

Our Lady of The Angels Catholic Infant School

Inspection report

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| Unique Reference Number | 125712 |
| Local Authority | Warwickshire |
| Inspection number | 328381 |
| Inspection dates | 21–22 October 2008 |
| Reporting inspector | Melvyn Hemmings |

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.

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| Type of school | Infant |
| School category | Voluntary aided |
| Age range of pupils | 3–7 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number on roll | |
| School (total) | 260 |
| Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS | 125 |
| Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years | 0 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Alison Richards |
| Headteacher | Caroline Pearson |
| Date of previous school inspection | 27 September 2005 |
| Date of previous funded early education inspection | Not previously inspected |
| Date of previous childcare inspection | Not previously inspected |
| School address | Riversley Park Coton Road Nuneaton CV11 5TY |
| Telephone number | 02476 326080 |

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Fax number

02476 326080

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This larger than average school has Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provision that includes a Nursery. A significant number of pupils are taught in mixed age classes. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free meals is below average. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds though a few from minority ethnic groups are at an early stage of learning English. There is a breakfast club and after school club on site that are not managed by the governing body and so are not commented upon in the report.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school. It provides pupils with a wide range of stimulating learning experiences within a warm and caring ethos, which is firmly based on the Catholic faith. The overwhelming majority of parents are rightly proud of the school. One parental comment is typical of many, 'This is a lovely school where my son feels secure and happy and eager to learn.'

Good leadership and management is a key factor in the school's success. The headteacher provides focussed educational direction and a clear vision for school improvement. All involved in the life of the school share this vision and a strong team ethos is evident. Senior leaders check provision carefully and are quick to take decisive action when they identify an area for development. A good example of this is the way provision in science has been significantly improved since the last inspection because of the variety of strategies put into place. Some leaders of subjects are relatively new to their roles and do not yet play a full part in promoting school improvement.

Children make good progress in the EYFS and this continues through the school. As a result, pupils attain standards at the end of Year 2 that are above average in reading, writing and mathematics. This represents good achievement from their starting point on entering the Nursery. Handwriting is a relatively weaker aspect of pupils' performance in English. Pupils have positive attitudes to their learning and attitudes are excellent throughout the school. Consequently, classrooms are calm and friendly places in which to learn. This makes a positive contribution to the progress that pupils make. Teachers usually plan their lessons well to engage pupils of all abilities. Occasionally, the tasks given to children in the Reception classes lack sufficient challenge and this limits the progress they make in that session. The school works successfully to involve parents in their children's learning. A good example of this is in the way pupils are encouraged to take 'prayer sacks' home. These contain artefacts for the family as a whole to discuss and reflect upon. This makes a positive contribution to pupils' spiritual development, which is outstanding.

Pupils behave well and are kind and considerate to others. They enjoy coming to school and show enthusiasm in all they do. The parental questionnaires fully endorse their children's enjoyment of school. As one parent commented, 'My daughter loves Nursery and we have problems bringing her away.' The good curriculum is extended well by a variety of enrichment activities. These include extra-curricular clubs for sport, drama and French and the opportunity to visit places of educational interest. The curriculum is planned carefully to develop pupils' awareness of life in a culturally diverse modern Britain. For example, pupils have opportunities to celebrate a variety of cultural festivals that effectively develop their knowledge and understanding of other faiths and cultures.

The pastoral care and support of pupils are outstanding. Each pupil is cherished as a unique individual and their care and well-being is at the heart of the school's ethos. This aspect of the school's provision is very much appreciated by parents.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

On entering Nursery, the skills and abilities of children are below those expected for their age particularly in language and mathematical development. Good quality teaching and learning throughout the EYFS enable children to make good progress across all the areas of learning.

As a result, they enter Year 1 with standards that are broadly average. This represents good achievement from when they started school. Although progress is good overall, occasionally the level of challenge for children in the Reception classes is insufficient. On such occasions, children do not make the progress of which they are capable. The balance between adult-led and child-initiated activities is good, with children being encouraged to make choices for themselves. This makes a positive contribution to their development as independent learners. Children behave well and are keen to learn. They work and play well together in pairs and small groups, sharing resources and taking turns fairly. Adults work very closely as a team and provide outstanding care and support for the children. Parents are very pleased with the way their children are looked after while in the EYFS. Induction arrangements are successful in enabling children to quickly settle into everyday school routines when they first start school. Leadership is good and has correctly identified the need to develop the outside area for Reception so all children have ready access to it throughout the day to support their learning.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve pupils' handwriting skills.
- Ensure children in Reception are always effectively challenged.
- Involve all subject leaders fully in promoting school improvement.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Although pupils achieve well and reach above average standards by the end of Year 2, leaders are not complacent and are determined to improve pupils' skills further. A key area for development is pupils' handwriting skills. A variety of strategies have been introduced, including sessions to improve pupils' control of their pencil when writing. It is too early to evaluate if these strategies are proving successful. Pupils' numeracy skills are enhanced by activities being mainly practical, which successfully helps them understand the different ideas being taught. Pupils now make good progress in science because of the increased opportunities for them to be involved in practical scientific investigations. Progress in Reception is occasionally hindered by activities not sufficiently challenging children. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and those at an early stage of learning English achieve well because of the well-targeted extra support they receive.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Their spiritual development is outstanding and they show an excellent awareness of their own and others' beliefs and empathy for others. Pupils join in all aspects of school life with enthusiasm and genuinely want to learn. They particularly like their teachers who they say are 'special and help you learn new things, and will always help us if we have a problem'. Attendance is satisfactory and the school is actively seeking to improve this. Pupils behave well in lessons and on the playground and treat each other and all adults with respect. They feel safe and are safety conscious, moving sensibly around the school and the playground. They know how to keep healthy and put this into practice by adopting healthy lifestyles. Pupils make a good contribution to the school community, such as being a member of the school council and helping all pupils have a voice in how the school develops. They also contribute well to the local community through such actions as fund raising for local charities. Pupils are well prepared for their future

