

Our Lady of Lourdes RC Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102040
Local Authority	Enfield
Inspection number	286259
Inspection date	6 July 2007
Reporting inspector	Wendy Simmons

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	209
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr D Landi
Headteacher	Miss C Wells
Date of previous school inspection	29 April 2002
School address	The Limes Avenue London N11 1RD
Telephone number	020 8361 0767
Fax number	020 8361 6682

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Our Lady of Lourdes is an extremely popular and oversubscribed school. Almost all pupils come from Roman Catholic families. Close to half of all pupils come from White British backgrounds. Many have an Irish heritage and other large groups include pupils from Black African and Italian families. When pupils join the school, almost all speak English with confidence. The school has three awards for high standards and has won the, 'Activemark', 'Healthy Schools' and, 'School Travel Plan' awards. It is currently working towards the accreditation for 'Investors in People'. The current headteacher took up her post in April 2007 following two terms when she acted as the interim headteacher.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Our Lady of Lourdes is a good school with outstanding features. The strong Catholic ethos permeates the school, so that the school provides a warm welcoming atmosphere and a real sense of community.

Leadership and management are good overall, but within this, the leadership by the new headteacher and governors are outstanding. The combination of good teaching and learning, the emphasis on basic skills, outstanding care and excellent relationships contribute to pupils' good achievement.

The school has an outstanding capacity to improve. Governors have worked tirelessly, with the very supportive deputy headteacher, to appoint a skilled and enthusiastic headteacher. They note in particular that she has shown, 'The skills to bring learning alive and make it really meaningful'. This is reflected most in the improvement in the curriculum. Whilst pupils have gained exceptional results in English, mathematics and science, by Year 6 for several years, there were missed opportunities to extend pupils' skills in other subjects where standards are less strong. The school is now providing a more 'all round' education. It is ambitious to become outstanding and knows there is still more to do in particular, by extending creative activities and by broadening pupils' all round achievement.

When children start in the Foundation Stage (Reception class), most have the skills that are expected and within this, a high proportion demonstrate higher ability. Children make good progress overall and reach well above average levels in almost all areas of learning. However, like the rest of the school, their creative skills are not promoted to best effect. Plans are in place to address this.

Assessment systems are good for English, mathematics and science. However, in other subjects, teachers are unsure how well pupils are doing because assessment systems are less well developed. As a consequence some pupils, especially higher attaining pupils, are not suitably challenged in all subjects.

Pupils' personal development is outstanding. They make a strong start on this in the Foundation Stage. Pupils behave outstandingly well, they contribute much to the community and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Pupils are adopting healthy and safe lifestyles. They enjoy school and value their teachers. As one said, 'I know that I have good teachers who help me to get on'.

Parents have great confidence in the work of the school and support the school and their children extremely well. One parent confirmed the views of many, saying, 'My husband and I are very happy with the school, its teachers and leadership'.

What the school should do to improve further

- Increase opportunities for pupils to develop their creative talents and skills.
- Develop assessment systems, as already started, in subjects where this does not exist, so that pupils' achievement in all subjects is as good as in English, mathematics and science.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children gain many important skills for their future learning in the Foundation Stage. Their achievement is good overall as, by the beginning of Year 1, their skills are much higher than average. This is especially evident in their social development, their knowledge of reading and in their mathematical skills. In writing, standards are above average but few gain exceptionally high levels. In their creative development their skills are no higher than average and this is an area for development.

