

Rosary Roman Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	100035
Local authority	Camden
Inspection number	395638
Inspection dates	14–15 May 2012
Lead inspector	Tim McLoughlin

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	354
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Raymond Morris
Headteacher	Isobel Gaffney
Date of previous school inspection	7 May 2008
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Age group	7–11
Inspection date(s)	14–15 May 2012
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Introduction

Inspection team

Tim McLoughlin

Additional inspector

Narinder Dohal

Additional inspector

Evelyn Riley

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspection team observed 23 lessons and part lessons taught in all classes across the school as well as hearing individual pupils read and talking to them about their work and progress. Meetings were held with parents, groups of pupils, governors and staff. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line Parent View survey in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at minutes of governing body meetings, school policy documents and 70 questionnaire responses from parents and carers.

Information about the school

Many of the school's pupils come to this larger than average school from the local area, although being a denominational Roman Catholic school it also draws from a wider geographical area. The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs who are supported at school action plus or have statements of special educational need is above the national average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above the national average as is the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in two Nursery classes and two Reception classes.

The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- This is a good school. It has a deeply caring and nurturing ethos and attainment is improving across the school, most noticeably in Key Stage 1. Members of staff work well together to ensure that pupils flourish both academically and socially. The school is not yet outstanding because the quality of teaching does not yet enable all pupils to make the most rapid progress in all classes, and systems for monitoring and improving performance are not always sufficiently focused on raising pupil achievement.
- Pupils' achievement is good. Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage, especially in developing early reading skills. They build well on this good start in the rest of the school, quickly improving their literacy and numeracy skills so that attainment rises to at least average levels by the end of Year 6.
- Teachers inspire and motivate pupils to do their best and they ensure that the differing needs are met well in most lessons. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are given good support both in and out of lessons and newly arrived pupils who speak languages other than English are very well catered for.
- Pupils' positive attitudes and good behaviour contribute greatly to their good learning in lessons. They work hard, are polite and courteous, and thoroughly enjoy school. They are kept safe, developing a good awareness of the dangers they may face.
- Senior leaders manage performance and lead teaching well. They set high expectations for staff and improvements are based on accurate self-evaluation. They are now focused on improving the quality of teaching further throughout the school, especially for new or temporary staff. Nevertheless, the governing body does not yet take a fully active role in holding the school to account.

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

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching from good to outstanding, so that all pupils make rapid and sustained progress, by:
 - making better use of pace and encouraging pupils to become more independent in their learning
 - using questioning so that pupils of all abilities are actively involved throughout the lessons
 - creating robust induction arrangements for new staff joining the school so that they may be assimilated easily into the school and benefit more quickly from the school's existing good practice.
- Develop governance so that governors feel able and confident to both support and challenge school leaders, and ensure that all pupils at the school reach their full potential.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

The inspectors agree with the view of the vast majority of parents and carers that their children achieve well and make good progress. Pupils' attainment by the end of Year 6 is consistently average, reflecting good progress for pupils from their starting points.

When children start school, most are working at the levels below those expected for their age. Early literacy and social skills are taught especially well in the Early Years Foundation Stage and most children are already gaining significant ground in their learning by the end of the Reception Year. In a typical reading skills session, children in the Reception class quickly worked with a partner to play a game of 'word detectives' to spot word families they had been taught about during the introduction to the session. Children were challenged well and responded with great enthusiasm. In the Nursery classes, children confidently spoke about the use of capital letters and full stops.

Pupils' consistently good progress is evident in lessons across both key stages. In a Key Stage 1 literacy lesson, for example, pupils wrote and read with confidence as they produced descriptions of what life must have been like for a Yeoman Warder guarding the Tower of London. Their learning was supported well by the imaginative use of resources and this helped to make learning enjoyable. In a Key Stage 2 numeracy lesson, pupils gained a very good understanding of how to solve number problems in a systematic way as they applied their knowledge to a practical problem by identifying a strategy and working in pairs to complete the solution. Progress is slower when pupils have fewer opportunities to develop their independent learning skills.

Across the school, reading is taught well and attainment in reading is average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. In lessons on phonics (letters and the sounds they make),

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progress is good. Pupils confidently build words by sounding them out and are able to describe what they are doing. Those who are in danger of falling behind in reading are given extra support, helping to close the gap so that they catch up with their peers. There are no significant variations between the progress of different groups, such as boys and girls, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those at the early stages of learning English, with all making good progress.

Quality of teaching

Most parents and carers feel that the quality of teaching is good. This view is endorsed by inspection findings. Teachers ensure that there is a good pace to learning in most lessons and they have high expectations of pupils' work. They provide a good level of challenge in lessons and, in the main, work is well matched to pupils' needs. Teachers encourage pupils to think for themselves, and in the Reception and Nursery classes in particular, there are very good opportunities for children to work independently, especially in the well-equipped outdoor areas. Throughout the school, teachers have good subject knowledge and make learning exciting. For example, a fun approach to teaching punctuation helped pupils in a Key Stage 2 literacy lesson to understand how to punctuate direct speech. Pupils in this class made outstanding progress and were very enthusiastic about the games and interesting ways that the teacher enlivens their curriculum. Teachers give pupils regular feedback on how well they are doing. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress in lessons because of the good quality guidance they receive from both teachers and other adults working with them. Lesson planning is effective and reflects the needs of pupils of all abilities.

