

Our Lady Immaculate Catholic Primary School

New London Road, Chelmsford, CM2 0RG

Inspection dates 5–6 June 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils	Good		2
Quality of teaching	Good		2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	Outstanding		1
Leadership and management	Good		2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils' achievement is good. They do well from their starting points, and attainment is above average by the time they leave school.
- The teaching of literacy is outstanding, and teaching in other areas supports the good and better progress that pupils make.
- The foundations of learning for most pupils are effectively laid in the Early Years Foundation Stage and at Key Stage 1.
- Teaching assistants make a positive contribution to the work of the school and to pupils' progress.
- Pupils have exceptionally positive attitudes to learning, and behaviour and safety are outstanding. Pupils enjoy coming to school, and attendance is consistently above average.
- School leaders, managers and governors know the school well. They are working very well together to make the school even better and know what needs to be done to improve teaching and to raise achievement.
- There is a caring and nurturing atmosphere in the school. Many parents volunteer regularly in the school, and this enriches pupils' learning.
- Provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is particularly strong.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Although much of the teaching is good or better, not all teachers set work at the right level of difficulty.
- Teachers do not always check how well pupils are doing, and then use this information to adjust their expectations during each lesson.
- Teachers do not always challenge pupils to do their best by presenting their work with care.
- Homework is not always matched carefully enough to what each pupil needs.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 18 lessons or parts of lessons. Three joint observations were completed with the acting headteacher. Observations also included assembly, break time, small-group work led by teaching assistants, and volunteers working directly with pupils.
- The inspectors looked at the quality of pupils' work in books, and the acting headteacher joined inspectors for this inspection activity.
- The inspectors heard a sample of pupils read individually and in reading groups.
- Meetings were held with the acting headteacher, senior leaders, the Chair of the Governing Body and other governors, a quadrant commissioner from the local authority, school volunteers, staff and pupils.
- The inspectors looked at a range of documentation, including the school's own information on pupils' attainment and progress, safeguarding, and information concerning school development and management.
- The inspectors spoke with parents during the inspection and also took into account letters, the 51 responses to the online survey (Parent View), and 22 staff questionnaires.

Inspection team

Teresa Kiely, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Godfrey Bancroft

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Our Lady Immaculate Catholic Primary School converted to become an academy school on 1 May 2012. When its predecessor school, Our Lady Immaculate Catholic Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good.
- This is a slightly smaller than average primary school.
- Most pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups and those who speak English as an additional language is low.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action, school action plus, or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium (additional government funding, in this case for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals) is low.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The school has experienced staff changes this year, including a recent change of headship. It is currently being led by an acting headteacher. A new permanent headteacher has been appointed and will take up post in September 2013.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that the progress pupils make in every year group is consistently high by ensuring that all teachers:
 - match work and activities to pupils' learning needs and the stage they have reached
 - make use of assessments to identify pupils' starting points in learning, and adjust their teaching and expectations to how well pupils are doing during lessons
 - provide pupils with homework that meets their learning needs
 - see that all pupils present their work with care.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- When children start school, their attainment is in line with expectations for their age. During the Reception Year, most of the current children have made exceptional progress. They are doing particularly well in personal, social and emotional development, and in communication and language.
- The results of the Year 1 screening in phonics (the sounds that letters make) are impressive, and the vast majority of the six-year-olds met the expected standard. The development of reading in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 is very well managed, and pupils across the school enjoy reading.
- Pupils continue to make good progress in Key Stage 1 and their attainment is above average at the end of Year 2. By the end of Year 6, attainment is above average for reading and writing, and high in mathematics.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress. This is because they receive appropriate help in class and when they are withdrawn for additional support.
- Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and those who speak English as an additional language make good progress. Pupils of Indian heritage achieve exceptionally well.
- Pupils develop their reading, writing, communication and mathematical skills in a range of subjects and topics. Inspectors noted the way in which Year 2 pupils were able to use their information and communication technology skills to support their creative writing.
- There were too few pupils known to be eligible for free school meals in 2012 to compare their attainment with that of their classmates without identifying individuals. However, the progress of pupils for whom the school receives pupil premium funding is generally at least in line with that of the rest of the class and sometimes better. This is because the school uses its funding well to support pupils' individual needs, considering carefully what will help each pupil the most.
- Against a background of significant disruption this academic year, senior leaders have made sure that achievement has not fallen. Pupils have made good progress in reading and exceptional progress in writing and mathematics.
- Inspection evidence confirms the pattern of good and better achievement indicated by the national data. However, there are pockets of less strong progress in certain year groups, and this reflects weaker teaching.

