistent, reflecting variations in the quality of teaching. Although all staff have adopted a new mentoring system and this is having a positive impact on pupils' progress, there are remaining inconsistencies in teachers' practice. Most lessons are interesting and are particularly well thought-out in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Year 6. However, the introductions to lessons are occasionally too long, causing pupils' levels of concentration to wane and restricting the time they have to practise their skills. Although assessment procedures are improving, the work set is not always finely enough matched to pupils' individual needs. Pupils are now better informed about how to improve their work because of thorough marking and individual discussions with teachers. However, more immediate feedback and correction of misconceptions is not always provided because teachers do not check learning during lessons rigorously enough. Although staff are clearly caring and supportive, they do not always do enough to document incidents of misbehaviour and allegations of bullying or the school's response to those incidents. Additionally, the monitoring of the impact of additional support for pupils whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable is not rigorous enough.

Staff are reflective on their practice and all share the capacity and resolve to drive improvement. The school has had a satisfactory focus on improving teaching and learning, but has made limited use of partnerships to support improvement to pupils' academic progress. Senior managers, staff and governors are well aware of the school's overarching strengths and weaknesses. However, insufficient use is made of the available data to analyse progress in different classes, and the analyses of the progress of different groups has not been robust enough. As a result, there is lack of clarity in understanding variations in progress over time and this contributes to a lack

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of sharpness in development planning. The quality of teaching is regularly checked but insufficient links are made in these evaluations between teaching and learning, and there is not enough focus on the progress made by different groups of pupils during lessons. Nevertheless, recent improvements to progress, including that of boys and of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, demonstrate the school's satisfactory capacity for further improvement.

About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Address inconsistencies in rates of progress by:
 - ensuring that the work set is always precisely matched to pupils' needs during the introductions to lessons and when pupils' are working independently
 - rigorously checking pupils' understanding during lessons
 - making certain that introductions to lessons are not too long so that pupils do not lose focus and always have sufficient time to work independently and practise their skills.
- Improve the impact of leadership and management on school improvement by:
 - appraising data more effectively to measure the progress pupils make in each year group and doing more to analyse the progress of different groups of pupils
 - using data analysis to inform school development planning
 - making certain that all staff who observe lessons are able to make robust links between teaching strategies and the progress made by different groups of pupils
 - using partnerships more effectively to support improvement to pupils' academic progress
 - ensuring that record keeping is detailed and thorough including the recording of incidents and the actions taken in response to those incidents
 - making certain that the impact of additional support provided for pupils is rigorously monitored.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

When children join the Reception class their attainment is usually in line with that expected for their age. By the time they leave Year 6, pupils' attainment is average in both English and mathematics, and their achievement is satisfactory. However, their achievement is improving because levels of attainment are rising and progress is accelerating. In the classroom, pupils acquire knowledge and understanding at a satisfactory rate. Both boys and girls are enthusiastic about learning and apply

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themselves well. Their work is always neat and well presented. They are responding very well to the new reward system and strive to do well in order to collect smiley faces. Although progress is satisfactory overall in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, there are inconsistencies between the rates of progress made by pupils in different classes both during lessons and over time. The school is successfully addressing a dip in outcomes in English. Boys, girls and those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are now making satisfactory progress, including in English, because of improved attitudes and better academic guidance. For example, in a Year 6 English lesson, pupils of all ability levels were able to share ideas and help to improve each other's work. As a result, they made good progress. The writing produced by older pupils is now well structured, accurate and engaging and makes the reader want to read on. In lessons pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are sometimes assisted by teaching assistants who are skilful in reshaping explanations and this helps them to progress at similar rate to other pupils.

