

Holy Rosary Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	124327
Local Authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	328110
Inspection date	10 December 2008
Reporting inspector	Patricia Potheary

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	211
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	John Taylor
Headteacher	Neil Jinks
Date of previous school inspection	19 October 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Alexandra Road Burton-on-Trent DE15 0JE
Telephone number	01283 239030

Age group	4–11
Inspection date	10 December 2008
Inspection number	328110

Fax number

01283 561475

Age group	4-11
Inspection date	10 December 2008
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

The inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: the quality of provision and progress for pupils between the ages of five and seven and for more able pupils; the effectiveness of all school leaders in securing improvement; and strengths in pupils' personal development. Evidence was gathered from an analysis of the school's data, the school's self-evaluation, the previous inspection report, pupils' work, parent questionnaires, school policies and other documents. Lessons were observed and discussions held with pupils, senior staff and the chair of governors. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

Holy Rosary Catholic Primary School is of average size and takes pupils from a wide mix of backgrounds. Pupils are predominantly White British although a small minority of pupils come from other countries, mainly Poland. A very small minority join the school speaking little English. There is one Reception class in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). The pre-school on site is managed privately and was inspected in the same week. The after-school club organised each day up to 32 pupils is also managed privately.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Holy Rosary Catholic Primary School is a good school. There is a calm and happy atmosphere where pupils and staff work productively together. Pupils make good progress in their academic subjects and demonstrate outstanding personal development. This results from strong leadership where pupils' well-being and a focus on improving standards are the guiding principles. When children join the school their skills and experiences are broadly typical of the age group but by the time they leave Year 6 standards are above average. Good teaching means that pupils in all age groups and of all abilities, including the more able and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, make good progress and achieve well.

Pupils thoroughly enjoy school, relishing the interesting things they do. In one fun-filled lesson, for example, they joined in enthusiastically making hand gestures for the different punctuation marks, quickly learning when they should be used. Teachers have a detailed and up-to-date knowledge of how to teach the different subjects. In addition, teaching assistants provide skilled support, particularly for those with learning difficulties or limited English. Work is planned well to meet the needs of the different ability and focus groups, but not all pupils have individual targets to involve them more closely in their own learning. On occasions, this means that marking and lesson planning are not always specific enough in pinpointing what individual pupils need to do to improve. Therefore, the good progress made by the majority of pupils in English and mathematics is not wholly secure for a very small number. In contrast, though, a minority of pupils make outstanding progress. Senior staff recognise this and are taking firm action to resolve this inconsistency, in part by developing the role of subject leaders to monitor how well lessons meet individual needs more closely.

Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is exemplary. There is a purposeful attitude to work which pupils value highly. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is excellent with a strong respect for the beliefs and cultures of others. They are a very caring group of pupils who get on very well with each other. As a result, bullying is rare. This reflects the exceptional way the school promotes cooperative community relationships, so much so that other schools are using similar ideas. Extensive and supportive links with the local Polish community, a multi-faith project and a gardening project at the school for disadvantaged young adults are but a few of the initiatives undertaken. The ethnic mix of the school is being intentionally increased and projects involving national and international links strengthened. For example, a day on 'Fair Trade' informed the children about wider justice issues.

The outstanding curriculum is exceptionally rich. A wealth of visits, visitors, projects and activities bring learning alive and support pupils' understanding of the lives and needs of others. The quality and extent of sports and the arts are very high and a large number of pupils take up extra sport to enjoy themselves and keep fit. They all take part in the Christmas productions and often perform to local groups. Excellent provision develops pupils' very good understanding of how to keep healthy and stay safe and most pupils eat plenty of fruit and vegetables. The curriculum also provides many opportunities for pupils to contribute very well to the school and wider community. One pupil related how staff 'listen to you', meaning that pupils' ideas are taken seriously and acted upon. For example, they have been able to instigate changes to the lunchtime, to after-school activities and to transition arrangements with the high school. For one local project, pupils contributed their ideas to improving the neighbourhood. Pupils also take on many responsibilities, including interviewing new staff, acting as prayer partners and helping the younger ones at playtime. Their very evident confidence is one result.

