



Our Lady's Catholic Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 111305
LEA Warrington
Inspection number 278650
Inspection dates 3 April 2006 to 4 April 2006
Reporting inspector Mr Jim Alexander CfBT Lead Inspector

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Wash Lane
School category	Voluntary aided		Latchford
Age range of pupils	3 to 11		Warrington, Cheshire WA4 1JD
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01925 633270
Number on roll	183	Fax number	01925 654584
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr P Gibbons
Date of previous inspection	1 November 1999	Headteacher	Mrs Julie Johnson

Age group 3 to 11	Inspection dates 3 April 2006 - 4 April 2006	Inspection number 278650
-----------------------------	---	------------------------------------

© Crown copyright 2006

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

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.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Our Lady's Catholic Primary School is a smaller than average size school, with 35 children attending the Nursery. There is a lower than average number of pupils from minority ethnic groups attending the school. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is slightly higher than the national average and the number entitled to free school meals is average. The school has Investors in People status and in January 2006 was awarded The Basic Skills Quality Mark for the second time.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school judges its overall effectiveness and the value for money provided as satisfactory, and inspectors agree. The school has been through an unsettled period since the last inspection and some difficult staffing issues have been addressed. There is now a more stable situation and the effective partnership with the local authority is helping to raise standards and ensure necessary improvements are made.

Overall, pupils' achievement is satisfactory. The quality of provision in the Foundation Stage and the progress these children make is satisfactory. The standards pupils reach by the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 are also satisfactory. Overall, the curriculum is satisfactory and it is enriched well by out of class activities. However, strong links between subjects, particularly English, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT) have not yet been established. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory with some good features. The brisk pace and high expectations in some lessons ensure pupils make good progress. However not all teachers' marking helps pupils improve their work. Those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities have their needs met satisfactorily. Pupils' personal development is good. They behave very well, enjoy school and their attendance is above average. The school cares well for the pupils and keeps them safe.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Monitoring and evaluation procedures have improved, resulting in a better understanding of what needs to be done to raise pupils' attainment. However, targets set for improvement in lessons do not challenge all pupils consistently well. The school has the confidence of parents. The positive steps taken recently to raise standards demonstrate that the school has the capacity to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that all teachers consistently use assessment information to set precise targets enabling all pupils to make good progress.
- To consistently give pupils better guidance when marking their work, so that they know how to improve.
- To improve teachers' plans so that pupils use their skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT across all their learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Achievement and standards are satisfactory. Children enter the Nursery with standards that are below expectations for their age. Despite making good progress in their personal and emotional development, their achievements in all other areas of their learning in the Foundation Stage are satisfactory overall.

By the end of Year 2, pupils reach broadly average standards in mathematics, writing and reading. The proportion of pupils achieving higher levels is also broadly average, with attainment in writing being higher than in other areas.

The 2005 national tests showed that by end of Year 6 standards were slightly below average in English and mathematics and above average in science. The progress made by these pupils, however, as they moved through the school was significantly lower than average. In 2005, the targets set by the school were exceeded in science but not met for the proportion of pupils targeted to reach higher levels in English and mathematics. Although progress in Key Stage 2 has been too low in recent years, there is now a more positive picture. The school has developed a strong partnership with the local authority and positive action is being taken to identify what needs to be done to raise standards further. A system of setting targets for pupils' writing has recently been introduced and this is beginning to have a positive impact on achievement. Pupils with English as an additional language and those who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Throughout the school behaviour is very good. Pupils work and play in harmony. They enjoy school, saying 'it's a nice place to be'. Sometimes children in the Reception class have limited opportunities to show initiative or to develop as independent learners. Attendance is above average.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good and firmly rooted in the Catholic ethos of the school. Pupils are well prepared for life in a diverse society. They follow a healthy lifestyle and adopt safe practices in lessons and around the school. Pupils make good contributions to the local and wider community and the church. They contribute effectively through the school council. This helps them to understand their responsibilities as young

citizens and prepares them for their future economic well-being. The wide range of residential visits contributes well to pupils' enjoyment and to their development of social skills.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall with some good features. Pupils have good relationships with their teachers and this helps to develop their self esteem and confidence very well. Consequently, pupils have positive attitudes to learning, enjoy their lessons and behave well.

