

The Rosary Catholic Primary School

Beeches Green, Stroud, Gloucestershire GL5 4AB

Inspection dates

28–29 June 2017

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Since the previous inspection, leaders have taken effective steps to improve teaching. These are strongly improving the standards pupils reach by the time they leave the school.
- Leadership is well distributed. There is an effective team of senior and middle leaders to drive improvement and build capacity.
- Leaders' strategies and actions for improving the outcomes of individual pupils are precise and well managed. These enable pupils to make strong progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Leaders check the quality of teaching and learning robustly. As a result, they have an accurate view of the school which they use to challenge staff and drive improvements.
- Leaders, including governors, are ambitious for the pupils. They are relentless in trying strategies and ideas to improve the school for the pupils.
- Governors know the school well and hold leaders firmly to account. They use a range of strategies to check the work of the school and take effective action to tackle weaknesses.
- Leaders ensure that there is a broad and balanced curriculum which motivates the pupils. However, pupils do not have enough opportunities to deepen subject-specific skills, for example in science and history.
- The quality of teaching is strong and improving. However, teachers do not consistently check pupils' basic spelling, punctuation, grammar and handwriting, which slows the progress for some pupils.
- Teachers and teaching assistants have good subject knowledge which they use to challenge and support pupils in lessons. However, there are not enough high-quality opportunities for pupils to apply their skills and understanding through problem-solving and reasoning in mathematics.
- Pupils enjoy school and feel safe. They take responsibility for their behaviour, which promotes a welcoming and inclusive ethos.
- Staff know the pupils well, including those who have complex needs. There are effective strategies in place to provide high-quality care, support and guidance to support them.
- Leaders closely check and monitor pupils' absence. However, attendance rates are not yet consistently strong for some pupils.
- The majority of parents endorse the work of school leaders. However, there is a minority who express concerns about leadership and some pupils' behaviour. This has not been resolved, so relationships with some parents are strained.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- To further improve the standards pupils reach by ensuring that teachers:
 - consistently check and challenge the quality of pupils' spelling, punctuation, grammar and handwriting in writing
 - provide high-quality opportunities for problem-solving and reasoning in mathematics
 - deepen pupils' subject-specific skills in other curriculum areas.
- To further strengthen leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that pupils' attendance improves
 - communicating effectively with parents to ensure that they have a clear understanding of the school's processes, systems and expectations in relation to behaviour management.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Since the previous inspection, an effective core of senior and middle leaders has been established. Senior staff work well together with clearly defined and well-distributed roles and responsibilities. As a result, the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is strongly improving pupils' progress across the school.
- Senior leaders are determined to improve teaching and learning. Together they are ambitious for the pupils to do well. Leaders ensure that their individual staff talents and skills are well distributed to target priorities for school improvement. Consequently, there is depth and capacity for the school to continue to improve.
- Leaders' actions for improving pupils' outcomes, particularly those who have English as an additional language (EAL) or those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, as well as disadvantaged pupils, are precise and well managed. These enable pupils to make strong progress to catch up in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Leaders are rigorous in checking the quality of teaching and learning, including using external partners and advisers. This gives them an accurate view of strengths and weaknesses. Leaders subsequently use this information well to direct resources and training to improve teachers' skills and knowledge to have a positive impact in the classroom. For example, initiatives to improve guided reading are now taking effect.
- Senior leaders use a range of strategies to hold teachers to account. These include face-to-face professional discussions to review pupils' progress, performance management and routine monitoring activities. As a result, staff are strongly held to account for the progress of pupils and in raising teachers' expectations of pupils.
- The special educational needs coordinator (SENCO) and the special educational needs manager work effectively in tandem to check pupils' progress and ensure that provision is well tailored to meet pupils' needs. Plans are precise and effective in supporting pupils with the full range of needs. However, there are no plans for the full accreditation of the SENCO to meet the requirements and duties of this post in school.
- Middle leaders, including subject leaders, take full responsibility for their subjects, for example in mathematics and English. They monitor lessons and check pupils' workbooks to be able to identify, plan and deliver necessary training for staff. For example, this led to whole-school training in phonics (including teaching assistants) which has had a positive impact.
- School leaders, including governors, promote a broad and balanced curriculum. This ensures that pupils are challenged about social, moral, spiritual and cultural aspects of their learning and development. For example, Year 6 pupils spoke about politics and understand how key British values, such as democracy, relate to the school council and decision-making for others.
- The curriculum is well-developed so that there are a wide variety of inclusive opportunities for all pupils, including disadvantaged pupils. For example, leaders are scrupulous in tracking pupils' participation in different events and activities to ensure that pupils receive a well-rounded experience and education.

