

Our Lady of Compassion Catholic Primary School

Kineton Green Road, Solihull, B92 7EG

Inspection dates 13–14 September 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The school has improved markedly since its previous inspection.
- Children make a good start to school in the Nursery and Reception classes.
- Standards in English and mathematics are high and pupils make good progress. Standards in reading are particularly high.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are catered for very well and make good progress.
- The quality of the teaching is good and pupils have positive attitudes to learning.
- Good relationships between adults and pupils help pupils to learn well in class.
- Pupils' behaviour is good and pupils feel safe in school. Their level of attendance is above average.
- The school is led and managed well.
- Leaders help teachers to improve their practice.
- Governors fulfil their roles well and hold the school's leaders to account. They ensure the school meets safeguarding requirements.
- The school makes good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The teaching, teachers' questioning skills and the marking of pupils' work are not always challenging enough to move pupils to an even higher level.
- Teachers do not fully exploit ways of teaching literacy and numeracy skills to deepening understanding in other subjects.
- Subject leaders need to provide more adventurous and challenging opportunities to extend pupils' learning and allow them to exercise their own independence and initiative.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in all classes. Each class was observed at least twice, and most were observed three times. In total, they visited 34 lessons.
- Inspectors had discussions with two members of the governing body, a representative from the local authority, the headteacher, senior leaders, all teaching staff, some assistants and various groups of pupils.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentary evidence, including the school's tracking of pupils' progress, documents relating to safeguarding and special educational needs, and the school's self-evaluation.
- Pupils' written work in a range of subjects from the previous school year was scrutinised.
- Inspectors took into account the views of 74 parents as recorded on Ofsted's Parent View online survey.

Inspection team

Graham Sims, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Alan Chaffey

Additional inspector

Roisin Chambers

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is larger than average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is broadly average.
- Almost all pupils speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and for whom the school receives additional income (the pupil premium) is well below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is broadly average.
- The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well above the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of a minority of teaching and raise the level of challenge some teachers provide by:
 - always planning tasks and activities which fully extend pupils' knowledge and understanding
 - improving some teachers' questioning skills
 - marking some pupils' work more rigorously
 - using time more effectively to deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding in a broader range of subjects while simultaneously developing their literacy and numeracy skills.
- Develop the role of subject leaders by:
 - getting them to be more innovative and adventurous in planning challenging activities for pupils to develop their skills to the highest level
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to exercise their own initiative and independence.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils' abilities and skills at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage are above average. Although the school has an above average proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, many children join the school with skills, knowledge and abilities which are above those expected for their age. They make good progress in the Nursery and Reception classes and are well prepared for their start in Year 1.
- Standards throughout the school have improved since the last inspection. This has been particularly noticeable in Key Stage 1, where standards have risen from broadly average to substantially above average for the last two years. Standards have continued to rise at the end of Key Stage 2 and were well above average in 2012.
- Pupils make good progress in English and mathematics. Almost all pupils reach the nationally expected standard by the end of Year 6, and over half exceed it. Standards in reading are particularly high. Pupils' attainment in writing is not quite as high, although it is still much better than in most schools.
- Pupils make good progress in most lessons. They listen attentively and participate well. They settle down to work quickly. Occasionally, teachers do not extend pupils' learning by moving them on quickly enough when pupils have already understood what is being taught.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make particularly good progress. Standards achieved by these pupils are much higher than in most schools. They benefit from well-targeted support from the staff.
- Pupils for whom the school receives additional funding, although few in number, make good progress. The school's supportive and caring atmosphere, regular reviews of pupils' progress and the availability of additional support all contribute well to their progress.
- The most-able pupils achieve high standards in English and mathematics. However, they are not always challenged sufficiently to move on to even higher levels or given sufficient opportunity to exercise their own independence or initiative.
- The range, depth and quality of pupils' work in subjects like science, history and geography are not as high as in English and mathematics. This is largely because pupils do not spend as much time on these subjects. Although much improved, teachers do not yet fully exploit ways of combining the deepening of pupils' understanding in these subjects with the teaching of literacy and numeracy skills.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of the teaching has improved since the previous inspection. Although a small proportion of teaching observed during the inspection required improvement, good teaching was observed in every class. Staff have been keen to improve their practice and have made good use of additional training, support and advice from within the school and through the local authority.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, there is a good balance of learning activities which are led by adults and learning opportunities within the classroom and outside which the children choose themselves. Learning is fun and the children enter Year 1 with a very good level of personal and social development.