When teaching is less successful, this is often due to the teachers' reluctance to allow pupils to work more independently and so they tend to make lesson introductions too long and over-detailed. This can also have a negative effect on the pace of learning and gives too few opportunities for in-depth and active questioning by both the teacher and pupils.

Throughout the school, teaching successfully promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Teachers encourage pupils to cooperate through group work. Topics such as one on Christmas traditions around the world and a week looking at Islam are used well to help pupils learn about their own and other cultures.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Inspectors found that pupils are polite, sociable and articulate, confirming the views of parents and carers who feel that their children behave well and are kept safe. Pupils also feel that behaviour is typically good, with initiatives such as the 'playground squad' helping to contribute to happy and safe playtimes. Pupils' attendance rate is now above average; this has been a significant improvement over recent years and this is having a beneficial effect on their learning. Pupils' good

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attitudes towards their work mean that learning is rarely disrupted. Pupils are sensitive to the needs of others, and all pupils, play together happily at break times. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children are responsive, well motivated and keen to take the initiative in their learning.

The school has good systems for promoting positive behaviour which are very well understood by pupils and their parents. Good behaviour and achievement are also celebrated through a variety of awards. When behaviour very occasionally falls short of the expected standard, pupils understand the consequences of misbehaviour. The school provides good quality help and support for children who are having social or behavioural difficulties so that they improve their social skills. The elected school council is very active and has recently campaigned successfully to prevent the closure of a local after-school club used by the school.

Pupils feel very safe at school. They talk confidently about dealing with possible dangers that they may encounter. As a result of the school's good provision, for example through assembly themes, they have a good awareness of the different forms of bullying, including physical harassment and cyber-bullying. They report that bullying only rarely occurs in school and they say that if it does happen, it is tackled quickly. Internet safety is diligently promoted through the use of termly questionnaires and follow-up.

Leadership and management

The school's headteacher and other senior leaders set high expectations for what every pupil and teacher can achieve. The positive impact of their efforts demonstrates that there is clear capacity for further improvement. There has been a strong and successful focus on improving teaching; the school's leaders have developed systems that track pupil progress and link teachers' practice to training opportunities. As a result, progress is now more even across the school. Leaders ensure that there is no discrimination. They focus strongly on promoting equality of opportunity, making excellent use of performance data to check the progress of different groups. Where they see any potential dips, they respond quickly.

Improvements are based on accurate self-evaluation and leaders know what still needs developing. There are many opportunities for professional development that focus well on the school's main priorities. Senior leaders meet all of the school's established teachers each term to discuss the progress being made by each pupil in their class and how the best progress might be achieved. However, induction procedures for new staff, to enable them to become quickly assimilated into the team and benefit from existing good practice, are not fully established.

Middle leaders and managers support senior leaders well by carrying out their duties with diligence and report regularly to the governing body about developments within their areas of responsibility and how this is improving the curriculum. The curriculum is good because it is broad and celebrates that this is a vibrant learning community in the heart of London close to many excellent amenities. Opportunities for

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enrichment are very good; for example, the work of an 'artist in residence' was used to develop pupils' appreciation of Impressionist art through the creation of large and striking murals that adorn the public staircases and walls. This also helps pupils to enjoy school and successfully promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The governing body provides loyal and effective support to the school, though is not always sufficiently empowered to offer a good degree of challenge to the senior leadership team. At times, the amount of information it receives from the school is overwhelming and not concise enough to enable governors to fulfil their strategic monitoring role more successfully. The governing body is very diligent in ensuring that safeguarding arrangements meet statutory requirements. The school engages very well with parents and carers. They are very positive about the work of the school with a comment from one, reflecting the views of most: 'Links with parents are good and I am kept well informed about my child's education and all areas of school life.'

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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data 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.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

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

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and 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.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



16 May 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Rosary Roman Catholic Primary School, London NW3 2AE

Thank you for being so welcoming and helpful when we visited your school. We enjoyed talking to you about your work and hearing some of you read. We found that your school is providing a good education and is helping you to do well. Here are some of the things we found out about your school.

- You said that you enjoy school and this was confirmed by the many happy faces that we saw in lessons and around the school.
- You are taught well most of the time and this helps you to make good progress.
- You rightly feel that behaviour is good and you keenly take responsibility. We were very impressed by the school council and the playground squad.
- You feel you are kept safe and we saw that you take good care of each other.
- The school provides lots of interesting activities for you to take part in.
- All adults in school are caring and they give you good help if you have problems with your work.
- The school's leaders are doing the right things to move the school forward and are clear about what still needs improving.

These are the things we have asked your school's leaders to do next to help it improve even further.

- Help to make sure that all of your lessons are as good as the very best.
- Involve the school's governors more in checking that everyone is achieving as well as they can.

All of you can help your teachers by continuing to work hard all the time and continuing to attend well.

Yours sincerely

Tim McLoughlin
Lead inspector

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