- Leaders ensure that pupils are enthused by the curriculum. Pupils show an appreciation and understanding of the different subjects and relevant age-related content. However, pupils do not always have enough opportunities to deepen subject-specific skills and understanding, for example in asking scientific questions or hypothesising about historical events and their impact on our lives today.
- Leaders use the additional funding for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and sports effectively. There are robust plans and tracking to ensure that resources and personnel are deployed purposefully to support pupils. As a result, pupils are making strong progress academically and there is a full range of inclusive sporting events to support all pupils. For example, the girls' cricket team has recently represented the school well in district finals.
- School leaders and governors are meticulous in their use and planning of the school's pupil premium grant. They monitor pupils individually to provide activities, events and a range of activities to support pupils' academic and personal development. As a result, disadvantaged pupils are making good progress to catch up with their peers and there are high-quality support plans in place for pupils with additionally high needs. The pastoral support worker (PSW) is also effective in working with senior leaders to support vulnerable pupils and families as part of the additional funding.
- School leaders use various local networks of support and have commissioned external reviews through the local authority to check and validate the effectiveness of their work. Furthermore, the school participates in a 'project group' with the local authority adviser to ensure that there is rigour and objectivity in appraising the school. As a consequence, leaders follow advice to take the necessary actions to improve the school.
- Most parents strongly endorse the work of the school and recognise the improvements made since the previous inspection. However, there is a minority who express concerns about leadership and behaviour management. Inspection findings show that pupils are well supported and that leaders take full and proportionate action in applying the school's behaviour policy. However, this is not always well communicated. As a result, some parents lack confidence in the school's leadership, which strains relationships.

Governance of the school

- The governing body is effective in delivering the full range of its duties and responsibilities through a well-organised committee structure. Following the school's conversion to academy status in 2011, it has forged strong links and partnerships with local schools and the local authority to ensure that it is not isolated. This ensures that the governing body is challenged and supported effectively.
- Governors are ambitious for the pupils. They are not complacent and do not make false assumptions. They have effective systems in place to ensure that they make decisions based on firm evidence.
- Governors know the school well and hold leaders firmly to account. Following the last inspection, there have been changes to the governing body which have ensured that it is rigorous and robust in checking the work of the school. In particular, the chair of governors is dedicated and ambitious on behalf of the pupils.

- Governors evaluate the effectiveness of leaders by commissioning external reviews and seeking first-hand evidence for themselves. When these find weaknesses, governors act promptly to secure improvement. For example, following a scrutiny of school tracking data, governors employed a specialist teacher for EAL pupils. This strategy has been fundamental in raising awareness for these pupils. As a result, there has been an immediate improvement in their academic outcomes across the school.
- Governors undertake a range of visits to the school, for example to check safeguarding arrangements. They also attend committee meetings, project group meetings and complete 'link governor' reports to assess the impact of strategies. This ensures that they are well placed and effective in making decisions about the direction of the school.
- Governors have sought the views of parents through questionnaires and have taken action to provide workshops and other meetings with them. However, these actions have yet to instil the full confidence of a minority of parents. This remains a priority for future school development.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders ensure that all necessary records and vetting arrangements are in place, including pre-employment checks, to safeguard children. Personnel files and records, including the single central record, are comprehensive and contain the required information so that all staff can work with pupils.
- Staff are well trained in all mandatory requirements for 'Keeping children safe in education' (2016) and know precisely what to do in a range of situations to keep children safe. The real strength of the school is in the strong culture for safeguarding that is prevalent among staff. For example, following staff observations through the school's reporting system, the designated safeguarding lead takes swift action to refer cases for appropriate multi-agency assessment.
- School leaders are proactive in checking whether children are missing in education and therefore at risk. They work assiduously with other professional partners and organisations and often take the lead in working with vulnerable pupils and families. They will also challenge other parties for the decisions they take and will not hesitate to make recommendations on behalf of the pupils.
- Vulnerable pupils are well supported through the pastoral systems and personnel in the school. Chiefly, the PSW works effectively with the headteacher to ensure that there are safe and reliable practices in the school for the children.
- Pupils know what bullying is, including cyber-bullying. They say that this is rare in school and is dealt with well by staff quickly if it occurs. As pupils in Year 6 told an inspector, '(Bullying) is absolutely not tolerated!'
- Pupils say that they feel safe. They know what to do to stay safe online and in different situations, for example in the event of a fire. During the year, there has been some concern from pupils in year groups where there have been incidents of antisocial or violent behaviour of a very few pupils. Incident logs show that these are reducing as school staff undertake training and revise strategies to manage these more effectively. Pupils and staff in these year groups are in agreement that this is improving.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers have high expectations of the pupils. Training to understand national standards and benchmarks has enabled teachers to raise their ambitions for the pupils so that they can achieve well across the school, including the most able pupils.
- Particularly effective teaching in upper key stage 2 has raised wider aspirations of staff in the school and provided an exemplary model for other teachers. For example, since the appointment of the assistant headteacher in 2015, she has been able to demonstrate and model effective practice as well as directly raise standards in Year 6.
- Teachers take full account of assessment information and use this to plan work for different ability groups. Teachers and teaching assistants know the pupils well. As a result, work is pitched well to meet the pupils' needs.
- Teachers work closely with senior leaders to ensure that plans for disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, as well as those who have English as an additional language, are well tailored with work matched to their needs. As a result, these pupils are typically making strong progress to catch up.
- Teaching assistants and other adults make useful contributions in lessons. They work well with pupils, for example, in supporting lower ability pupils with phonics work and in gathering information for teacher assessments. The appointment of an additional adult for EAL pupils, as well as other well-trained teaching assistants, is enabling pupils to overcome speech, language and communication difficulties quickly.
- Teachers ensure that there is a strong culture for learning across the school. Activities support pupils to be resilient and to work well with others. As a result, pupils are proactive and keen to take responsibility in their work.
- Following recent training, teachers have a clear understanding of what they want pupils to learn in lessons and over a sequence of time. This means that teachers are structuring lessons for pupils to build their skills, knowledge and understanding incrementally over time and to make good progress.
- Pupils enjoy the variety and range of home learning activities which are presented through themed work and topic-related learning.
- The teaching of phonics and reading in key stage 1 has improved strongly because staff subject knowledge has been developed. Pupils enjoy learning about letters and sounds and practise these on a daily basis through a variety of games and activities. As a result, pupils are gaining confidence in phonics and reading, although they do not always apply this knowledge consistently when spelling.
- Teachers' subject knowledge in mathematics is strong. Teachers ensure that pupils gain skills and knowledge well as they go through the school, especially in calculation and arithmetic. However, there are not enough high-quality opportunities for pupils to apply their skills through problem-solving and reasoning. As a result, pupils sometimes lack the awareness or understanding of when and how to apply these in a range of mathematical contexts.
- Despite the strong improvements in teaching, there are still times when teachers do not check or challenge pupils consistently about basic errors in spelling, punctuation,