School leaders understand the school's strengths and weaknesses well as self-evaluation is accurate. The system to monitor the progress of different groups is thorough, and ensures that the challenging whole-school targets are met. As a result, the school has improved well since the last inspection and standards are rising in English, mathematics and science. The capacity to continue improving is good. Governors are undertaking their responsibilities well, giving good support to the school and providing the necessary level of challenge. However, the school's considerable budget surplus is not being used well enough to support the achievement of pupils currently at the school. For example, one of the school's priorities is to improve teachers' use of information and communication technology (ICT) in all subjects, to enhance pupils' engagement with learning and help them to play a more active part. Practice in using ICT in this way is variable and the imaginative use of a wide range of modern technologies to benefit pupils' learning is underdeveloped. Not enough has been done to extend teachers' skills in this area and the funds allocated for training are insufficient.

Parents are very positive about all aspects of the school, particularly the good care, support and guidance pupils receive, the wide range of activities and the skilled teaching. As one explained, 'They put your child first, create a homely atmosphere, but at the same time encourage achievement.' Procedures to safeguard pupils meet requirements. In addition, support for those who are vulnerable, have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, or speak little English is effective and well organised. Transition arrangements between the year groups and with the local high schools reflect best practice. With good basic skills, socially mature dispositions, and a willingness to take responsibility, pupils are well prepared for their next school and future careers.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Provision in Reception is good. Strong, confident leadership ensures continuous improvement, most recently in mathematical and literacy development. Staff have an exceptionally good understanding of how to track progress to support the next stage of learning. This ensures that children's progress is at least good and for a few it is very rapid. Children make a smooth transition into Year 1 having securely reached the expected goals for their age. Good, imaginative teaching means that children can choose their own activities but also spend time being guided by the teacher. There is a buzz of contentment as children go about their various tasks, supported skilfully by staff. In one engaging lesson, children were happily making chocolate truffles, whilst learning how to count them. The new scheme for linking sounds and letters is already helping children to recognise the beginning sounds of different objects. With new equipment, the use of the outside space has improved recently and there is a good flow between the classroom and outside. The school recognises, however, that the range of outdoor activities does not yet reflect the full extent of the areas of learning. Children are supported very well in settling into school and there are close links with the pre-school and parents. This ensures that learning, based upon children's previous skills, can begin right away. There is exceptionally good support for the children who arrive speaking no English and they settle well. Excellent care and guidance ensure that pupils make very good strides in their personal development, quickly learning to follow instructions, tidy up responsibly and even negotiate over disagreements before involving adults.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that lessons are based upon secure knowledge of pupils' individual targets and that each pupil is fully aware of what they need to do to improve.
- Allocate more of the school's resources to benefit the learning of pupils currently in the school, especially by training staff to increase the use of ICT in all subjects.

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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?	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?	2

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/or disabilities make progress	2

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	2
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	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?	1
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	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
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**

11 December 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Holy Rosary Catholic Primary School, Burton-upon-Trent, DE15 0JE

Thank you for being so welcoming when we visited your school. We very much enjoyed meeting you, joining you for lunch and seeing some of your lessons.

Your school is a good school, with many interesting things going on, just as you described. Skilled teaching helps you to make good progress in your lessons. As a result, you do well in English, mathematics and science. We like the way you really enjoy your lessons and always try to do your best. You told us that your teachers make lessons interesting and we can see that they know how to help you do as well as you can. We have, though, asked them to make sure that you understand your personal targets and know what to do to improve in each lesson. We want them to make sure that lessons are based closely upon these targets. We are sure that you will discuss this with your teachers and help them by working hard and sharing your ideas.

Senior staff work hard to keep developing the school and for this reason, the standards you reach and the progress you make are improving. We would like to see more spent on helping you do well, particularly in training teachers to use technology and computers more imaginatively so that you can play a more active part in all subjects.

An outstanding curriculum helps you to make excellent progress in your social and personal skills. You were keen to tell us that the school also keeps you safe and looks after you very well. It is therefore very pleasing to see that you are helping yourselves by taking plenty of exercise and eating a healthy diet. Your behaviour is excellent, especially in the way you value learning and respect others, including those who have different beliefs and ways of living.

The responsibilities that you take on within the school and wider community are impressive, especially the way you contribute your ideas to improving the school and local neighbourhood. It is good to know that you feel the school takes your views seriously and that you can make a difference. You clearly enjoy coming to school. We think that this, alongside your good quality basic skills and mature attitudes, will help prepare you well for your next school and future lives.

Yours sincerely

Patricia Pothecary Lead inspector