Pupils' spiritual and moral development is at the heart of the school's work. Pupils have ample opportunities to consider the big questions about life and death. A sensitively delivered lesson about bereavement was particularly well received by older pupils, because it helped them come to terms with loss in a respectful atmosphere. They clearly understand the difference between right and wrong and this is reflected in their work about the atrocities that occur during wars. Whilst behaviour is usually good pupils acknowledge that there are occasional minor 'fallings' out' but say that these are swiftly addressed by staff. Pupils have a good understanding of the need to take regular exercise and to eat healthily. Pupils' involvement in looking after the school's chickens and allotment encourages a sense of responsibility The school council and buddy system ensure that pupils make an appropriate contribution to their school community, but opportunities to contribute to the wider community are more limited. In particular, pupils have few opportunities to gain direct experience of other cultures, consequently their knowledge and understanding of other faiths and cultures are limited. Although pupils develop good social skills, their progress in basic skills is only satisfactory; consequently they are satisfactorily equipped for the next stage of their education.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2

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

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The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

There are pockets of good teaching but most of the teaching in school is satisfactory. Many teachers have good subject knowledge but the strategies used to share this knowledge are inconsistent in quality. Sometimes, at the start of lessons, pupils are sat for too long passively listening rather than being activity involved in learning. Staff have good relationships with pupils and this gives pupils a great deal of confidence. Teachers now have a greater understanding of the levels at which pupils are working, but the tasks are still not always matched precisely enough to pupils' needs, both during the introduction to lessons and when pupils are working independently. This slows the progress of more able pupils, who find the work too easy, as well as those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, who sometimes struggle because the work is too hard. Most teachers are very diligent in the way they mark books and make regular reference to pupils' targets. Pupils know that the regular meetings between teachers and pupils where targets are discussed are important. However, teachers do not always correct mistakes and misunderstandings promptly during lessons.

The school recently introduced a more creative curriculum but was disappointed with its impact. It has retained the more positive features of this curriculum, including the history topics which fill pupils with enthusiasm, whilst refocusing on developing pupils' basic skills. It is too early to judge the full impact of these adjustments. Pupils get ample opportunities to write at length. A range of subjects and exciting visits to local places of interest are used well to support the development of writing and motivate both boys and girls. The school has reviewed its arrangements for teaching mathematics. Weekly sessions, which focus on improving those areas of mathematics which pupils find challenging, are helping to boost their progress. Throughout the curriculum, there is a good emphasis on personal development and this is reflected in pupils' good understanding of how to keep healthy and safe. Partnerships are used to extend the range of opportunities for pupils including those related to music and sport.

The school provides a cheerful and welcoming environment. Relationships between pupils and staff are warm and supportive and pupils who are ill or upset are looked after well by caring staff. Support for potentially vulnerable pupils is an established part of the school routine and plays a useful part in encouraging their learning and development. For example, pupils value the support they have received from the

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate $\frac{1}{2}$

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Rainbow group and the advice provided by the school nurse. However, records of actions that have been taken to support potentially vulnerable pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities are limited, and the school finds it difficult to supply many striking examples of where it has helped pupils to overcome specific barriers to learning and secured good academic progress.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3	
Taking into account:		
The use of assessment to support learning	3	
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships		
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support		

How effective are leadership and management?

Senior leaders, staff and governors work effectively to seek further improvement and their actions show they have the pupils' interests at heart. The school has raised its expectations of outcomes for pupils by setting more challenging targets for itself. There is extensive data about pupils' progress and the school uses this information to identify and support individuals who are danger of falling behind. It has not yet made enough use of this data to gain an overview of the progress pupils make in different year groups, and the analysis of the progress of different groups of pupils has only just started. Consequently, development planning is not always robustly focused on where progress most urgently needs to improve. The monitoring of teaching involves a good range of staff and the format for recording has recently been improved. Although the headteacher is able to make clear links between teaching strategies and outcomes for different groups of pupils, not all of the staff who observe teaching have the same level of expertise. Whilst the school has attempted to share good practice in the school and used external partnerships well to promote pupils' personal development, there are few partnerships with other schools that focus on developing teaching and learning.

The school's actions to promote equal opportunities are satisfactory. It has not always had robust information about the progress of different groups of pupils but its focus on supporting the progress of individuals, together with improved use of assessment, has closed gaps in performance. For example, it has been successful in the boosting the progress of boys and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, particularly in English in Key Stage 2. Governance is satisfactory. Governors are very supportive of the school. They have successfully managed the school's finances and ensured that statutory requirements are met, but relatively few governors have had safeguarding training. Even though the school itself forms a cohesive community and there is a good understanding of local contexts there is limited evidence of the school reaching out to the wider community in the United Kingdom. Therefore, its contribution to community cohesion is satisfactory.

