



# Our Lady's Catholic Primary School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 124321  
**LEA** Stoke-On-Trent  
**Inspection number** 281691  
**Inspection dates** 24 November 2005 to 25 November 2005  
**Reporting inspector** Frances Gillam RISP

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Watkin Street
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided		Fenton
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11		Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire ST4 4NP
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01782 235 385
<b>Number on roll</b>	222	<b>Fax number</b>	01782 235 387
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Rev W Davies
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	10 July 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr John Chadburn

<b>Age group</b> 3 to 11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 24 November 2005 - 25 November 2005	<b>Inspection number</b> 281691
-----------------------------	---	------------------------------------

---

© 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's is an average-sized Roman Catholic aided primary school. Almost all of its pupils come from White British backgrounds. A small number of pupils come from minority ethnic groups, including pupils from mixed heritage and Asian backgrounds. Just over a third of these pupils are at the early stages of learning English. The children's attainment on entry to the Nursery is below that expected for 3-year-olds. By the time the children are ready to move into Year 1, their attainment is similar to that expected for their age.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

### **Grade: 4**

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector (HMCI) is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

The school provides an inadequate education for its pupils. Standards are below average by Year 6 and pupils make unsatisfactory progress in mathematics and science in the junior classes. Leadership and management are inadequate. The lack of urgency in dealing with the weaknesses since the last inspection has allowed problems to persist and has seriously hindered the school's capacity to improve. The school's view of its effectiveness is too generous. The systems in place to check how well the school is doing are not sharp enough. The headteacher does not check carefully to see if action taken to bring about improvement is working. This leads to inconsistencies in agreed ways of working. Teaching and learning are unsatisfactory. Shortcomings, such as weaknesses in teachers' marking and work not matching pupils' abilities, are more evident in the junior classes. This leads, in particular, to average-attaining pupils not doing well enough. The school provides unsatisfactory value for money. Standards and the quality of provision in the Foundation Stage are good. Most pupils say they like school and enjoy the good range of activities provided outside normal lessons.

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

- Ensure that the headteacher and senior managers check agreed ways of working are implemented and are then rigorously evaluated for their effectiveness.
- Ensure that the headteacher and senior managers evaluate more carefully, and governors question more thoroughly, the reasons for the variation in pupils' progress from one year to the next to identify more effectively strengths and weaknesses in teaching and the curriculum.
- Introduce more effective systems to ensure that teaching is providing a suitable level of challenge for all pupils, particularly in mathematics and science.
- Ensure teachers make better use of assessment information to plan lessons and to help pupils understand how they can improve their work.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 4**

Children get off to a good start in the Nursery. Carefully planned activities extend the opportunities for children to develop their skills knowledge and understanding so that they build effectively on what they have done before. By the time they are ready to move into Year 1 they are attaining the goals expected for their age. The pupils make satisfactory progress through Key Stage 1. At the end of Year 2, standards are average, although writing is weaker than reading and mathematics.

By Year 6, standards are below average overall. Targets set for the Year 6 tests in English are sufficiently challenging and pupils of all abilities make satisfactory progress. Although targets in mathematics and science seem realistic, these were not met in the tests in 2005 and pupils make unsatisfactory progress in these subjects in the junior classes. Although action is being taken to improve pupils' achievements in mathematics, this is not yet successful. The school's data shows that average-attaining pupils make unsatisfactory progress in mathematics, particularly in Years 3 to 5. In lessons, focused support for pupils who have learning difficulties and an emphasis on providing greater challenge for the more able ensure these pupils do as well as they should. However, the work for the average-attaining pupils is not adapted to meet their needs. They find it too difficult and struggle without additional help; this leads to their slow progress.

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

### **Grade: 3**

Pupils' personal development is satisfactory. The school uses its Catholic ethos well to develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding. Pupils develop a clear sense of right and wrong. In the Foundation Stage, children develop trusting relationships. Adults provide good models for them to emulate and this develops the children's social skills and moral understanding successfully.

Most pupils enjoy school and have good attitudes to their learning. Behaviour is satisfactory: most pupils behave very well, but a small number of older boys have unsatisfactory attitudes and the number of exclusions has increased recently. The crowded nature of the small teaching areas sometimes hinders good behaviour because pupils are easily distracted when working close to others. Attendance has improved in recent years and is now good.

