

Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Primary School

Lock Lane, Partington, Manchester, M31 4PJ

Inspection dates 28–29 January 2014

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Pupils do not achieve as well as they should, particularly in writing at Key Stage 1 and in reading at Key Stage 2. Boys do not achieve as well as girls.
- Very few pupils make more than the progress expected of them from their starting points in reading, writing and mathematics. Some pupils are not reaching the standards of which they are capable.
- The quality of teaching and learning has not been consistently good across the school. Teachers do not always plan work which builds on what pupils already know to introduce new learning and move pupils on quickly enough.
- Leaders and managers at all levels have not been monitoring pupils' progress and the quality of teaching well enough to ensure standards are maintained from the previous inspection.
- There are many new members on the governing body who are still developing their knowledge and understanding of their roles and responsibilities.

The school has the following strengths

- Children make good progress from usually low and very low starting points during the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Pupils behave well in lessons. They feel safe in school and well supported by staff.
- The school provides a lot of experiences to support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well.
- Pupils who are eligible for additional funding through the pupil premium achieve well in comparison to other pupils in the school.
- Leaders and managers have put actions in place which are beginning to show marked improvements in the quality of teaching. As a result, pupils' achievement is beginning to improve.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 17 lessons or parts of lessons, which included seeing all teachers and several teaching assistants teaching classes and groups. Two of the observations were carried out jointly with the headteacher. Inspectors listened to pupils reading in Year 2 and Year 6.
- Discussions took place with senior and middle leaders, a group of pupils and members of the governing body. A meeting was held with a representative of the local authority and the school's independent education consultant.
- There were 24 responses on Parent View, the on-line questionnaire, but the inspectors also took into account recent surveys of parents and pupils which the school had carried out.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' books and scrutinised various documents including the school's pupils' progress data, internal monitoring and external reports on the quality of teaching and learning, the school's self-evaluation to gain an accurate view of its performance and action plans to bring about improvement. Documents relating to safeguarding, including behaviour logs and attendance, were also reviewed.

Inspection team

Hilary Ward, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Michael McLachlan

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Our Lady of Lourdes is a smaller than average sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action, school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is about average.
- The proportion of pupils of minority ethnic heritage is lower than average, as is the proportion who speak English as an additional language.
- However, the proportion of pupils eligible for support through the pupil premium is almost twice the national average at approximately half of all pupils in the school. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- There have been some changes to teaching staff since the previous inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better in order to raise standards, particularly in reading and writing, by:
 - giving pupils enough time to finish tasks which provide them all with an appropriate level of challenge
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to practise their reading and writing in all subjects
 - continuing to monitor the effectiveness of the literacy programme which has been recently introduced.
- Increase the proportion of pupils who make more than the progress expected of them, from their different starting points, in reading, writing and mathematics by:
 - raising teachers' expectations of what their pupils can achieve
 - ensuring work builds on what pupils can already do and what they already know, so that they learn new things as soon as possible
 - providing topics which interest pupils, including the boys, so that they want to learn more.
- Improve leadership and management, including governance, by:
 - developing effective observation, monitoring and evaluation by all senior and middle leaders in their areas of responsibility
 - developing partnerships with leaders in other good and outstanding schools to share the best practice at all levels
 - providing further training for members of the governing body so that they are more knowledgeable about the work of the school in order to provide senior leaders with appropriate challenge and support.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement because pupils have not made good or better progress from Year 1 to Year 6, particularly in their reading and writing.
- Children enter the Nursery class with skills and knowledge which are usually below and, for a majority of children, well below those expected for their age. They make good progress from their different starting points during their time in the Nursery class, especially in their language and communication skills and in their personal and social development. This good progress is continued in the Reception Year, so that the proportion of children reaching a good standard of development by the time they enter Year 1 is only slightly below that expected nationally.
- In the recent past, this good early progress has not been developed well enough across the school. Pupils' reading and writing skills have been well below those expected at the end of Year 2 and still below the national average at the end of Year 6. Pupils have not always been expected to complete pieces of written work or to write very much, especially in other subjects of the curriculum. They do not always develop their reading skills by finding out information for themselves. The school has recognised the need to improve pupils' achievement and their rates of progress in all aspects of English and have introduced a new literacy scheme. As a result, pupils' work in their books, and when they read to inspectors, is showing that they are beginning to make better progress.
- Pupils do not build securely enough, or soon enough, on what they already know to ensure that they move on at a good pace. This leads especially to the progress of the most able pupils requiring improvement. They do not always reach the higher levels of attainment of which they are capable. However, recent improvements in the quality of teaching are now resulting in green shoots appearing and beginning to grow into higher standards in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Although boys' achievement still lags behind that of girls, the school has listened to their views about what they would like to learn and how they would like to be taught, and new topics and activities which interest them are being introduced.
- Pupil premium funding is used effectively to ensure equal opportunities for all groups of pupils, including the high proportion known to be eligible for free school meals. Additional support and small group work has resulted in these pupils achieving at least as well and often better than others. The small number of pupils from minority ethnic groups also achieve equally well.
- Pupils with disabilities and special educational needs are monitored well and given extra help and support, which enables them to make progress from their different starting points in line with other pupils.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The quality of teaching has not been good enough over time and teachers have not had high enough expectations to ensure that pupils make consistently good or better progress. However, more effective monitoring by the headteacher, good support from the local authority and an external consultant and a training programme for teachers, is resulting in noticeable improvements in the quality of teaching across the school.
- The majority of teaching seen during the inspection and the school's most recent checks, is now good, confirming the impact of the recent actions the school has taken. A small amount of teaching still requires consistent improvement for it to be securely good. Although teaching appears to have improved overall, this has yet to show better outcomes in pupils' learning and progress over time.
- Children make a good start on their early reading, writing and number skills in the Early Years Foundation Stage because knowledgeable staff provide them with good resources and activities indoors and outdoors. The Nursery teacher helped children to begin to create their own stories

