



# Our Lady of Good Counsel Catholic Primary School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 120609  
**LEA** LINCOLNSHIRE LEA  
**Inspection number** 280852  
**Inspection dates** 22 September 2005 to 23 September 2005  
**Reporting inspector** Mr. Raymond Jardine LI

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	The Drove
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided		NG34 7AT
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 12		
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01529 304373
<b>Number on roll</b>	169	<b>Fax number</b>	01529 415490
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Ms. Patricia Matthews
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	7 December 1999	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr. Anthony Weldon

<b>Age group</b> 4 to 12	<b>Inspection dates</b> 22 September 2005 - 23 September 2005	<b>Inspection number</b> 280852
-----------------------------	---	------------------------------------

---

© Crown copyright 2006

Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://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 of Good Counsel is a voluntary aided Catholic primary school situated in the town of Sleaford. It has been established for over 100 years. Most pupils come from families that are relatively socially advantaged and very few pupils are entitled to free school meals. The school is smaller than other primary schools, with 169 boys and girls on roll aged from four to eleven years. Almost all pupils are of white UK origin but there are small numbers from other backgrounds, mainly of Asian and Irish heritage. Very few pupils do not have English as their first language and only one is at an early stage of learning English. The number of pupils joining the school at times other than the usual is relatively high and only half of those in Year 6 classes over the past two years joined the school in Year 1. The proportion of pupils on the register of special educational needs is below average. Of the eight pupils on the register, one has a Statement of Special Educational Need for physical disability. Others on the register have moderate learning difficulties but they do not receive additional support from outside agencies. Pupils' attainment on entry to the school is mainly above average.

## 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's overall effectiveness is satisfactory. The school's view is that it is good. Inspectors judge that, while there are good features, some aspects of pupils' progress and the school's management are not as strong. Standards are considerably above average but taking account of pupils' abilities on entry to the school, their overall achievement is satisfactory. Children make consistently good progress in Reception and reach standards above those expected by the end of Reception. In Years 1 and 2 this good progress is sustained and pupils reach high standards but in later years their progress is satisfactory. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory. Much of it is good and there are strengths in the teaching of mathematics. However, pupils do not make enough progress in science because too little attention is given to the teaching of scientific enquiry skills. Pupils throughout the school make good progress in their personal development. They enjoy their life at school, take responsibility within the school community and contribute much to it. Staff are strongly committed to the school's success and contribute significantly to the school's mission, Catholic values and ethos. Arrangements for pupils' care and well-being are good and excellent attention is given to helping them adopt healthy lifestyles. The curriculum is satisfactory overall and is enhanced by the many opportunities for pupils to take part in sporting activities. The school's management is satisfactory. However, the roles of subject leaders and governors are not yet embedded in the school's cycle of monitoring and review. Appropriate actions taken by the staff and governors' to reverse a drop in standards in English two years ago demonstrates their ability to affect improvements. Parents are highly supportive and pleased with the school's work. Overall the school provides satisfactory value for money.

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

- Raise standards in science, especially in pupils' scientific enquiry skills. - Improve the involvement and effectiveness of subject leaders and governors in the school's cycle of self-review.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Overall standards are well above the national average. Pupils make satisfactory progress in relation to their attainment on entry. They make good progress throughout their Reception year and most children exceed the goals expected. This good progress continues into Years 1 and 2. Standards by Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics have been exceptionally high in recent years, although they dipped in 2004. The school's most recent results show an improvement, due mainly to the attention given to improving pupils' writing skills. Pupils enjoy their learning and show a strong commitment to succeed. The few pupils who are from minority ethnic backgrounds are fully involved in school life and do as well as their peers. Those with special educational need progress particularly well. In Years 3 to 6, the pupils make satisfactory

progress. They exceeded their targets in English and mathematics by some margin in 2005, but these are not challenging enough. Pupils reach well above average standards, particularly in mathematics and English. In mathematics in particular, progress is consistently good. However, in 2004 the pupils' progress in science dipped significantly and standards remain lower than other subjects. There are few signs of recovery. Improving pupils' scientific enquiry skills is rightly a school priority.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' attitudes to school are good and their attendance is high. Pupils enjoy the school's warm atmosphere and value the friendships they make. The school's success in encouraging positive attitudes ensures pupils care for each other and this prepares them well for later in life. Relationships between pupils are very good and behaviour is good. Even the less well behaved pupils learn to respond positively. Bullying is rare and pupils are secure in knowing staff will deal effectively with any threat they might face. The school's religious character, which is central in its aims, suffuses much of its work. Pupils' spiritual and moral development are strong and pupils have a heightened awareness of the need to be good always. In personal, social and health education, Year 3 pupils see that taking care of themselves is matched to God's love for them. Social development is good. Pupils take pride in acting as 'buddies' to others, looking out for the opportunities to be helpful. The school gives pupils many opportunities for taking responsibility. In classrooms, pupils willingly help with the organisation of lessons, setting about jobs in a most purposeful manner. The school has a particularly good eye for seeing many ways by which pupils' independence and self-confidence can be promoted. Healthy lifestyle is an outstanding feature. The strong partnership between school and home means pupils know about good eating habits and are given healthy diets. Provision for cultural development is satisfactory. Through the year pupils contribute to local drama and musical events but cultural diversity features less prominently.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. In Reception and Years 1 and 2, teaching is good, particularly the teaching of basic skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT). In Years 3 to 6, there is also much good teaching but it is more variable in quality and there are some weaknesses in science. Most lessons are stimulating, exciting and well planned to meet the needs of pupils. Teachers keep detailed records of their pupils' progress in English, mathematics and ICT and use these well to guide their teaching. However, science assessment has only recently been introduced and is not yet having an impact. Those with special educational needs are supported and guided well, especially when working with the well trained learning support assistants. Teaching is consistently good in mathematics where activities are