As pupils move through the school their achievement is good, but uneven between classes, within subjects and by ability. Pupils do better in some year groups than in others. The school maintains very high standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. In most other subjects their attainment is average. As many pupils show considerable ability and are enthusiastic to do well, leaders have correctly prioritised raising achievement in these other (foundation) subjects. This has started well in information and communication technology (ICT). The very effective support for pupils with learning difficulties, result in their outstanding achievement in basic skills.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Children quickly gain very mature skills in the Foundation Stage. For example, when pretending to be builders they worked cooperatively, concentrated, persevered with the task and did not get frustrated when their building collapsed! Pupils enjoy learning as is evident in their outstanding attendance and enthusiasm for the many new clubs and extra activities. They learn a good range of skills that help to prepare them well for their future lives. They were especially proud of their recent fund raising for diabetes. The good work on different faiths, the interesting range of cultural activities, such as the introduction of 'Black history month', and the teaching of Italian enrich cultural development very well. Racial harmony is excellent. One pupil said, 'We learn about more than Christianity, it's important, everyone is human and we all deserve respect'. Pupils enjoy sport and are adopting healthy and safe lifestyles, as seen in their work linked to 'Sun Awareness Week'.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good overall, but range from satisfactory to outstanding. Lessons are mostly well planned to meet the different needs of pupils. The basic skills in English, mathematics and science are well taught and contribute much to the high standards of work. For example, in English pupils quickly learnt about bias in advertising and used descriptive vocabulary and punctuation very successfully. Teachers have good subject knowledge and often make effective use of discussion time to ensure that pupils understand what they are learning. However, individuality and creativity is not fostered to the very best effect. For example, pupils successfully learnt how to make wind up mechanisms using cams, but the final working models were all very similar and design work lacked imagination and individuality. There are missed opportunities to help pupils to learn in different ways. The overuse of commercial worksheets hampers pupils' abilities to express their individual ideas.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The basic skills in English are well promoted and pupils engage in a good range of practical activities in mathematics and science. In the last year the school has introduced a good range of visits, extra activities and clubs, which support pupils in their learning and enrich their personal development well. Links with ICT are greatly improved and the school is working well to widen links between subjects. However, from the Foundation Stage through to Year 6 there are missed opportunities to promote creative activities, such as in drama, art, design and technology. While many pupils learn a musical instrument, there are generally few opportunities for pupils to compose and explore music to enrich their learning in different subjects. Pupils commented that they thoroughly enjoyed it when a teacher brought the poem of the Highway Man alive by retelling this in the dark and they said that they would like more of these creative dramatic activities.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The care guidance and support given are outstanding. Throughout the school, children grow in confidence due to the supportive and caring relationships and strong Christian ethos. Older pupils support younger ones especially well. In the words of one pupil, 'Staff and teachers are very kind, they teach me lots of new things to help me one day to get to university'. Parents have great confidence in all that the school does. One commented, 'Both of my children love the school due to excellent support'. The school provides rigorous safety and child protection procedures. They give good guidance to pupils in how to improve their English and mathematics in particular. The marking of pupils' work has improved well since the last inspection. Links with support services and the help given by assistants contribute much to the help that pupils with learning difficulties receive.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Since the arrival of the current headteacher, parents confirm that, 'There have been lots of changes, she takes account of what parents and children have to say'. The headteacher, deputy and governors know the school very well and have put a rigorous plan in place to further develop the school. Governors provide outstanding support. Leaders have evaluated the school's needs very carefully. In the last year, they have successfully managed changes following a review of the staffing structure. Many new systems and policies have been put in place to get the school up-to-date with what is expected. The role of middle managers is developing steadily so that assessment systems can be developed beyond English, mathematics and science and so that managers can better evaluate pupils' 'all-round' achievement and skills. Currently the headteacher and deputy have many responsibilities. There are very good plans in place to delegate more of these when they create a fuller senior management team. This is due to start when newly appointed staff join the school in September 2007.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

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

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	1
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

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

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

18 July 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Our Lady of Lourdes RC Primary School, London, N11 1RD

You may remember that I came to your school to find out about how well you are doing. I am writing to let you know what I found out.

Your school is a good school where you clearly enjoy learning. In particular, you are pleased that there are more visits, clubs and extra activities and I agree that these are very important. You are exceptionally well cared for and this helps you to be happy and make good progress. I am pleased that you are learning about a wide range of faiths and cultures and the strong links with the church and your excellent contribution to the community help you to develop outstanding spiritual and social development. Congratulations for being so polite, respectful, and behaving well.

The teaching and learning are good and your teachers help you to do especially well in your English, mathematics and science work. Your work in these subjects is much better than in many other schools in the country. Your headteacher, deputy and governors are working especially hard to make the school even better for you. They are right to want you to do even better in the other subjects that you learn about. This has started well and I know that you like the links that are being made between subjects to make learning more fun and meaningful. I have asked them to do the following things to help you to do even better:

- give you more opportunities to develop your creative talents and imaginations, in such things as drama, music, art and design and technology
- find ways to check how well you are doing in many subjects and not just in English, mathematics and science.

Please help them with this by continuing to work hard and by using your imaginations as much as you can when working on creative projects.

Well done for fund raising for diabetes, you can be very proud of your efforts! Thank you for being so friendly.

Yours faithfully

Wendy Simmons Lead inspector