using props in present bags, to sequence 'once upon a time', 'who was there?', 'what happened next?' and 'in the end'. Reception class children were helped to count the money they earned from selling a pretend Chinese take-away they had created with silver trays and wool 'noodles'.

- In Key Stages 1 and 2, pupils are increasingly being given work which stretches their thinking, for example, when the most able pupils were introduced to using a protractor to measure angles in a Year 2 mathematics lesson. However, in a few lessons, all pupils are given the same activity, regardless of their ability so that the most able pupils do not move on quickly enough and less able pupils struggle to complete the task. For example, in a lesson on inference all pupils were given the same questions to answer even though it was clear that not all had understood the concept of inference.
- Even in lessons where pupils learn well, teachers do not always give pupils the chance to improve their reading and writing skills, for instance in science, by providing more opportunities for pupils to investigate things for themselves and then record their findings in extended pieces of writing.
- Teachers are using questioning more effectively to stretch pupils and are moving lessons on more quickly. This benefits the most able pupils but sometimes means that less able pupils do not have time to think through their ideas to give answers. However, the school has now introduced the teaching of reading, writing and mathematics in ability sets and this is helping pupils to learn through activities which are better matched to their learning needs.
- The work of teaching assistants can be variable but when their work is well supported and monitored by teachers, teaching assistants effectively enable small groups of pupils to learn new work more quickly or for others to go over work they have found difficult. Very effective support was seen in the Reception class, when a group of children were sitting with a teaching assistant making Chinese dragons. They had conversations about the size the head should be in relation to the tail. When a child found a lost eye from a teddy, the assistant took the opportunity to discuss 'pupils and irises', extending the children's knowledge, understanding and vocabulary.
- Marking of pupils' work requires further improvement. There are examples of good marking, for instance, where teachers set additional questions to extend learning or check pupils' understanding and respond to corrections. This quality is not consistent across the school.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Behaviour is good in lessons and around the school at breaks and lunchtimes. Pupils enjoy coming to school and are usually keen to learn. Attitudes to learning are not yet outstanding because pupils do not always concentrate throughout a lesson, particularly if the subject matter does not capture their imagination.
- There is a consistent approach to managing pupils' behaviour with clear policies and processes. Pupils respond well to the establishment of clear routines, as a result of which there have been very few behavioural incidents of concern.
- Pupils collaborate well with learning partners in lessons and enjoy sharing their views, discussing what they already know and what they are learning.
- This extends to contributing their ideas through the 'I want you to know' cards. These give pupils an opportunity to recognise each other's kindnesses and to comment favourably on their teachers' work. Although inspectors did wonder whether the comment 'teachers deserve extended holidays' was because the pupils fancied these too. These cards are, though, also used to identify pupils who have concerns or worries. Pupils know that as well as speaking directly to an adult, they only need to put their name on a card and into a box and they will be dealt with speedily and confidentially.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a particularly strong aspect of the school's work. Frequent visits are arranged linked to topics pupils are studying and these help pupils to extend their knowledge of the local and wider world. For example, during the inspection, the Year 6 class visited the airport as part of their work on noise pollution.
- In a religious education lesson, Year 5 pupils reflected on famous people who had succeeded

