



# St Rose's Catholic Infants School

Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 117484  
**LEA** HERTFORDSHIRE LEA  
**Inspection number** 280094  
**Inspection dates** 10 May 2006 to 11 May 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Mrs. Joyce Cox LI

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Infant	<b>School address</b>	Green End Road
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided		HP1 1QW
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 7		
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01442 398855
<b>Number on roll</b>	226	<b>Fax number</b>	01442 398835
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mrs. Gabrielle Prince
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	6 November 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs. Barbara Hancock

<b>Age group</b> 3 to 7	<b>Inspection dates</b> 10 May 2006 - 11 May 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 280094
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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## **Description of the school**

This is an average sized infant school with a nursery for pupils aged from three to seven years. The majority of the pupils are from Catholic families and come from a wide catchment area of seven parishes. Average numbers of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds, a small number of whom do not speak English. Relatively few pupils are entitled to free school meals. A slightly below average but increasing number of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

## **Key for inspection grades**

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

## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

### **Grade: 2**

Inspectors feel that the school is being too modest in judging its effectiveness to be only satisfactory. The school's effectiveness is good because pupils' achievement is good overall and they attain exceptionally high standards by the end of Year 2. The headteacher has quickly and successfully begun to develop and improve many aspects of the school's work, such as assessments of pupils' progress and planning. Working closely and effectively with the deputy headteacher she has correctly identified the urgent need to improve aspects of the overall satisfactory Foundation Stage provision. The school has a very warm and welcoming ethos and older pupils are well prepared for the next stage in their education. Parents are pleased with the school. Children in the Foundation Stage make satisfactory progress. From a generally above average starting point they attain standards above those expected at the time of entry to Year 1. Children's achievement varies from good to satisfactory between the Nursery and two Reception classes, as does the quality of teaching and learning. The accommodation in the Nursery is cramped and unappealing and there is no easy access to the outdoor area. Pupils' personal development and behaviour are outstanding. The headteacher's good leadership and the support given by a dedicated staff ensure that any pupil who is not making the expected progress is quickly identified and supported. However in some lessons the work does not always meet the learning needs of lower attaining pupils. Governance is good and governors are very involved in school improvement. The school has made good improvement since the last inspection because standards are higher and issues from the previous report have been tackled successfully. The rising trend in test results together with the headteacher's accurate assessment of the school's strengths and weaknesses means the school has a good capacity to improve further and to become even more successful in raising pupil's achievement. The school provides good value for money.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Improve planning and teaching in the Foundation Stage so that all teaching is of a consistently high standard. - Improve the quality of organised play both indoors and outdoors in the Nursery. - Make sure work provided for lower attaining pupils meets their learning capabilities.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

The pupil's achievements are good overall. Children in the Foundation Stage make satisfactory progress. From a generally above average starting point they attain above the expected standards on entry to Year 1. The progress children make in the Nursery and Reception classes varies because the teaching is not consistently good. Standards at the end of Year 2 are exceptionally high in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils reach their challenging targets. Results have risen since 2001 and pupils' performances have been consistently high since that time in reading, writing and mathematics. In

2005 over half of the Year 2 pupils attained the higher Level 3 in reading and mathematics. Girls attain higher test results than boys and the school is developing strategies to improve boys' standards. The school keeps a watchful eye on the progress of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and pupils whose first language is not English. As a result, they also achieve well. Pupils use information and communication technology (ICT) in many areas of the curriculum and standards achieved are good and much improved since the last inspection. Due to the emphasis the school places on speaking and listening, standards in spoken English are exceptionally high in Years 1 and 2.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 1**

The personal development and well-being of pupils is excellent. Pupils flourish because of the school's strong family atmosphere and the way it cherishes each pupil. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary and they display very good manners in class and around the school. They enjoy school greatly and are very enthusiastic about their work because the teaching is interesting. Pupils' very good attitudes to their work create a happy and productive learning environment. Relationships are excellent and develop pupils' self esteem very well. Attendance is satisfactory whilst punctuality is good. The school's strong Catholic ethos permeates all aspects of its work. This makes a significant impact on pupils' excellent progress in their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles and how to keep themselves safe. They have a very well developed sense of social and moral responsibility towards the wider community and are effective in raising funds for charities. Pupils speak very confidently in lessons and assemblies. They have many worthwhile opportunities to voice their opinions to governors and make some decisions about the running of the school. Pupils learn key skills in English and mathematics rapidly, which will help them in the future.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching and learning is good overall. Teaching is consistently good in Years 1 and 2 but ranges from good to satisfactory across classes in the Foundation Stage. Pupils' learning is most successful when teachers have strong subject knowledge, plan well for the full range of abilities and have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. In these lessons, teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to share ideas and to learn from each other as well as learning through listening and watching. However, not all teachers in the Foundation Stage have such good subject knowledge. Good teaching in the Reception occurs when children of all abilities are challenged and learn through purposeful play as well as adult led teaching. However, in other classes in the Foundation Stage, teaching is not so inspiring or informed and tasks are more mundane. Assessment systems are good overall and excellent in English in Years 1 and 2. However,