carefully chosen to engage pupils' interest while ensuring that they are all appropriately challenged. In a Year 6 class, pupils enjoyed playing a board game that tested their understanding of fractions. One girl said "It's exciting and I enjoy solving problems" as she accumulated a good score in her game. Pupils also make good use of computers to help them learn in most subjects. This emphasis on pupils working independently and applying their literacy and numeracy skills is helping them acquire the necessary skills for their future working lives. However, the teaching of science is weaker. Teachers are not focussing sharply enough on developing pupils' scientific enquiry skills and consequently pupils are not confident in planning investigations of their own, considering the quality of their evidence and looking for ways of improving their working methods. Pupils also say that they do not enjoy science as much as other subjects.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum provides a satisfactory range of learning and other opportunities and serves the needs and interests of pupils. Good provision for literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology equips pupils with essential skills for learning. The curriculum for science is not as well planned. In personal, social and health education, good attention is paid to road safety and safe behaviour when away from home. The strengths in the curriculum are the provision in the Reception class, the support for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and the opportunities given for sports. In the Reception class, activities are exceptionally well planned. This leads to a high level of purposeful organisation in the classroom that supports very effective learning. The learning needs of vulnerable pupils are identified immediately. Staff are well aware of these pupils and plan their learning opportunities carefully. Pupils take part in a variety of sports in partnership with other schools. Pupils are very keen and there are no barriers to boys or girls in the choice of sports. This makes an impressive contribution to them staying fit and healthy and, with arts events, extends their education through the community. Extra curricular activities are well attended.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The care of pupils is good. There are many provisions in place such as a child protection policy that contributes effectively to pupils' safety and security. The active cultivation of the school's religious ethos gives clear and strong direction for staff. Teachers pay close attention to pupils' whole well-being and their spiritual and moral development in particular. The attention given to pupils adopting healthy life styles is a strength of the school. Good support for pupils' personal development is especially prominent in Reception and in Years 1 and 2 where their high levels of confidence and independence enable them to make good progress. Good support is also given to pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities throughout the school. Along with those with behaviour problems, who are effectively managed, all are enabled to take full advantage of learning opportunities and make progress. The school council is an

active forum for gathering pupils' views. It has been a source of initiatives prompted and followed through by pupils such as the setting up of the school's "Buddy" system in which older pupils befriend others who may be in need of help. School council representatives give great credence to its positive affect on school life. Teachers have a great deal of information on the standards and progress of their pupils. They make good use of the analysis of this information to plan what pupils should learn and in keeping them informed about their progress. Pupils express appreciation for the efforts of their teachers in showing them how to improve their work. In Year 6, pupils are given good opportunities for finding out about secondary schools.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. Staff work well together and are strongly committed to the school's success. They convey the school's mission and strong Catholic ethos very well and contribute much to pupils' good personal development and well being. The inclusion of all learners in the school is central to its work and the school is also well regarded by its parents. The headteacher's and other managers' views of the school's strengths and weaknesses are sound and based on a cycle of review and improvement. The school is rightly pleased with the high standards pupils attain, although its evaluation of their achievements in some respects is too generous. Staff and governors are involved in reviewing the school's work and setting out priorities in the school's improvement plan, but parents are not consulted enough. Teachers' performance management is integral to the school's monitoring and review cycle and was a contributory factor in helping improve English standards in recent years by focussing training on improving writing. The weakness in Reception raised at the time of the last inspection has also been addressed well. Overall, the school demonstrates it can tackle its weaknesses effectively. However, the role of some subject leaders is not developed enough in the school's management cycle. Currently they do not observe other teachers to support and develop their work, although this is planned for this year. In science, plans to tackle weaknesses in the subject have yet to be fully implemented. The school has a lot of assessment data but it is mainly paper based and cumbersome which prevents it from being used efficiently by senior staff and subject leaders to guide their work. Governors are very supportive and know the school well. They are influential in shaping the school's direction but are not involved enough in monitoring progress.

**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](http://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>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
--	-----------------------	--------------

### 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>	3	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2	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	2	NA

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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	1	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	2	NA

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3	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>	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	2	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	3	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	Yes
<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**

You probably remember that we visited your school recently. We very much enjoyed our time with you, and would like to thank you for all the help you gave us during the two days. We met most of you in lessons and talked with you in groups and what you said helped us come to judgements about the quality of education you are receiving. We were particularly impressed by your liking for school, how you behave and how proud you are of your school. We have written a full report about our visit, which has been sent to Mr Weldon. What we have set out below for you are some of our main conclusions about Our Lady of Good Counsel Catholic Primary School. We were impressed with the following: - Your school provides you with a very good start in your Reception year. - There are many opportunities provided for you to gain skills and knowledge, especially in English, mathematics and information and communication technology and this is preparing you well for your future working lives. - Your enthusiasm for learning and your positive attitudes make the school a happy place in which to learn. - You take very seriously the need to adopt healthy ways of living. - The school's Catholic mission is helping you to respect and care for those around you. The school council has helped bring about several improvements. - The teachers and other adults in the school look after you well and encourage you to become mature and responsible. We also found some areas which could be even better: - Many of you need more help and guidance in science and more opportunity to practise your skills in investigating. - Teachers in charge of the subjects you are taught need to be involved even more in looking at how well you are doing and what could be improved further.