

Our Lady of The Assumption Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	103712
Local Authority	Coventry
Inspection number	308398
Inspection dates	18–19 November 2008
Reporting inspector	Marian Harker HMI

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	224
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Kevin Lambert
Headteacher	Rebecca Coogan
Date of previous school inspection	5 July 2004
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Hawthorn Lane Tile Hill Coventry CV4 9LB
Telephone number	02476 466655

Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	18–19 November 2008
Inspection number	308398

Fax number

02476 695459

Age group	3-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Our Lady of the Assumption is an average sized primary school situated on the outskirts of Coventry. The large majority of pupils come from the local area with the rest from surrounding neighbourhoods. The proportion of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is much higher than average. The large majority of pupils are of White British origin. The school has part-time Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provision for children in Nursery and full-time for those in Reception. The independently managed St Thomas' Pre-School group offers provision for before and after school clubs within the school.

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 the Assumption is a good school. A parent typically commented, 'Each child is nurtured in our school; a real sense of community is fostered amongst the staff, pupils and parents.' The headteacher, supported by a committed staff and governing body, has established a strong sense of teamwork, which has placed the school on secure foundations with a good capacity to improve. Partnerships with parents and the local community are outstanding and everyone works harmoniously together. Pupils thoroughly enjoy their education and behaviour is good. The overall effectiveness of EYFS is good and these children achieve well. Pupils make satisfactory progress through Key Stage 1 and achieve standards that are broadly average by the end of Year 2. Pupils make good progress overall in Key Stage 2, where standards have recently improved. However, more work remains to be done to improve standards and achievement in mathematics and writing across the school. Bearing in mind their starting points, pupils have achieved well by the time they leave. The progress of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is satisfactory overall. However, some pupils make good progress, particularly when learning needs are promptly identified and appropriate support put in place. Pupils from minority ethnic groups and those who do not have English as their first language achieve in line with their peers.

Pupils' personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are outstanding. The curriculum is good and offers a wide range of extra-curricular and enrichment activities, including a number of residential visits. The quality of teaching and learning is good. During the inspection, the majority of lessons observed were good and the remainder were satisfactory. The recent improvements in teaching, however, have not yet had time to impact fully on pupils' achievement in Key Stage 1 and there is not sufficient challenge for more able pupils across the school. In the more successful lessons, the pace of learning is brisk, teachers make good use of paired discussions to extend learning, and well-chosen activities match the needs of the pupils and make learning exciting. In some lessons, opportunities are missed to reinforce basic skills, particularly in writing.

The quality of pastoral care and support is a strong feature of the school's work and is good. Staff are committed to caring for pupils and the school fully meets statutory requirements regarding the safe recruitment of staff. Academic guidance is satisfactory and equips pupils with the skills to become independent learners. The school is developing the use of individual targets to support pupils' learning, but it is not always clear what pupils need to do to improve their work. The headteacher has a clear vision for improving the quality of education for all pupils. Whilst management across the school is good, especially the whole-school commitment to the inclusion of every child, the effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation is currently satisfactory and, in particular, the quality of feedback given to teachers lacks clarity.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Attainment on entry to the Nursery is below expectations. The learning environment is stimulating and welcoming and the children settle quickly into school life. One parent voiced the views of many when they commented, 'The nursery is extremely well organised and yet has a homely feel, just right for a young child.' Excellent care and support enable the children to develop their social skills well. EYFS staff take great pride in their work and as a result the welfare and safety of each individual child are carefully considered; this is an outstanding

feature of their work. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and children enjoy their learning. By the time they leave Reception, most children are achieving standards broadly in line with national expectations, except in communication, language and literacy, and some aspects of mathematical calculation, where progress is slower. The leadership and management of the EYFS is good. The EYFS leader has an accurate view of the strengths and weaknesses of the provision and has a clear vision for further improvements.

