

Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	109265
Local Authority	South Gloucestershire
Inspection number	288332
Inspection date	23 May 2007
Reporting inspector	David Clegg

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	247
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Patrick Auger
Headteacher	David Cahill
Date of previous school inspection	18 June 2001
School address	Hanham Road Kingswood Bristol BS15 8PX
Telephone number	01454 867160
Fax number	01454 867161

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Primary School is an average sized school where the great majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds and almost all are fluent in English. There is an average proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. When children start in Reception they generally have the expected level of skills.

In the last two years the school has undergone significant changes to staffing. The headteacher was appointed two years ago and the deputy headteacher in September 2006. A high proportion of teachers have joined the school in the last two years.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The overall effectiveness of the school is satisfactory. Parents are positive and supportive of the school; one typical comment being 'We would certainly recommend the school to any parent.'

A recent decline in standards has been successfully addressed and the trend in standards is now upward. Whilst standards are in line with the national average, they are improving. Standards in writing at Year 2 are better than this time last year and standards in mathematics and science in Year 6 are also higher. Levels of achievement are satisfactory but also improving. Good progress is being made in writing in Years 1 and 2 and in aspects of early language and number in Reception, both the result of effective action taken by the school. Standards in science at the end of Year 6 are also improving following a careful review of why standards declined, specific training to address weaknesses and new assessment procedures.

The provision for children in the Reception Year is satisfactory. They generally make satisfactory progress and the majority of children reach expected levels in most areas of learning although very few reach above average levels.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Pupils are positive about school, enjoy their lessons and have a great deal of confidence in the adults in the school. Attendance levels are above average. By the time they leave pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education with a sound level of academic skills and good personal attributes. They understand how to stay safe and healthy.

Satisfactory teaching and learning result in pupils generally having work at the right level, although there are occasions when they find it a little too easy or too hard. Relationships in classrooms are very constructive and the atmosphere in lessons is conducive to learning. Marking is sound but is not as informative as it could be. It does not always refer to pupils' learning targets so the impact of these is slightly diminished. The satisfactory curriculum meets the needs of most pupils and is significantly enriched through a range of worthwhile and engaging activities that include special days, a themed week, visitors and visits to places of interest.

The school provides a good level of care, support and guidance. Pastoral support is strong with pupils being well known to teachers and other adults. The arrangements for keeping pupils safe are up to date. Pupils know their learning targets and feel that they are helpful to them. Their 'pupil profile' books also maintain a good record of their individual progress and so they have a good idea about how well they are doing although marking could be more helpful.

The reason for the school being on an upward trend is good leadership and management that are putting in place a number of effective and beneficial measures. This action has been taken following an accurate assessment of key strengths and weaknesses based on effective self-evaluation. The pupil assessment procedures are being strengthened and, although there remain gaps in the information, what information is available is used well to track pupils' progress and challenge any signs of potential underperformance. This is already resulting in improved progress and better standards.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the marking of pupils' work so that pupils are informed of the next steps in their learning and know how well they are doing in relation to their targets.

- Tighten up the collection and use of assessment data to ensure that the school has a clear view of the progress of all pupils in all year groups. A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils achieve satisfactorily and attain average standards. There has been a decline in the last two years from above average standards but the school has now arrested that decline. Levels of achievement have improved and standards are starting to rise. Children in the Reception Year are making good progress in aspects of reading and number and are well on track to start Year 1 with above average standards. In other areas of learning, progress is satisfactory and children reach the levels expected for their age. Standards and the rates of progress are improving in writing, particularly in Years 1 and 2, and in mathematics and science at the end of Year 6. It is in the latter two subjects that the decline has been most noticeable. The introduction of more regular and systematic assessments leading to focused teaching is paying dividends in these subjects. Such rigour is not yet established consistently across the school, which is why progress remains satisfactory rather than good.

Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities benefit from the careful support they receive and achieve in line with their peers.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

This is a strong feature of the school. Pupils enjoy learning and feel that they are helped to achieve as much as they can. They make a significant impact on the school through their positive attitudes. The work of the school council is taken seriously. Council members were, for example, instrumental in suggesting the recent upgrade to the toilets. The older pupils take good care of the younger ones at break times by becoming 'Friends who take Care' (FTCs).

Pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is good. Pupils have a strong commitment to helping those less fortunate than themselves. There are regular campaigns to raise funds for charities in both the UK and overseas. The school has regular and sustained involvement in helping to fund a development programme in Laos. There are also good links with the parish that both help to sustain pupils' spiritual development and successfully promote the sense of community through involvement in church activities. Pupils are well behaved and polite.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Lessons are planned to meet the range of ability in each class and this ensures pupils make steady and occasionally good progress. The improved use of assessment information is helping teachers to focus their teaching on particular aspects of subjects and this is leading to improved standards. For example, in science lessons, there has been a renewed emphasis on pupils doing more investigations and this is resulting in improved standards, particularly in this aspect of the subject. Similar work is taking place in writing, so that teaching is sharply focused on aspects

of written work that assessments have shown need attention; this is particularly evident in Years 1 and 2.

A key characteristic of the teaching is the very constructive and harmonious relationships that exist throughout the school. This was amply demonstrated during the inspection when each class was made up of a range of pupils in different year groups as part of a celebration of Spanish speaking countries. Pupils worked collaboratively and enjoyed the opportunity to be taught by different teachers.

Marking is sound but not as helpful as it could be because it does not consistently inform pupils about what they need to do to improve their work. The references to pupils' learning targets are not always evident and this diminishes the potential benefit of the targets.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum meets the needs of pupils and is significantly enriched through a wide range of activities that supplement and complement lessons.

The school is currently adapting aspects of the curriculum to make more links between subjects and this is proving beneficial. For example, this is giving pupils more opportunities to practise and refine their writing skills in lessons other than English. This process is more advanced in Years 1 and 2 than in Years 3 to 6 although the same improvements are in the process of being implemented.

The enrichment programme makes a significant contribution to pupils' development. It offers them a good range of sporting activities, the themed events introduce pupils to new cultures and experiences, and the visits and visitors add a further dimension to what is offered. For example the regular involvement of a locally based drama group offers pupils sustained opportunities for drama.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The good level of care, support and guidance incorporates both the pastoral care of pupils and academic support and guidance. Pupils are well known to adults and there is a high level of care provided. Consequently pupils feel safe and able to talk about any concerns with adults and friends. The statutory procedures for ensuring pupils' safety are up to date.

Pupils get good academic guidance despite slight weaknesses in aspects of marking. Clear learning targets are regularly set and parents and pupils are fully aware of these through the 'pupil profile' books. Pupils themselves think that their targets are helpful; as one commented, 'They help us to learn.'

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The recent changes to the senior team have strengthened the leadership and management. The senior managers know the school's strengths and weaknesses and they have a clear idea of what needs to be done. They have instituted a number of important improvements that are already 'bearing fruit'. This is evidence of the school's good capacity to improve. The implementation of regular and accurate assessments and the careful use of the information

gained are already leading to focused teaching, better rates of progress and higher standards. The team knows that there remain some gaps in the information about pupils' progress but share a determination to make sure that the successes gained in, for example, improving writing and science, are spread to all aspects of the school's work. The senior leaders have done a good job in forging a good team approach evident throughout the school.

These improvements in provision and outcomes are coinciding with a considerable amount of necessary upgrading to the fabric of the building. Governors are experienced and encompass a range of expertise that the school utilises in a sensible and beneficial manner. They are fully aware of the school's current performance and play a full part in the programme of improvement.

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.

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?	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	2
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	2
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?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

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	2
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	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

24 May 2007 Dear Pupils

Inspection of Our Lady of Lourdes RC Primary, Bristol, BS15 8PX

Thank you all very much for the help you gave me when I visited your school recently. I very much enjoyed talking with you and sharing your assembly at the end of what was an exciting day for all of you as you learned about Spanish speaking countries.

I think at the moment your school is giving you all a satisfactory education. There are some things that are particularly good. These include:

- The school is good at helping you to grow up and get ready for the next stage of your education.
- The standards you reach are improving and in line with those of most other schools.
- All the adults in the school take good care of you, support you well and your learning targets give you a good idea about what you are trying to achieve.
- Lessons are enjoyable and you are very positive about how much you learn.
- There are good opportunities, which I know many of you like, to play sport and visit interesting places.
- Those who are in charge of the school are doing a good job in making the school even better.

I have suggested that two things are done now:

- When they mark your work teachers could let you know what progress you are making towards your learning targets so that you know what you have to do to get better.
- Make sure that those in charge of the school have a very good idea about how everyone is getting on so that you all make good progress.

Once again thank you for your help, and best wishes for your futures.

Yours sincerely

Mr D Clegg Lead inspector