against the odds and the teacher sensitively linked this to their own experiences of family members or friends who inspired them.

- Pupils enjoy taking on jobs such as playground leaders, chicken monitors, learning detectives and re-cycling monitors and take these responsibilities very seriously.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Safeguarding arrangements are securely in place and pupils say they feel safe in school and are confident that any issues will be dealt with by staff. In discussion in a formal meeting and informally with pupils around school, it was clear that pupils feel incidents of bullying are managed well. There were displays around school about anti-bullying in all its forms. During the inspection, senior leaders responded to a parental concern about potential bullying on the internet by placing guidance for parents on the school's website.
- Attendance has improved in the last year and is now broadly average. This reflects effective work undertaken between the school and parents to reduce absences and increase punctuality. Parents are offered workshops to understand what their children are learning and how best they can help them.

The leadership and management

requires improvement

- Attainment is lower than at the previous inspection and although positive actions have now been taken by the school's leaders, they have not yet had time to demonstrate sustained improvements in standards in the school. As a result, leadership and management require improvement.
- The school has been well supported by the local authority and an external consultant. There is now an accurate evaluation of the school's performance and an action plan to deal with areas identified as needing improvement. Particular attention has been paid to improving the quality of teaching by putting more effective performance management of teachers and a programme of professional development in place and this is clearly showing positive results.
- Senior leaders have recognised the weaknesses in pupils' literacy skills and introduced a new literacy scheme, which is beginning to improve pupils' reading and writing skills.
- Middle leaders are keen to develop their areas of responsibility, but their leadership skills are not yet fully developed to ensure they are monitoring work in their area of responsibility effectively enough. In the past, leaders have not always looked to developing partnerships and links with other schools to share best practice.
- The curriculum is now better meeting pupils' needs and interests, especially that of the boys, with learning detectives and teachers exploring with pupils how best they think they can learn. The curriculum provides a good range of after-school clubs and enrichment activities. Some of these are provided through use of the primary school sports funding which has enabled pupils to try sports which they might not otherwise experience. At present, the school is buying in a dance specialist and pupils were clearly seen to enjoy the experience this provided. Pleasingly, the specialist is also developing the skills of staff to provide new sporting activities for pupils.
- The whole staff team, together with members of the governing body, share a common purpose to improve the school and raise standards for its pupils. There is a very positive atmosphere in the school, which should ensure it continues to move forward to becoming a good school again.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - There is a new Chair of the Governing Body and a large number of new governors. Established governors are joining new members in a training programme put in place to develop their understanding of their roles and responsibilities and how they can most effectively challenge and support the school. Governors are keen to develop these skills. They are very clear about the improvements required and are asking searching questions to hold senior staff to account. They understand that performance management is linked to Teachers' Standards and the school's development plans and that any underperformance must be tackled and only good performance rewarded. Governors have not monitored the effect of actions well enough to see what works and what does not. Even so, finances are managed well, including the use of the

pupil premium and primary sports funding.

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	106346
Local authority	Trafford
Inspection number	440739

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

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	213
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mary Richards
Headteacher	Paul Gibbons
Date of previous school inspection	16 November 2010
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