Where lessons are good, teachers set challenging work and offer clear explanations. Lessons zip along at a brisk pace and high expectations ensure pupils make good progress. However, in some lessons the pace is too slow and pupils sit passively for too long. The work set does not provide enough challenge and consequently they do not make enough progress. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD) receive effective help and support in all lessons from well deployed teaching assistants, consequently they achieve as well as their classmates.

Pupils' work and progress is systematically assessed and recorded. This gives teachers a better understanding of where pupils are in their learning and what they need to do next. Not all teachers use this information accurately enough to plan and adjust their teaching. This means that work is not consistently set at the right level to challenge all pupils effectively. There are examples of outstanding marking that involve pupils in assessing their own learning and show them very clearly what they need to do to improve their work. This good practice is not consistent across the whole school.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory and is suitably planned to meet pupils' needs, including those with LDD. Activities in the Nursery ensure children's needs are catered for well, consequently they are actively engaged in learning. Occasionally activities planned for Reception children are too formal and limit their opportunity to make choices. Planning to extend pupils' skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT in other subjects across the curriculum is not formalised. This holds back the pace at which basic skills improve.

There are good opportunities to extend pupils' experiences through, for example, educational visits and visitors as well as residential trips in Years 3 to 6. Opportunities to learn about safety and health education, and the dangers of substance misuse are good. There is a wide range of activities outside the school day which promotes pupils' physical, personal and aesthetic development well.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The school considers care, guidance and support to be good. However, inspectors judge them to be satisfactory. Although pupils are set academic targets for improvement in some subjects, the system is not robust enough to ensure these targets are suitably challenging for all pupils. The quality of guidance given to pupils when teachers mark their work varies throughout the school, although there is some outstanding practice in Year 6.

The good care and support vulnerable pupils receive goes a long way towards promoting their personal development and well-being. Good relationships between pupils and adults ensure that they have someone to turn to if help is required. Behaviour is very good. It is monitored closely and rare incidents of unacceptable behaviour are dealt with promptly and effectively. Child protection procedures are thorough. Policies for

first aid and risk assessment are good. Teachers and teaching assistants provide good support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The school judges leadership and management to be satisfactory and inspectors agree. The headteacher and governing body know the school very well. They have developed an effective partnership with the local authority to ensure that progress in raising standards and achievement is accelerated. This has had a positive impact, and achievement in Key Stage 2 is improving.

The headteacher is well supported by the deputy headteacher and other senior staff. The deputy headteacher is responsible for developing the role of subject leaders and these teachers are beginning to more effectively monitor and evaluate provision. The headteacher monitors and evaluates the quality of teaching and learning and as a result teachers are increasingly aware of the part they play in raising standards and achievement. The school has developed a system to track pupils' progress and this is giving teachers a clear understanding of how to raise standards further.

The governing body supports the school effectively and ensures statutory requirements are met. They have developed rigorous procedures to check performance and to ensure that the school is held to account for its provision. A number of new governors have recently been appointed and the school benefits from the experience they bring.

Overall, the school has an accurate view of its effectiveness and the quality of its provision. The progress made by the school recently demonstrates its capacity to improve further.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
--	-----------------------	--------------

Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	3	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you very much for being so welcoming when we recently visited your school. You were all polite and friendly and spoke well about your school. We were pleased to see how well all the adults and children got on together, this obviously helps you in your lessons. Your behaviour was wonderful!

Your teachers and other staff have worked together well recently to keep improving your school. They plan a lot of interesting things for you to do and make sure that you are safe and well cared for. You told us that you really enjoy your lessons especially when teachers expect you to do your best. The school offers you a good range of other activities which you also clearly enjoy.

To help you to do even better, we have asked teachers to use what they know about how well you learn to set you more challenging targets and let you know how to achieve them. Also to develop good links between ICT, literacy and mathematics in the other lessons you do. This will ensure Our Lady's becomes an even better school.

We very much enjoyed talking with you and your teachers, and wish you and the school the very best for the future.