lives because of the high level of attention given to their personal as well as their academic development.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Pupils are keen to learn and show positive attitudes in lessons. They are inquisitive and willing to ask for help when unsure if what they are doing is correct. They maintain their concentration for lengthy periods and so have a high work rate. Staff encourage pupils to show initiative and take responsibility for their learning, such as by choosing activities in which they wish to be involved. This effectively develops their independent learning skills. Teachers plan activities carefully to build upon pupils' own experiences and this captures and maintains their interest. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to discuss their ideas in pairs and small groups, and this effectively develops their speaking and listening skills. Occasionally the progress that children in Reception make is hindered because the work they are given does not stretch them sufficiently. Teaching assistants provide good support for all pupils, especially those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and those at an early stage of learning English.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is planned carefully to have an emphasis on promoting pupils' personal, social and emotional development. As a result, pupils' confidence and self-esteem thrive and their personal development is good. The curriculum provides pupils with many opportunities to develop their literacy and numeracy skills in subjects other than English and mathematics. The school is successfully developing a more creative curriculum using cross-curricular themes. Careful planning ensures that pupils of the same age in different classes are provided with similar learning experiences. There are good links with other providers to extend and improve pupils' learning. For example, pupils really enjoy the sessions provided by a specialist musician that effectively develop their singing and instrumental skills. The physical layout of the building means that some Reception children do not have ready access to the outdoor area. This means they are unable to use it throughout the day to support their learning. The strong links with the local church effectively promote pupils' spiritual development.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

All staff are dedicated to the welfare of their pupils and their families. Very rigorous child protection and risk assessment procedures are in place to safeguard all pupils. Very good levels of supervision ensure their safety and well-being in and around school at all times. Because of the high level of care and support, pupils are happy and secure, and gain in confidence and self-esteem. This is a key contributory factor to their good personal development and academic progress. Of special note is the way the school works so effectively with outside agencies to meet the needs of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and those at an early stage of learning English. The procedures for checking the progress that pupils make have been improved since the last inspection and now are good. However, the information collected is not always used effectively to set suitably challenging work for children in Reception or to guide them to improve their performance.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Self-evaluation is accurate and enables the school to correctly identify and prioritise areas for development. Leaders then quickly take action to bring about improvement, as is seen in the strategies introduced that have successfully improved the content of pupils' writing.

Opportunities for staff to develop their professional expertise are good. Strong links have been forged between outside services and other organisations to promote and enhance learning.

Leaders successfully develop the school community by promoting good relationships between pupils from different cultural backgrounds. The school effectively engages with the local community through such activities as home visits and by organising a variety of family learning opportunities. Some leaders of subjects are not involved fully in supporting school improvement. Governors support the school well and are involved fully in helping it improve. Leaders have dealt effectively with the areas for development identified at the last inspection. There is good capacity to make any necessary improvements in the future.

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

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| 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

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| 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

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| 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

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| 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

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|---|---|
| How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners? | 2 |
| The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 2 |
| 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 | 2 |
| The attendance of learners | 3 |
| The behaviour of learners | 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

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|--|---|
| 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

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| 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? | 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 Angels Catholic Primary School, Nuneaton, CV11 5TY

We really liked coming to your school and enjoyed watching the exciting things you do. Your school is good in many ways and some things about it are super. You make good progress and reach standards that are above average in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2.

What we found out about your school:

- it's a very friendly and happy place in which to work and play
- you behave very well and are very kind to others
- the adults give you lots of exciting things to do and make learning fun
- you enjoy coming to school very much and are keen to learn
- parents are very pleased with the way adults look after you and care for you every day
- anyone who needs extra help with their work is always given it
- you are good at making choices for yourselves and sticking at your work until it is finished
- adults help you to be ready to go to your next school
- leaders of the school are working hard to make it even better.

To make your school even better I have asked the adults who run it to:

- help you to improve your handwriting skills
- make sure that those of you in Reception are always given work that makes you think hard
- involve those teachers who are new to leading subjects more effectively in checking how well the school is doing.

You can all help the school by always trying your hardest in all your work. All of you are a credit to your school.

Yours sincerely

Melvyn Hemmings

Lead inspector