Pupils know the benefits of a healthy lifestyle. They are taught effectively about keeping safe and healthy. This is because the school encourages healthy eating and gives them plenty of opportunities for physical exercise. The school council gives pupils of all ages opportunities to contribute to the development of the school. Pupils have suggested improvements to the school décor and the purchase of new equipment. The council also organises charity events which give pupils opportunities to contribute to the wider community. Pupils are taught most of the skills essential for working life, except that their numerical skills are not developed sufficiently.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 4**

The quality of teaching and learning is unsatisfactory overall. Weaknesses are more pronounced in Years 3 to 6. For example, in science, pupils in some classes are expected to spend too much time copying information and in others they complete a high number of worksheets. This restricts the opportunities for pupils to develop their ideas

and consolidate knowledge and understanding. In mathematics, work is often planned at a level to challenge the more able pupils. While this is suitable for these pupils, average-attaining pupils often find it difficult to grasp what they are to learn. They find it particularly difficult when they come to work on their own. Staff waste valuable time going over work discussed earlier, leaving less time for pupils to complete tasks intended to consolidate their learning. Not all teachers mark pupils' work regularly, nor do they provide clear enough guidance to pupils about how well they have done and what they need to do to get better.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. Teachers in these year groups plan work more effectively than in the older classes. This ensures activities successfully meet the needs of their pupils so that they build satisfactorily on what they have done before. Teaching in the Nursery and the Reception class is good. Activities stimulate the children's interest, they are eager to find things out and concentrate hard on what they are doing. Meaningful links between the different areas of learning make good use of time. This means that children's learning is consolidated, for example, by playing number games in the outdoor area.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum is satisfactory. Children in the Nursery and Reception class have well-planned opportunities to develop all aspects of their skills and understanding across the areas of learning. The curriculum for Years 1 and 2 has recently been adapted to give pupils more opportunities to learn in a practical way which develops their independence. Their skills, especially in reading, writing and mathematics, are developing more rapidly as a result. Older pupils are taught all aspects of the National Curriculum but do not have as many opportunities as pupils in the younger classes to develop their own ideas and think for themselves.

There is a good range of activities, outside normal lessons, for pupils of all ages. Examples include the art club for Year 2 pupils and sporting and residential opportunities for pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory. Pupils are well cared for. Good procedures for child protection are in place. Parents' and pupils' views are sought but some parents feel their concerns are not always dealt with effectively, for instance, about the patchy provision of homework. Pupils are beginning to receive better guidance on how to improve their work and most are aware of targets set for their class. Most, however, remain unaware of the specific areas on which they need to work as individuals. Arrangements for starting school work well. Children settle into the Nursery and quickly get to know the class routines. There are also good contacts with local secondary schools.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 4

Leadership and management are inadequate. Up until this last 18 months, there has been a lack of urgency in dealing with weaknesses from the last inspection. There has been an ongoing weakness in standards in mathematics and more recently the improvement in science standards has not been sustained. This is because there is too little evaluation of what is happening in the classroom to tease out the weaknesses in teaching mathematics and science. The school is receiving support as part of a national programme to improve leadership and management and raise pupils' achievements. As a result of the good support from this programme, the school now has a clear system for tracking pupils' progress. However, the headteacher does not use this information rigorously to check why pupils seem to be doing better in one class compared with another. As a result, staff are not held accountable for the learning that takes place in their classroom. The lack of a systematic way to measure the impact of any action to bring about improvement also means that agreed ways of working, such as marking pupils' work, are not checked for their effectiveness. Weaknesses such as these in the self-review processes seriously restrict the school's capacity to improve. While governors are supportive, they are not fully aware of the weaknesses. They are not in a strong enough position to question any variation in pupils' achievement and to help drive improvements.

A number of parents expressed concern about how well their children are doing and with good reason. Parents feel that the school listens to them but they are not always satisfied that the correct action is taken to allay their concerns.

**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>	4	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	4	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	No	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	No	NA

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	4	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	4	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	NA

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	3	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	3	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	3	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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	4	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>	3	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>	4	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	4	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	4	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	4	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	4	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**

The Children Our Lady's Roman Catholic Aided Primary School Watkin Street Fenton  
Stoke-on-Trent ST4 4NP

28 November 2005

Dear Children

Thank you for making Mr Sadler and myself so welcome when we came to visit your school. We enjoyed talking with and your teachers and looking at what you were learning in your lessons.

We would like to tell you what we found out. By now you have probably heard that your school needs special measures. This means that your school has some problems and it needs special help so that you can do better with your work. These are the most important points.

- Children in the Nursery and Reception class do well at school. They are very happy and their teachers do a good job of helping them settle quickly into school.
- You tell us how much you enjoy school. We know that you do because you are doing much better at coming to school more regularly.
- You know all about keeping safe and healthy. You have good opportunities to learn about healthy diets and the need for lots of exercise.
- You enjoy the activities outside your normal lessons. These help you to improve your sporting and artistic skills.
- We have asked Mr Chadburn to check how well you and your teachers are doing so that he can help you to do better.
- We have asked your teachers to check your work carefully and let you know how you can improve it, particularly in mathematics and science.

I wish you every success for the future.

With best wishes

Fran Gillam Lead inspector