grammar and handwriting. As a result, some pupils' writing can lack quality in the detail or in conveying the right meaning for the reader.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are encouraged to challenge themselves. They are keen to learn and participate well in lessons.
- The ethos of the school, based firmly in its Christian values of 'Following in Jesus' footsteps', ensures that pupils feel respected and valued. Pupils show courtesy and respect the views and opinions of one another.
- Pupils are polite and enjoy taking responsibilities, such as 'house captain'. Those who are on the school council are proud of this role and value the responsibility it brings.
- Support and induction for pupils who have English as an additional language are highly effective. Pupils feel welcome and valued. The range of strategies helps them to settle quickly and make rapid progress in speaking, communicating, reading and writing.
- Targeted pastoral and support plans are effective in helping pupils to overcome educational, social and emotional barriers. For example, pupils at risk of exclusion have extensive multi-agency support, which is often initiated, sourced and funded through the school. As a result, the most vulnerable pupils are typically being well supported before escalation to exclusion.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils conduct themselves well around the school and at playtimes and lunchtimes. They socialise well and play together harmoniously.
- Pupils who have been in the school since the previous inspection talk confidently about improvements, including in the general conduct and attitudes of pupils. They are proud of the school and told an inspector that they would recommend it to other children and families.
- Leaders log all behavioural incidents that are reported to them, including in class. There is immediate 'follow-up' by senior teachers, which is ensuring an overall reduction in the number of incidents being reported, including those in year groups which have been most affected.
- Leaders have introduced a series of checks and strategies to ensure that pupils' attendance and punctuality improve. Parents are challenged about attendance, with a variety of actions used by school leaders to ensure that pupils attend. Case studies show rapid and sustained improvement for particular pupils and families as a result of school staff 'going the extra mile'. As a result, the numbers of pupils with persistently high absence are reducing over time. However, overall attendance rates for groups, including those eligible for free school meals and some who have special educational

