

Our Lady of The Wayside Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	104098
Local Authority	Solihull
Inspection number	308511
Inspection date	18 November 2008
Reporting inspector	Joyce Cox

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)	464
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	Martin Heathcote
Headteacher	Bart O'Shea
Date of previous school inspection	1 November 2004
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Stratford Road Shirley Solihull B90 4AY
Telephone number	01217 446852

Age group	3–11
Inspection date	18 November 2008
Inspection number	308511

Fax number

01217 440608

Age group	3-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors, who evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: what the school is doing to raise pupils' attainment in mathematics, the quality of the curriculum and how well assessment is used to plan the next steps in pupils' learning. Evidence was gathered from the school's self-evaluation; the school's assessment records; observation of the school at work; discussions with staff, parents and governors; and an analysis of parental questionnaires. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, are not justified. These have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

This large school serves an extensive parish that stretches into Worcestershire. Many pupils travel some distance to receive a Catholic education and the school is very oversubscribed. In the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), the school provides part-time education for three-year-olds in its Nursery and most of these children transfer into the Reception unit. The majority of the pupils are from White British families and virtually all speak English as their first language. A below average proportion of pupils are identified as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities, although an average number of pupils have a statement of special educational needs. The main needs are specific learning and communication difficulties.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This school provides its pupils with an outstanding education, both in their academic achievements and in their personal development. Strong Catholic philosophies and principles underpin much of this and are the basis of the outstanding care, guidance and support for all pupils. One of the key reasons for the school's many successes is that the headteacher's inspiring leadership enthuses others to have the highest possible aspirations for the school and its pupils. Working in very close partnership with his deputy, he has skilfully built a staff team that is totally committed to school improvement and who strive for excellence in all that they do. Virtually all parents speak in glowing terms about the school's considerable achievements. One parent, summing up the views of many, wrote, 'This school places strong emphasis on all curriculum areas whilst maintaining its strong Catholic ethos and high standards in core areas.'

This is a school where every pupil is valued, totally included in all activities and made to feel special. Children in the EYFS have a very happy start and make good progress, and all attain above average standards for children of this age on entry to Year 1. Pupils' achievement is excellent in the rest of the school so that by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, pupils attain standards that have, over many years, been consistently well above average and often exceptionally high. The outstanding achievement of pupils means they reach very challenging targets by the end of Year 6 and attain exceptionally high standards in reading, writing and science. These standards represent especially good progress and achievement for pupils with learning difficulties, who receive excellent support with their learning. The provisional 2008 results indicate that the number of pupils attaining the higher Level 5 was very slightly lower in mathematics than in English. Senior leaders immediately noted this and are currently implementing highly effective strategies, such as using specialist teaching in small groups for Year 6 pupils, which is having an immediate impact on their achievement.

A further fundamental reason why standards are so high is that the quality of teaching is outstanding. This has a considerable impact on pupils' learning and achievement. By pitching work and support precisely at pupils' own levels, staff ensure that all pupils enjoy their work and feel they are successful. There are obvious strengths in how work is planned, how time is managed and in staff's high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour. The team of talented and highly competent teaching assistants provide excellent support to teachers and pupils. Staff make excellent use of precise assessment information to record and track pupils' progress. The tracking system is relatively new in the EYFS and staff are not yet completely confident in using assessment information to plan the next steps in children's learning.

Relationships and pupils' behaviour are exemplary and, consequently, pupils are extremely motivated and learn exceptionally well. In Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, teachers' excellent planning builds very effectively on pupils' prior knowledge and differing needs. This, coupled with specialist teaching in sport and music, ensures that lessons are lively, exciting and enjoyable. Pupils are understandably very proud of their school and their teachers, saying such things as, 'This is a really good school, lessons are brilliant, we all do well and the teachers always take time to explain anything we don't understand.'

Pupils' obvious love of school is reflected in their excellent attendance. They get on extremely well together and enjoy taking responsibility by being school councillors, raising considerable amounts of money for charity, being house captains and looking after younger children. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent and lies at the heart of the school's

work. Special reflection areas in each classroom, guided meditation for Year 6 pupils and quiet prayer rooms enable pupils to think deeply and discuss issues related to emotional security and well-being. The school's commitment to achieving community cohesion is excellent. Pupils are extremely knowledgeable about other world faiths and expressed considerable enthusiasm for their recent 'One World Week' where each class learnt about different religions and beliefs. A pupil commented, 'I particularly enjoyed our visit to a Muslim school as I realised that although we have different religions, we are very similar as we like the same food and television programmes.'