work in some lessons is rather difficult for lower attaining pupils and this then slows their rate of learning.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

Inspectors disagree with the school's more positive evaluation and feel that it currently provides only a satisfactory curriculum. This is primarily because of the improvements needed to aspects of the Foundation Stage curriculum. In one of the Reception classes the children receive an exciting and stimulating curriculum, which is skilfully planned to provide an effective balance of work and play activities. However this is not yet consistent practice in all of the Foundation Stage classes. For example, more work is needed to improve the outdoor and indoor Nursery provision and to make sure that play is structured and purposeful. The school has a strong focus on reading, writing and mathematics in Years 1 and 2, so pupils achieve well and attain high standards. The school has significantly improved resources and the provision for ICT, which is used effectively across all subjects. The school promotes a good understanding of healthy lifestyles. Staff plan a good range of special events, visits and visitors which broaden pupils' experiences and understanding of topics they are studying.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The care of pupils is good. All staff show high levels of care and are committed to ensuring pupils' well-being. The high quality personal support and good academic support contribute significantly to pupils' achievement. The school has excellent systems in English and good systems in mathematics for checking on and improving pupils' progress. The school has effective procedures for ensuring the health, safety and well-being of its pupils. Child protection and health and safety procedures are good. The school's excellent relationships with parents, the local community and other agencies are significant factors in its success. Strong links with specialist agencies enable the school to provide expert help for increasing numbers of pupils who have extra learning needs. Both pupils with learning difficulties and gifted and talented pupils achieve well because of the way their needs are identified and their progress is monitored and, where necessary, improved.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher has worked very hard since her appointment to begin to improve provision in some significant aspects. For instance, she has successfully implemented changes to curriculum planning and to the way in which pupils' progress is recorded. Writing standards have risen even higher since her appointment as a direct result of improved tracking to identify those Year 2 pupils who are capable of attaining the higher Level 3 with additional support. Together with the deputy headteacher she has introduced effective systems to evaluate the school's

work. She has also skilfully and sensitively raised teachers' and support staff's awareness of the vital part they all play in school improvement. Subject leaders' roles have improved since the last inspection and they now have a fuller understanding of ways to improve achievement in their subjects. The school's improvement plan is clearly focused on raising pupils' attainment and achievements. Managers have adopted a systematic and effective programme for checking and assuring the quality of teaching and learning. The one area still requiring further improvement and close monitoring is teaching, planning and provision in some of the Foundation Stage classes. Parents are consulted about school improvement and almost all are very happy with what the school provides. They clearly appreciate the hard work and dedication of the headteacher and one writes, 'She has made some very positive changes in the school and is very fair and willing to listen to parents and give her honest opinion.' Governors provide a good level of support and an increasing level of challenge to the school. Standards are exceptionally high and still rising and the school has successfully tackled the issues from the last inspection. Consequently it shows a good capacity to carry on improving.

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## Inspection judgements

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

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	2	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	2	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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	1	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	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	1	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2	NA

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	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

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
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	NA
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
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**

We enjoyed our visit to your school very much. We learned a great deal about your school by talking to you and watching you learn. We thought that you would like to know what we liked about your school and how we thought it could get even better. - You made us both feel very welcome and greeted us with a smile. - You enjoy coming to school because you feel safe and you really like your teachers. - You like your new headteacher very much and Year 2 pupils told us she is 'excellent, strict but fair.' - You all get on very well together and your behaviour is excellent. - You work hard and you are good learners. - You are especially good at explaining what you have learnt by talking to the adults or your friends. Your headteacher runs the school well and your parents are right to think that you go to a good school. To make the school even better we have asked the teachers to: - Make sure those of you in the Nursery and Reception classes get a really good start to school. - Make sure teachers plan work carefully so that some of you do not find it too hard to do. Keep working hard and being good at St. Rose's.