needs and/or disabilities, are still marginally below the national average and therefore this remains a priority for the school to address.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- The 2016 national test results showed strong improvements in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of both key stages 1 and 2. Pupils were consistently above the national average in meeting the expected standard. Current work in pupils' books and teacher assessments show that pupils are maintaining the standards from the previous year.
- Most year groups show consistent improvement and strong progress in reading, writing and mathematics from pupils' different starting points. This includes disadvantaged pupils, lower attaining pupils and those with English as an additional language (EAL). In particular, EAL pupils often make rapid progress as a result of the enhanced and focused provision they are receiving.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with education, health and care plans and higher needs ('My Plan+') make strong progress. Their skills are mapped well by senior teachers so that pupils can attain realistic but challenging milestones.
- The proportions of the most able pupils, including those who are disadvantaged pupils, meeting the higher standards in reading, writing and mathematics are variable across the school, although these pupils are consistently making more than expected progress. Pupils are being challenged more in lessons so that an increasing proportion are now demonstrating deeper and more complex skills in core subjects.
- Pupils' reading skills are improving. In particular, lower attaining boys who need to catch up are filling gaps in their knowledge to be able to read with greater fluency, expression and understanding.
- Pupils' phonics skills and knowledge show strong improvement. This has been a focus of school improvement work in the year. As a result, 85% of pupils are expected to meet the standard in the phonics screening check in 2017.
- Pupils make the most rapid progress in upper key stage 2 and, as such, there is some 'catch-up' towards the end of the school. Rates of progress, although strong elsewhere, do not compare as well as in Years 5 and 6. Leaders recognise this and are taking additional steps to bolster the teaching and outcomes elsewhere in the school.
- Workbooks show that pupils' subject-specific skills in other subjects, such as science and humanities, are not being consistently deepened. As a result, pupils are slow to acquire critical skills, such as predicting, hypothesising, assimilating different information, testing, observing and recording in ways that are at an age-appropriate level.

Early years provision

Good

- Children are well taught so that, by the time they leave the Reception Year, the majority are well prepared for learning and the challenges of key stage 1.
- Teachers and other adults know the children well. Consequently, they plan a range of inviting activities that hold the children's interest and enable them to learn at length and depth.
- Adults skilfully use a range of quality resources to ensure successful learning across different areas of the curriculum. For example, in the sandpit, boys were observed handling apparatus to support their physical development and at the same time learning about capacity. They were also developing communication skills and creative development as they were pretending to make ice-creams. As a consequence, children make strong progress across the early years curriculum.
- Effective teaching and provision enable the majority of children to catch up, including those with English as an additional language. Almost all of the children entered the Reception Year with skills below those typical for their age, especially in writing. Currently, nearly three-quarters of the children have attained a 'good level of development' (therefore meeting the government's expectations for attainment at the end of the early years foundation stage).
- Teaching is also effective in targeting and supporting the disadvantaged children to start catching up. Although this is a small cohort with a high number of children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, they are now demonstrating increasing competence in reading, writing and communicating towards the early learning goals (or age-appropriate expectations).
- The teaching of phonics and early reading skills is strong. Children are taught letters and sounds to enable them to be well prepared for Year 1. For example, during the inspection the children were identifying words and objects with the 'ch' sound in them.
- Teachers make good use of assessment information from the various pre-school providers and child minders. Transition arrangements are effective as the school uses a variety of visits to every pre-school setting as well as inviting the children and parents to lunch. This promotes positive relationships with parents from the earliest opportunity.
- Although the children make strong progress, there are no children exceeding the early learning goals in mathematical development, including numbers and shape, space and measure.
- Safeguarding in the early years foundation stage is effective.

School details

Unique reference number	137410
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	10037070

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	Four to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	181
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Lizzie Dawkins
Headteacher	Rosy Savory
Telephone number	01453 762 774
Website	www.rosaryschool.org.uk
Email address	head@rosary.gloucs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	14-15 July 2015

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- The Rosary Catholic Primary converted to academy status in September 2011.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set out the minimum requirements for pupils' attainment and progress at the end of Year 6.
- The school is smaller than the average-size primary and has one class in each year group.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium funding is lower than the national average.

- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is higher than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have English as an additional language is lower than the national average.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors visited all classes and were accompanied by the headteacher.
- Inspectors held meetings with leaders to evaluate their work. These included: the headteacher; the special educational needs coordinator and manager; the chair of governors and representatives of the governing body. The lead inspector also met with an adviser from Gloucestershire local authority who is one of the school's purchased improvement advisers. In addition, the lead inspector held a telephone conversation with the local Diocesan adviser.
- The inspectors scrutinised a number of documents, including records of governors' visits, assessment information, the school's self-evaluation, teaching and learning monitoring reports, anonymised performance management records and the school development plan.
- The inspectors also carried out one observation of part of a physical education lesson.
- The inspectors undertook an extensive scrutiny of pupils' books to evaluate the quality of work and check the accuracy of assessment information, including for disadvantaged pupils, those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, as well as those with English as an additional language.
- The inspectors spoke to children through various activities during the inspection and heard pupils read in Years 2 and 6.
- The inspectors observed playtimes and lunchtimes.
- The 39 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, were taken into account. The inspectors considered comments provided alternatively, such as meeting directly or as a result of the free-texts received. There were no responses from either the pupils or staff surveys. The inspectors met extensively with parents across the two days before school and one inspector also went out at the end of the first day to meet with parents.

Inspection team

Stewart Gale, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Maddy Kent

Ofsted Inspector

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