



Holy Rosary RC Junior Infant and Nursery School

Inspection Report

Better
education
and care

Unique Reference Number 105701
Local Authority Oldham
Inspection number 287304
Inspection dates 7–8 March 2007
Reporting inspector Stephen Wall

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Fir Tree Avenue
School category	Voluntary aided		Fitton Hill, Oldham
Age range of pupils	3–11		Lancashire OL8 2SR
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0161 6243035
Number on roll (school)	230	Fax number	0161 6265328
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr B Madden
		Headteacher	Mrs Barbara Morris
Date of previous school inspection	10 September 2001		

Age group 3–11	Inspection dates 7–8 March 2007	Inspection number 287304
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Holy Rosary is an average sized urban primary school. The nature of its intake changed considerably in 2002 because of a change to its admissions criteria. Until that date the school admitted Catholic pupils from a wide area of largely average social and economic circumstances. Since 2002, however, the school has admitted its pupils exclusively from the local area of very challenging social and economic circumstances. The majority of pupils joining the school are no longer from practising Catholic families. Most pupils are of White British heritage and have English as their mother tongue. The proportion of children entitled to free school meals is above the national average. The numbers of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly average. The school holds Investors in People status and the ActiveMark for sport award, the Healthy School Standard award and the Silver and Gold Eco School award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Holy Rosary is an outstanding school because its pupils make outstanding progress in their academic and personal development. It has risen very effectively to the challenge of the changing nature of its intake and has maintained very high levels of achievement for its younger, more challenging year groups. Central to the school's success is the outstanding leadership of the headteacher and senior managers who act as excellent role models and set very high expectations for all the school does. The overwhelming majority of parents value the school very highly and praise the quality of education it provides for their children. 'I cannot speak highly enough of the teachers' and 'I am so pleased I sent my children to Holy Rosary' are typical comments. Despite declining numbers of children in the area, a consistently high number of parents seek places for their children at Holy Rosary, showing how highly regarded it is in the community.

Strong Christian values underpin the school's work and support the pupils' excellent spiritual and moral development. This is an exceptionally happy school where the smiling faces of the pupils show how much they enjoy their education. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary in classrooms and around school. Relationships throughout the school are of the highest order. Adults are excellent role models for the children. All these aspects combine to produce youngsters who are courteous, confident and eager learners. The older pupils relish the range of responsibilities the school asks them to carry out such as helping the Nursery and Reception children at lunchtimes. Pupils feel safe in school and the level of care, guidance and support the school offers them is outstanding. By the time they leave the school the pupils are very well prepared for the next steps in their education and have a firm foundation for future success.

Standards, as reflected in national tests at the end of Key Stage 2, have risen steadily in recent years. In 2006 they were exceptionally high. This represents outstanding achievement for pupils who entered the school with broadly average levels of attainment. The very high standards are the result of highly effective teaching. Achievement is good in the Foundation Stage because of good teaching and the wide range of interesting activities provided. Following the change to the admissions criteria in 2002, pupils' attainment on entry to the school is now consistently below expected levels. Because of this, standards at the end of Key Stage 1 have declined from previously very high levels. They are still above average, however, and this represents very good achievement for these younger pupils. The curriculum is matched very effectively to the needs of the older pupils to support the very high standards they attain. The school has started to develop the curriculum for its younger pupils in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 to match more closely the changing and more challenging nature of their needs. For example, the use of information and communication technology (ICT) has been bolstered to provide more stimulation for pupils whose concentration span is shorter. The school recognises that further development of the curriculum is needed and is determined to meet the challenge to maintain the outstanding levels of achievement.

The headteacher, ably supported by other senior staff and governors, sets a clear agenda for improvement. Very thorough self-evaluation procedures and careful analysis