The quality of teaching is good

- Across the school, although a small proportion of teaching is not yet good, there are strong patterns of good and outstanding teaching. One school leader, whose teaching was observed, created high levels of independence amongst the pupils, excitement for learning and enthusiasm for the task. She is mentoring other teachers towards this same outstanding quality of teaching.
- In good and better teaching across a range of different subjects, teachers continually reinforce

reading, writing and mathematics skills. They continue to assess pupils' understanding during the lesson. There is a strong focus on how planned talk underpins learning.

- The foundations of learning for most pupils are very effectively laid in the Reception Year and Key Stage 1. Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is consistently outstanding. Children have excellent opportunities here to learn through a carefully structured programme of direct teaching and managed play. The inside and outside environment is stimulating and challenging.
- Literacy teaching is excellent and the school has a wide range of reading material. The phonics programme is highly effective because it is very well managed and led.
- Teaching assistants provide a positive contribution to the work of the school. They are well trained and successfully support class or group-based activities. They make a strong contribution to literacy development across the school.
- When there are shortcomings in teaching, this is often linked to poorer activities that do not match individual needs. When this happens, more-able pupils are not fully stretched, and those who need additional support are not able to work independently.
- Assessments are regular and accurate. School leaders are able to use data to check the school's performance and pupils' progress. However, weaker teachers do not consistently use information about pupils' starting points to shape tasks to their abilities.
- Homework, although appropriate, is not always matched well enough to pupils' different needs. Senior leaders have already identified this as an area for improvement.
- Pupils' work in their books shows their interest and involvement in the subject matter. However, teachers do not all ensure that pupils always take care over the presentation of their work.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils' attitudes to learning are exemplary. This positive approach is found, regardless of whether they are taught by permanent or temporary members of staff, and it makes a very good contribution to pupils' progress.
- There is a climate of exceptionally high expectations for behaviour across the whole school. All the staff are skilled in managing pupils' behaviour.
- Staff and pupils are unreservedly positive about behaviour and safety. A very small number of parents are not so positive. However, any concerns are meticulously followed up by the school.
- Bullying is very rare, but it is rigorously followed up when it occurs. Pupils are positive about how the school deals with incidents of bullying, and say it is dealt with in a sensitive and supportive way.
- Attendance is consistently above average and pupils enjoy coming to school.
- Pupils understand how to keep themselves safe. They are aware of different types of bullying and know how to keep themselves secure when using the internet. They say they feel very safe when they are at school.

- Throughout the inspection, the pupils displayed courtesy and good manners to one another. They were also very polite to all the adults in the school.

The leadership and management are good

- The recent changes in school leadership, and the turbulence that this has caused, have not led to a drop in achievement. The acting headteacher and the leadership team have worked very effectively with the governing body during this period of change. Everyone involved is intent on making the school the best it can be.
- Teaching is good and continues to develop as a result of checks on teachers' work, mentoring, and training by school leaders. Arrangements for managing teachers' performance are relatively new but are effective.
- The school knows its own strengths and areas for development. School leaders and the governing body use data to identify possible areas of underachievement. They act quickly and effectively to ensure that all pupils achieve well.
- Equality of opportunity is fundamental to the school's values. Discrimination is not tolerated and relationships between different groups are good.
- The school's safeguarding arrangements are effective and those who work with pupils have been properly checked.
- Subjects and topics are broad and balanced. The school focuses on the application of pupils' communication, reading, writing and mathematical skills across a range of subjects. There are also rich opportunities for pupils to develop their learning through additional activities led by parent volunteers, such as in sport and cooking.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is at the heart of everything the school does. For example, in a Key Stage 2 lesson, pupils were asked to talk about freedom and responsibility and responded with comments that were thoughtful and reflective.
- The majority of parents are supportive of the work of the school. A few, however, expressed concerns. The main issues here surrounded the impact on pupils of the changes to the school leadership team and communications between school and home. The governors have now set up a parents' forum to improve communication, and the last meeting was well attended.
- The school, as an academy, has brought in support and advice from several sources, including the local authority and a local headteacher. It uses this support effectively.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors know what is happening to the school, and have been particularly vigilant in supporting the school during its recent changes in leadership. There is a very good relationship between the acting headteacher and the governing body. There have been several changes to the governing body, and these strategic appointments have strengthened the governors' ability to understand their responsibilities and statutory duties. Governors are very well informed about how the school is doing, and how leaders tackle any areas of underachievement. There is a new and effective system of performance management for teachers, and governors are aware of the quality of teaching in the school. They know how pupil premium funding is being used, and how the school budget is being spent. Governors have benefited from good training, and know how to challenge the school to do 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	138105
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	403861

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

Type of school	Academy converter
School category	Non-maintained
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	218
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Hugh Allan
Headteacher	Barry Owens (Acting Headteacher)
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	01245 353755
Fax number	01245 344292
Email address	admin@ourladyimmaculate.essex.sch.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

[Piccadilly Gate](#)
[Store St](#)
[Manchester](#)
[M1 2WD](#)

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2013