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Safeguarding procedures are satisfactory. Much is done to ensure that pupils feel safe and secure including making certain that staff are vetted. However, records of incidents, including allegations of bullying, lack rigour and do not record in sufficient detail the actions that have been taken or the way the impact of those actions has been monitored.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

Good leadership and management have resulted in the good provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage being sustained during a period of staff absence. Currently, children are making good progress in lessons. This is because they are offered an exciting range of activities that capture their interest and imagination and move their learning on. For example, the creation of elves' footprints led to a magical atmosphere which contributed to children sustaining their interest in writing a passport to the Arctic. Other activities, such as dressing up as elves and wrapping Christmas parcels, also fired their imagination. These activities were well supported by adults, who used questioning effectively to extend learning and to model language for children. Children's personal development is particularly well promoted but their progress in early numeracy is slower than in other areas, because the opportunities that are supplied to promote it are not as exciting and engaging as other activities. Relationships between staff and children are kind and supportive. Children settle quickly into the Reception class and their integration into school life is helped by the provision of older buddies who provide children with additional help and support.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

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Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	
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

There was a good response to the questionnaire and many parents and carers provided additional written comments. Parents and carers are very pleased with the quality of education provided by the school and are particularly appreciative of the 'buddy' system that ensures their children settle quickly into the Reception class. They find staff friendly and approachable and the vast majority feel that their concerns are taken seriously and are quickly addressed. A small number of parents and carers expressed concerns about bullying. While the school takes their concerns seriously, record keeping and the monitoring of the impact of the school's policies are not as robust as they might be.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Immaculate Conception Catholic Primary 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 92 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 208 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		NTC AGRAD		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	73	79	17	18	1	1	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	70	76	21	23	1	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	52	57	36	39	3	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	57	62	32	35	2	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	60	65	32	35	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	50	54	36	39	4	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	58	63	32	35	1	1	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)	47	51	37	40	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	59	64	31	34	1	1	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	46	50	34	37	2	2	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	46	50	38	41	4	4	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	57	62	34	37	1	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	65	71	26	28	1	1	0	0

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	43	47	10	0	
Primary schools	6	46	42	6	
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9	
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3	
Special schools	30	48	19	3	
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5	
All schools	10	44	39	6	

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 08 April 2011 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.

the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and Attainment:

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.

the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, Leadership and management:

> 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: 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.

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.

the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and Progress:

> 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.



8 December 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Immaculate Conception Catholic Primary, Sheffield, S21 3YB

It was a great pleasure to inspect your school. We enjoyed talking to you all and listened very carefully to what you had to say. You are clearly proud of your school, including the lovely new building, and we can understand why. It is a satisfactory school but it is improving. You behave well, have lovely manners and are always most welcoming to visitors. We enjoyed reading your writing, particularly the writing about trips. They are clearly very exciting; in fact, you said they were 'Awesome'.

By the end of Year 6, your attainment is similar to that reached by pupils in most other schools but it is improving. Children get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Your progress is satisfactory but inconsistent in the rest of the school because not all your lessons are of the same quality. Some lessons are exciting but sometimes you have to sit and listen for too long at the start of lessons and you get a bit fed up. Sometimes you are set work that is too easy and sometimes it's too hard. You clearly like the new systems which make sure you know how to improve your work but sometimes teachers do not do enough to check how much you understand during lessons. So we have asked them to improve these aspects of their teaching.

We have asked the school leaders to make sure they have enough information about the progress you make over time and to improve the way they use this information to help your school get better. You told us that teachers always try to help you when you find yourself in a difficult situation but teachers do not always keep detailed records of what they have done. So we have asked them to improve this. The leaders and managers are working hard to improve your school. You can all help too by continuing to try very hard in all your lessons.

Yours sincerely

Susan Walsh Lead inspector

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