- The teaching for pupils who have any additional learning needs is good. Learning support assistants and teaching assistants are used effectively to provide support where it is needed. They encourage pupils to tackle work on their own and not to become reliant on the continual help of adults.
- Reading is taught well. For the younger pupils, there is an appropriate emphasis on teaching the sounds that letters make (phonics). For the older pupils, regular guided reading sessions introduce them to a wide range of books and give them opportunities to discuss what they are reading with their teachers and other adults.
- Teachers' planning in English and mathematics is thorough. Pupils' work shows that the depth and range of work over the course of the year is good. The well-organised division of classes, which minimises the amount of mixed-age class teaching, also provides good opportunities for teachers to plan together.
- Good relationships between adults and pupils help lessons to run smoothly. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to talk together and collaborate. Pupils respond well to the teachers and are keen to volunteer answers.
- The quality and regularity of marking have improved, but it is not always challenging enough. Senior leaders have kept regular checks on marking this year and produced guidance for staff. Teachers write helpful comments, but these do not go far enough to provide extended challenge for the pupils. Too many persistent errors in pupils' work are overlooked.
- Teachers' questioning and some learning activities are not always challenging enough to move pupils to the next level. In one class, for example, pupils were given a simple worksheet to complete which kept them busy but did not challenge them in any way. While some teachers ask probing questions, others too readily accept simple answers.
- The teaching is not yet adventurous enough to raise the overall quality of teaching and pupils' achievement to outstanding. There are not yet enough opportunities for pupils to use their own initiative or independence, or to produce extended pieces of work which provide them with the highest level of challenge.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning. They behave well in class, respond enthusiastically to their teachers and collaborate well with each other. Although they are keen to meet their targets, they do not spend much time correcting or improving their work once it has been marked by their teachers.
- Pupils' behaviour around the school is good. Pupils are well aware of the school's high expectations with regard to behaviour. They are polite and courteous to adults and visitors. Their behaviour when gathered as a whole school for assembly is exemplary.
- Bullying is extremely rare and is dealt with effectively. A few parents expressed concern about the way the school deals with bullying, but these views were not supported by the views of pupils, staff and governors. Pupils said they fall out with each other occasionally, but they make friends again quickly.
- Pupils feel safe in school. They have a good understanding of safety and the risks inherent in using the internet. The school's emphasis on moral and social development and its promotion of core values help to ensure the school is free from discriminatory language and actions. Pupils are supportive of and helpful towards those who are disabled.

- The level of attendance is above average. It has improved markedly over the last two years as a result of clearer guidelines and a firm stance on unauthorised term-time absence.

The leadership and management are good

- The school has improved since the previous inspection. The headteacher, senior leaders and staff have tackled issues identified in the previous inspection report effectively. Standards in English and mathematics have risen throughout the school. Attendance has improved.
- Leadership responsibilities are shared more effectively than before. The appointment of a new deputy headteacher has resulted in an effective senior leadership team in which leaders' different skills complement each other well. Subject leaders carry out their roles conscientiously but are not innovative enough in seeking ways to enrich their subject areas or improve pupils' achievement to the highest level.
- The school has effective systems for managing the performance of teachers. Senior leaders have a good understanding of what needs to be developed and set appropriate targets for staff. The quality of teaching has improved as a result. However, there are not yet enough opportunities for staff to learn how to raise their teaching to the highest level.
- Improvements over the last two years show that leaders are capable of moving the school forward. Staff work together well and are committed to providing the best opportunities they can for the pupils. The school's self-evaluation is accurate and identifies relevant priorities for improvement.
- The local authority provides effective support for the school. Its involvement with the school has diminished recently as the school has improved. However, the school's leaders say the authority's support and advice have helped the school to improve.
- The safeguarding of pupils meets requirements. The school carries out the necessary checks on staff to ensure they are suitable to work with children. All staff have received an appropriate level of training. Staff provide good care for the pupils throughout the school.
- Provision for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is managed well. Staff are kept fully aware of issues pertaining to these pupils and are given good guidance on how they might help them. The work of learning support assistants is coordinated well. There are good links with external agencies.
- The school provides a strong focus on developing pupils' skills in English and mathematics. However, this is often at the expense of other subjects. Teachers are starting to use other subjects to develop pupils' literacy and numeracy skills, but there is room for more innovative ways of broadening pupils' knowledge and understanding and helping them to develop as independent learners.
- The school makes good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Instrumental in this are strong links with the church, a good range of extra-curricular activities and opportunities for older pupils to take responsibility as prefects. The annual residential visit for pupils in Year 6 has a major impact on pupils' personal development. Opportunities for younger pupils to take responsibility and develop independence are not sufficiently developed.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - the governing body is led and managed well
 - governors provide good support and realistic challenge for the school's leaders
 - governors have a good understanding of the issues facing the school and a strong desire to

help the school become even better.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	104102
Local authority	Solihull
Inspection number	400684

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	340
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Frank Mason
Headteacher	Chris Bentley
Date of previous school inspection	10 November 2009
Telephone number	0121 7069508
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