

Inspection of Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Primary School

Bow Lane, Finchley, London N12 0JP

Inspection dates: 25 and 26 April 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

This school was last inspected over 12 years ago and judged 'Outstanding' under a previous inspection framework. This reflected the school's overall effectiveness under the inspection framework in use at the time.

From then until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between inspections. Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Our Lady of Lourdes is a happy and friendly school. Leaders have high expectations of behaviour and learning. Pupils are enthusiastic about coming to school. They work hard and typically learn well, which can be seen in the quality of work that they produce in different subjects.

Pupils behave sensibly and the school is calm and orderly. Staff have positive relationships with their pupils and model respectful behaviour. Pupils are kept safe, and the few instances of bullying are dealt with swiftly.

Leaders have designed a curriculum that is broad and ambitious. In most subjects, including mathematics, pupils increase their knowledge and understanding during their time at the school. However, in a small number of subjects, the curriculum is less well implemented.

Physical health is a priority and there are ample opportunities for pupils to develop skills and stamina during lessons, sports events and playtimes. For example, many pupils take part in a daily mile and recently took part in a 'mini-marathon'.

Parents and carers are effusive in their praise. Many commented specifically about the strong partnership between school and home, and the community spirit fostered by school leaders.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders have constructed an ambitious curriculum that matches the breadth of what is expected nationally. They have identified what pupils should learn and have sequenced this logically. For example, in physical education (PE), younger pupils learn to control a ball with their hands and feet. Older pupils apply this knowledge successfully when attacking and defending in different sports.

Learning across subjects is designed to enable pupils to develop connections and a deeper level of understanding. For example, pupils learn about the geography of the River Nile. When studying history, this knowledge helps them to understand the importance of the Nile to the Ancient Egyptian civilisation.

In a small number of subjects, the curriculum is not as well implemented. Although teachers have secure subject knowledge, there are times where teaching includes tasks and activities that are less effective in building on the knowledge and understanding that pupils have previously learned. As a result, pupils do not secure as deep a body of knowledge in these subjects over time.

Teachers typically check pupils' understanding of what has been learned. However, there are instances where this information is not used effectively to correct errors or

misconceptions as they arise. This means that, for some pupils, misunderstandings persist in their work.

Reading is prioritised. The early reading curriculum is well established, and staff are trained to implement the agreed phonics programme with precision. Children start learning phonics straight away in Reception. Weaker readers are quickly identified and well supported to catch up. Pupils are keen to share books and enjoy reading with an adult. Staff work closely with parents to help them support reading at home. For example, parents can attend workshops and receive information packs.

Pupils with SEND are identified quickly and supported well. Tasks and activities are successfully adapted to accommodate pupils' differing needs. For example, additional resources are provided so that pupils are able to access the same curriculum as their peers wherever possible.

Pupils demonstrate positive behaviour and attitudes towards their learning. This is because there are clear and well-understood systems in place. This begins in early years where children practise using their 'elephant ears' when listening to their teachers. Pupils concentrate and cooperate well with each other. For example, they share resources amicably. Leaders have effective systems in place to check pupils' attendance and punctuality.

Staff provide pupils with opportunities to take on additional responsibilities and help others. For example, the 'mini-Vinnies' deliver donations to the local foodbank. There is a well-designed curriculum in place to help pupils to understand the importance of maintaining healthy lifestyles and understanding different cultures. Leaders and staff promote the importance of regular exercise. For example, there are daily opportunities for sport during breaktimes. Pupils' emotional well-being is supported effectively. Pupils know how to use the 'worry boxes' or to put their names on the 'zones of regulation' if they would like to talk to adults about their concerns.

Leaders, including those responsible for governance, have a secure knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Governors understand their roles and responsibilities in holding leaders to account. They ensure that the school is meeting its statutory duties.

Relationships with parents are strong. There are many opportunities for parents to be involved in their children's education. For example, in early years, they contribute to the information about what children are learning.

Staff are happy to work at the school and appreciate leaders' consideration regarding workload and well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Safeguarding is a priority. Policies and practice reflect the most up-to-date guidance. Training for staff and governors is frequent and relevant. This ensures that everyone understands their role in keeping pupils safe.

Pupils who may be at risk of harm are identified quickly. They are supported well by staff. Leaders engage effectively with outside agencies when needed.

The curriculum has been designed to help pupils understand how to keep themselves safe. For example, pupils learn about potential risks of working online and how to stay safe when walking to and from school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of subjects, teaching does not take sufficient account of what pupils have learned previously. The tasks and activities teachers set do not reflect the ambition of the curriculum. In these instances, pupils' knowledge and understanding are not developed sequentially. As a result, they do not secure as deep an understanding in these subjects. Leaders should ensure that teachers are clear about what pupils have learned previously, and use this to build pupils' knowledge cumulatively.
- At times, teachers do not check pupils' understanding of what they have learned. Errors and misconceptions are not consistently identified or corrected, and so persist in some pupils' understanding. Leaders should ensure that teachers check pupils' understanding so that they are well supported to learn and remember more.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	101331
Local authority	Barnet
Inspection number	10267897
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	237
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Seamus McKenna
Headteacher	Barbara Costa (Executive headteacher)
Website	www.olol.barnetschool.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	25 and 26 November 2010, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Our Lady of Lourdes is an average-sized Catholic voluntary-aided primary school.
- The school had its last section 48 inspection on 22 September 2016.
- The executive headteacher leads another local Catholic primary school.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with the executive headteacher, the head of school, subject leaders and other staff. Discussions were also held with members of the governing body.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, PE and geography. To do this, they met with subject leaders, had discussions with staff

and pupils, visited lessons and looked at pupils' work. Inspectors also considered the curriculum in other subjects as part of this inspection.

- The inspection team reviewed the arrangements for safeguarding by scrutinising records, and through discussions with staff and pupils.
- The views of pupils, parents and staff, as gathered through discussions and Ofsted's surveys, were considered.

Inspection team

Alison Cartlidge, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Rutinderjit Mahil-Pooni

Ofsted Inspector

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