What the school should do to improve further

- Increase the rate of pupils' progress and raise standards in mathematics and writing, so that consistently good progress is made by all pupils across the school.
- Ensure that teaching is consistently good or better and more able pupils are appropriately challenged.
- Ensure that all pupils know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve their work.
- Ensure that self-evaluation of the school's performance is sufficiently rigorous, so that staff know what they need to do to improve their teaching and school improvement priorities are sharply focused on raising standards.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

By the time pupils leave the school from Year 6, standards are broadly average. Taking account of attainment on entry to the school, which is below expectations, this represents good achievement. The increasingly complex needs of each year group, and a growing number of pupils who joined the school part way through their education, particularly in Key Stage 1, are all factors leading to recent variations in standards. School data indicate that, in 2008, pupils exceeded their challenging targets, except for the more able pupils in mathematics, and achieved standards in line with national averages in Year 6. However, the Key Stage 1 results were lower than those usually achieved, due to a lower attaining group with higher proportions of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and an increase in the proportion of pupils joining the school part way through their education. Achievement in Key Stage 2 is good but rates of progress vary. One reason for this is because opportunities have been missed to thoroughly develop basic literacy and numeracy skills. Although standards in writing at Key Stage 2 have recently improved due to the implementation of a structured scheme of work, this is not a consistent feature across the school. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' progress accelerates and many achieve well, reaching expected standards for their age.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

This is a significant strength of the school. Pupils thoroughly enjoy being at school, as a parent commented, 'My daughter can't wait to get to school in the morning.' In lessons, pupils have very positive attitudes to learning and are keen to take part through raising questions and engaging in discussion. They work well together and talk confidently and enthusiastically about school. This is reflected through the work of the school council which has initiated the Posh Nosh lunch, where members of the school council serve lunch to pupils nominated for their good behaviour at lunchtime. Pupils are very polite and courteous to adults, visitors to school and other pupils. Behaviour is good because pupils feel valued and know what is expected of them.

The school has implemented an appropriate range of strategies to promote attendance, which has improved significantly since the last inspection and is now satisfactory. The strong Catholic ethos permeates all aspects of school life and contributes to outstanding spiritual development. Visits to, and excellent links with, the local church community increase pupils' awareness of religious concepts such as faith and belief, and reinforces the school's values. The school has a strong sense of community; pupils' social skills are well developed and they make an outstanding contribution to the school and beyond. For example, pupils have recently raised significant sums of money for local and national charities. Pupils feel well supported in school and adopt safe and healthy practices. The recent improvement in literacy and numeracy skills prepares pupils well for the future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The majority of pupils make good progress in their learning and achieve well as a result of good teaching. Teachers are confident and are able to draw upon secure subject knowledge. At the start of most lessons there are clear learning objectives shared with the pupils. Probing questions are often used effectively, enabling teachers to assess how well the pupils are doing and help all pupils, particularly the more able, develop their thinking further. However, this is not a consistent feature in all lessons and, in particular, the more able are not challenged enough. Teachers set work that is usually challenging and exciting and this contributes significantly to the high enjoyment levels in lessons. Well-planned practical activities help give meaning to learning. For example, pupils really enjoyed preparing a short written article for the school council on anti-bullying. Occasionally, some lessons lack pace because of lengthy introductions and this leads to the disengagement of a small number of pupils. Opportunities are sometimes missed to reinforce basic skills such as spelling, handwriting, punctuation and grammar. Support staff are skilled and have a positive impact on learning, especially when supporting pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. This approach enables these pupils to be fully involved in all lessons and make at least satisfactory progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school provides a well-balanced curriculum that meets the needs of pupils and ensures that they make good progress overall. Teachers plan so that the curriculum successfully builds on previous learning. The curriculum is further enriched by specialist activities and themed weeks that are relevant and enjoyable learning experiences. Progress has been made since the last inspection in pupils' use of information and communication technology (ICT) across the curriculum. Good features of the curriculum include the programme of personal, social and health education which effectively supports the personal development and well-being of pupils. Programmes of induction and transition are well established and ensure pupils are well prepared for the future. For example, pupils who have left the school are asked to evaluate how well the transition arrangements were managed, so further improvements can be considered. There is a comprehensive programme of additional activities at lunchtime and after school that enhance and enrich the curriculum. Pupils speak highly of the additional opportunities provided for them. Key Stage 2 pupils benefit from two residential visits. For example, Year 5 pupils are given the opportunity to stay at Alton Castle, a residential centre that provides an excellent opportunity to develop pupils' spirituality. The school is in the process of implementing the