Pupils' excellent skills in literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology (ICT) and their mature personal skills prepare them exceedingly well for later life and learning. However, success in national tests has not compromised the wider curriculum, which is outstanding. It is highly effective and relevant in meeting pupils' diverse needs, aspirations and capabilities. Very imaginative links between subjects, such as stunning pointillism paintings of mosques, make learning practical, relevant, challenging and exciting. There are outstanding opportunities for pupils to work collaboratively in the wide range of exciting clubs and enrichment activities. Pupils develop excellent enterprise and financial skills through exciting projects such as growing and selling their allotment produce. Pupils' personal development is excellent because the care, support and guidance provided by the school are outstanding. Adults are highly effective at tracking and supporting pupils' personal and academic progress to ensure that pupils can achieve really well. Pupils have an excellent awareness of, and commitment to, personal safety and healthy, active lifestyles. Excellent links with a wide range of outside agencies ensure the best possible support to further pupils' academic and personal well-being.

Exceptional leadership by the headteacher and deputy headteacher are evident in rigorous and accurate evaluation of every aspect of the school's performance, which leads to considered and highly effective action. The headteacher's considerable expertise in school leadership is used to very good effect to support other local authority schools. Governance is outstanding. Consultation, collaboration and partnership are watchwords that cement the very strong bonds between all members of the school community. There has been excellent improvement since the last inspection. The hard work and dedication of the headteacher and his staff have ensured consistently high standards and achievement over a number of years. Consequently, the school demonstrates an excellent capacity to improve even further.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Since the arrival of a new EYFS leader just over a year ago, the school has worked tirelessly to improve the facilities for its youngest children. Planning, assessment and the indoor and outdoor learning areas have been considerably improved. There is a very strong team spirit amongst the Nursery and Reception staff, who are all totally committed to providing high quality Early Years education. Interesting role-play areas and enthusiastic adults, acting as play partners, enhance children's language skills effectively. Teaching is good and improving rapidly as staff become increasingly confident with the new organisation. Staff keep detailed records of children's progress but these are not always used effectively enough to plan the next steps in children's learning. The curriculum addresses all the areas of learning and there is an improved balance between those activities led by the staff and those that children choose for themselves. From slightly above the starting levels typically expected for children of this age, all children make good progress and all attain above average standards in all the areas of learning at the

start of Year 1. Children achieve exceptionally well in their personal, emotional and social development. They quickly learn to become independent and confident learners. A strong emphasis on the development of basic skills, such as phonics, helps children's early reading and writing skills develop well. An excellent partnership is quickly established with parents, who are very happy with all aspects of the EYFS. This is because the care and attention given to children's welfare are outstanding. Excellent leadership and management are characterised by a shared sense of purpose, highly effective teamwork, good quality policies and a constant drive to improve all aspects of the provision.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure EYFS staff use assessment information to plan the next steps in children's learning.

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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?	1
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	1

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?	1
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?	1

Achievement and standards

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

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	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	1
The behaviour of learners	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 learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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	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

Annex B

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

19 November 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Our Lady of The Wayside Catholic Primary, Shirley, West Midlands, B90 4AY

You will probably remember that we visited your school not too long ago and I am writing to let you know what we found out. Before I do, I would like to thank you for the exceptionally warm welcome you gave us. You are all extremely polite and friendly and are great ambassadors for the school. A special thank you to the two Year 6 pupils who did such a brilliant job of showing us around.

Your school has so many great features that it is actually an outstanding school! The excellent teachers make learning fun and enjoyable and you reach high standards in your work. You have an excellent understanding of how to keep fit and healthy and it was brilliant to see so many of you enjoying the table tennis and numerous sports clubs. You are really well cared for at school and you receive excellent support in your learning and in your personal development. Another strength is the impressive way in which the headteacher and the deputy headteacher lead the school and make sure it is a welcoming, happy and successful community. You yourselves are another huge strength with your excellent behaviour, your hard work and your tremendous contribution to school life and in the mature way in which you care for each other.

The headteacher and the leadership team have many excellent ideas to make the school even better. We agree with their plans and also feel it would be helpful if the Nursery and Reception staff use their excellent observation notes to plan what children will learn next. The headteacher and all the staff want the school to continue to improve. Having met you, we are sure you will play your part as well by continuing to work hard and by keeping up your excellent standards of behaviour.

We wish you every success in the future. It was a real pleasure and privilege to meet you all.

Yours sincerely

Joyce Cox

Lead inspector