of performance data mean that the school knows its strengths well and what it needs to do to improve its effectiveness even further. In some areas of its work, the school underestimates how effective it is because of its belief that only perfection can be judged as outstanding. The school has made very good progress since the last inspection. In particular, improvement to the quality of teaching and learning has supported strongly rising standards. The school's record of improvement and its outstanding leadership give it outstanding capacity for further improvement. The school offers outstanding value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Develop the curriculum to meet more closely the increasingly diverse needs and challenges of the changing nature of the school's intake.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Pupils' achievement is outstanding. Children enter Nursery with skills that are below those expected for their age. Many have poor communication and social skills. They make good progress in the Foundation Stage and are well prepared for Year 1, although some still have problems with language and communication. In Years 1 and 2 pupils build very well on their previous learning and attain above average standards by the end of Year 2. By the end of Year 6 standards are consistently above average and sometimes well above, as reflected in the exceptionally high test results in 2006. The school is able to demonstrate that a dip in standards in 2005 was caused by a year group containing a higher than usual proportion of lower attaining pupils. The school sets very demanding targets. In 2006 these were exceeded in English, mathematics and science at the end of Key Stage 2. Boys and girls do equally well. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities also achieve highly; in the tests at the end of Year 6 all attained the nationally expected levels for pupils aged 11.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. They love coming to school, as seen in their good and improving attendance rates. Their social and moral development is excellent. They respect one another and adults. They work and play together harmoniously and sensibly. Pupils' awareness of multicultural issues is strong because of educational visits to faith centres, for example, and celebrations of other cultures in their class work. Pupils develop a real awareness of the value of contributing to their community through the many opportunities they have to take on positions of responsibility such as by becoming 'Rosary Rangers' and running the school tuck shop. The active school council teaches them the importance of expressing their ideas and opinions constructively. Pupils have an excellent knowledge of the importance of living a healthy lifestyle. Large numbers take part in the school's wide range of sporting

activities. Pupils' high levels of competence in basic skills and their exceptional levels of self-confidence mean they are very well prepared for future success.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Children get off to a good start in the Foundation Stage in response to good teaching. In Key Stages 1 and 2 teaching and learning are outstanding. Teaching is highly effective because it sets consistently high levels of challenge and expectations of what children can do. Lessons are planned exceptionally well to build on pupils' previous learning. Teachers are becoming increasingly adept at using ICT to add variety and interest to lessons. Teaching assistants work closely alongside the teachers contributing effectively to pupils' learning. Pupils are invariably engrossed in their work because the tasks they are set are imaginative and pitched at just the right level. The very positive relationships in classrooms encourage the pupils to want to learn and give of their best for their teachers. Imaginative displays around school celebrate pupils' work and encourage them to take real pride in their standards and presentation. The marking of work is excellent because it indicates clearly what pupils need to do to improve their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The quality of the curriculum is good. There is a strong emphasis on developing the core skills of reading, writing and number. The school recognises the need to develop its curriculum to make it more flexible in meeting the needs of its changing intake, such as providing a stronger emphasis on the development of emotional, communication and social skills. Provision for ICT is outstanding. Pupils are very confident and competent users of computers to support their independent learning. The wide range of enrichment activities in sports and the arts attract large numbers of participants. There are many educational visits to places of interest. These activities enrich the pupils' educational experiences and add significantly to their personal development.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The quality of care, guidance and support is outstanding. Arrangements for safeguarding children are firmly in place and reviewed regularly. Appropriate checks are made on adults working with children. Effective induction arrangements mean children settle in quickly when they join Nursery. Procedures for identifying vulnerable children are very effective and the school works with a wide range of outside agencies to support them. Children have the confidence to approach adults with any problems and know that appropriate action will be taken. Adults care deeply about the well-being of the pupils. They treat them with genuine respect and affection. Pastoral support

is exemplary. The support and guidance for pupils' academic development is also outstanding. Very comprehensive and effective procedures for monitoring the progress of individuals and groups mean that any underachievement is quickly identified. Action to rectify it is swift and effective.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The school is led outstandingly well by the headteacher, who receives very effective support from other senior managers, staff, parents and governors. She provides the school with a clear vision for success and sets the agenda for high standards in all the school does. The school really does want the pupils to do as well as they can and everyone works consistently to that end. High aspirations are at the heart of the school's development. There is a strong team spirit where everyone's contribution is valued. The professional development of staff is given a high priority and is closely linked to staff's own development and the development of the school. Procedures for self-evaluation are rigorous. It takes account of a wide range of stakeholders, including the parents. The school makes exemplary use of data to identify what it needs to improve. This leads to improvement and high achievement. Governors are very effective in providing challenge and support.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	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?	1
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
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?	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
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	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1
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.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
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	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
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

Thank you for making us so welcome when we came to visit your school recently. We really enjoyed talking to you. What you told us helped us reach our judgements about Holy Rosary.

We think you are very lucky to attend such an outstanding school. You make excellent progress in your learning because your teachers have high expectations of what you can do and set you challenging work to do in your lessons. We were very impressed by how well you behave and how much you enjoy being at Holy Rosary. Your teachers take very good care of you and help you to develop into confident young people who enjoy learning. Your headteacher and all the adults who work with you are doing an excellent job in making sure you all do as well you can.

In order to make Holy Rosary even more successful we are asking your teachers to make sure that the range of activities they offer you is developed to meet all your needs, so that you all continue to achieve as well in future as you have done up to now.

We are confident that you will continue to work hard with your teachers to make sure that Holy Rosary remains such a happy and successful school.