Creative Learning Journey to help support the further development of literacy and numeracy skills.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The quality of care, guidance and support makes a significant contribution to the pupils' personal development and well-being. Pastoral care is a strength of the school. Pupils benefit greatly from being part of a safe, secure and caring community. Parents are pleased with the support given to children and this was evident in the very positive responses from parent questionnaires. Pupils who are vulnerable, are well looked after through effective support from individual members of staff. Necessary action is taken to ensure pupils are safeguarded; child protection procedures are fully established and understood by all staff. Pupils of all ages say that they find adults approachable and relationships between staff and pupils are very positive. As a result, pupils are confident and happy at school. Pupils have a satisfactory understanding of what they should do to improve their work, through verbal feedback from teachers and marking. Although targets are set for English and mathematics, they are not used consistently by teachers to plan effectively for the next steps of learning.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher's dedicated and effective leadership, with strong support from the two assistant headteachers, has pulled everyone together to meet the needs of pupils, ensuring the large majority make good progress and develop into confident young people. The leadership and management of the school are held in high regard by the parents, one commenting, 'The headteacher has a golden heart.' The relatively new leadership team has given the school a good capacity to improve. This has been demonstrated through the recent improvement in the quality of teaching and learning. However, the headteacher realises that aspects of whole-school evaluation, such as the sharpness of school improvement priorities, lack sufficient clarity and rigour that will lead to further improvements. Governance is good. The governors fulfil their legal responsibilities well, are regular visitors and very supportive of the school. They have a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and hold senior leaders to account. Communication with parents is regular and informative. As a parent commented, 'The weekly newsletters are fantastic, keeping everyone up to date.' As a result, partnership work is a strength of the school and is outstanding. The whole community says that it is made to feel very welcome by the school and encouraged to take an active role in improving the education for the pupils. A fitting tribute was given by a parent, who said, 'Our Lady puts the children first, and that is how it should be.'

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Annex A

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?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	3

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	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 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?	2

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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Our Lady of the Assumption Catholic Primary School, Coventry CV4 9LB

Thank you for your very warm and friendly welcome to your school. We learned a lot about it, through talking to you, seeing how you were getting on in your lessons, looking at your work and sharing your Celebration Assembly. We could see that you really enjoy coming to school and try hard to do your best and help each other.

- We think you go to a good school where everyone works really well together.
- You all looked very smart in your school uniform.
- Your play leaders and buddies do a really good job on the playground.
- Your school council is a very good ambassador for the school.
- Your behaviour in lessons and around the school is good.
- You are all proud of your school and help to make it a good school.
- Your attendance has improved and more of you are arriving on time.
- You are extremely well looked after and cared for.
- You know how to stay healthy and safe.
- You have many opportunities to develop your interests, including sports activities, music and residential visits.
- You are given many opportunities to develop your own values and beliefs.

In order to make your school even better, we have asked your headteacher and senior staff to do the following:

- make sure that you all achieve as well as you can in writing and mathematics
- make sure that teachers always plan good lessons and ensure your work is challenging
- make sure that you all know how well you are doing and what you need to do to improve your work
- make sure that the school leaders develop very clear plans to ensure you achieve as well as you can.

Yours sincerely

Marian Harker Her Majesty's Inspector