

Our Lady and St Teresa's Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125718
Local Authority	Warwickshire
Inspection number	328383
Inspection date	24 September 2008
Reporting inspector	Marion Thompson

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)	106
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	12
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Paolo La Barbera
Headteacher	Carol Weller
Date of previous school inspection	18 October 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Windmill Hill Cubbington Leamington Spa CV32 7LN
Telephone number	01926 424420

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a small school with Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), where the majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is similar to that found in most schools. The pupils attending the school come from a fairly wide range of socio-economic backgrounds. There is a privately run before and after school club operating in the school. The headteacher left in July 2006. Since then, the governing body has not been successful in appointing a permanent headteacher. Between September 2006 and July 2008 the school has been led by two acting headteachers, the first for one term and the second for five terms. The current acting headteacher took up post for a period of one term in September 2008.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school, which provides a sound education for its pupils. It provides a good education in the Reception class. The quality of education in the school is improving rapidly. Parents strongly support the work of the school, but many are concerned about the long-standing difficulties the school has faced in appointing a permanent headteacher, despite strenuous efforts by the governing body. The acting headteacher, supported by the enthusiastic and hard working staff team and governors, is providing secure interim leadership. She is successfully sustaining the many improvements already begun and is initiating positive changes. Planning processes are based on an accurate analysis of the work of the school and challenging targets are being used to raise expectations about what pupils can achieve, although, as yet, they have not been fully met.

Over this difficult period, the school has benefited greatly from the support of the local authority, which has provided effective staff development in many aspects of provision and management. Governors support the school strongly, but the level of challenge they provide is more limited. Subject leaders are beginning to improve their skills in monitoring and evaluation in order to develop their subjects more effectively, but this is in the early stages. The school has made satisfactory progress since the previous inspection and is currently soundly placed to improve further.

Standards are broadly average, and achievement is satisfactory for pupils of all abilities and backgrounds. Pupils, especially boys, are beginning to make faster progress in the weaker areas of writing and mathematics. This is because teaching and the curriculum, which are already sound, are beginning to improve further. Teachers are making better use of assessment information to plan work that is suitable for pupils of all abilities. The monitoring of pupils' progress is increasingly used to identify when pupils are falling behind, so they can be helped to catch up. Girls are making slower progress than boys. A few lack confidence, especially in mathematics, and do not always engage fully in discussions in class. Lessons occasionally lack pace and interest, with too few opportunities for pupils to discuss and collaborate, and too much time spent listening to the teacher. At times, the subject matter does not appeal to girls. Academic guidance is satisfactory. Whilst all pupils are now set appropriate short-term targets, they do not always think about them when they are doing their work.

Pupils' personal development is good, because of the good quality of pastoral care which is influenced by the strong Catholic ethos. Pupils enjoy school, behave well, feel secure and have good attitudes to learning, although occasionally girls are less confident than boys. Attendance has risen and is now average. Pupils have a good awareness of how to live a healthy lifestyle. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. However, within this largely monocultural school, pupils' knowledge and understanding of the range of faiths within Britain are limited. Pupils take their responsibilities to the school seriously, but opportunities to engage with the wider community are more limited. Their good personal and sound academic development, combined with steady progress in basic skills, is a sound preparation for the next stage in their lives and education.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Provision in the EYFS is good and children get off to a good start. Because of the very small size of some cohorts, standards on entry to the Reception class vary considerably. While in most respects skill levels are broadly as expected for children's ages and represent the whole ability range, over recent years, children's communication skills have been lower. Children make good progress in most areas of learning, but especially in language development. They generally achieve the standards expected for their age by the time they enter Year 1. Their development of skills in information and communication technology (ICT) is satisfactory. Children's personal development is good and they learn to share and play well together.

Children enjoy their lessons, feel safe and develop healthy eating habits, for example eating fruit. They develop independence in learning through choosing from a wide range of individual activities within the classroom, but opportunities to choose outdoor activities are more restricted. Teaching and learning are good. Lessons are carefully matched to the individual child's level of skills. A wide range of methods is used to engage children so that they enjoy learning. The curriculum is broad and detailed records of children's individual progress ensure that their achievement is monitored effectively. Good provision of care, guidance and support helps to overcome barriers to individual children's education and welfare. Leadership and management are good. The work of the learning assistant is planned well, and supports and complements that of the teacher.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards and develop pupils' confidence in writing and mathematics, by ensuring that all pupils, and especially girls, are interested in the content of lessons and have opportunities to be actively involved.
- Ensure pupils make use of their short-term targets to help them to improve their work.
- Improve subject leadership by developing leaders' skills in monitoring and evaluation in their subject areas.
- Encourage children in the Reception class to develop their independence by providing more opportunities to choose outdoor activities.

A small proportion of schools where 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

Children make good progress in the Reception class, reaching broadly average standards on entry to Year 1. Standards overall are broadly average, and achievement is satisfactory. Progress varies between subjects. Pupils make good progress in science, where standards are above average. The development of knowledge and understanding is good and pupils' approach to investigative work is improving. Reading develops steadily throughout the school. Progress in writing is slower and standards are lower, especially for girls. However, there has been a marked improvement in the quality of writing during the past year, due to the impact of the strategies the school has put in place. Standards in mathematics are below average, especially for girls, but again are improving, although there is still some way to go for them to catch up with the

boys. Pupils with learning difficulties make satisfactory progress, because of effectively targeted support.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall, but their knowledge of the breadth of spiritual diversity is rather limited. They much enjoy school and behave well, observing safe practices around the school. Although bullying sometimes occurs, pupils express complete confidence in the school's ability to deal with it effectively. Pupils enjoy learning, although girls are occasionally less confident learners than boys. They are involved in every aspect of school life. Through their representatives, they make an effective contribution at the weekly meeting of the school council. Contributions to the wider community are less developed, although pupils make a satisfactory contribution through charity work and environmental awareness. Pupils develop satisfactory skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT, which make a sound contribution to their preparation for the future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching staff have good relationships with pupils, and lessons are calm and orderly. There have been a number of recent improvements in teaching. For example, the purpose of most lessons is clearly explained, so pupils understand what they are trying to achieve. Increasingly frequent opportunities for self- and peer assessment help pupils to develop a deeper understanding of their work. Assessment information is used to plan lessons which present pupils with a satisfactory level of challenge. Occasionally, the pace of lessons is too slow and too much time is spent listening passively. These lessons fail to engage all the pupils fully, particularly girls. At times, especially in mathematics, girls are not drawn into class discussions, which tend to be dominated by boys.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is broad and balanced, and meets the needs of pupils of all abilities and backgrounds satisfactorily. Intervention groups are increasingly effective in helping pupils to catch up when they have fallen behind, especially in writing. Due emphasis is given to literacy and numeracy. Provision for the promotion of personal development is good. Enrichment activities, such as Engineering Day, excite and motivate pupils to learn. The curriculum is less effective in engaging the interest and developing the confidence of a small minority of girls, especially in mathematics, and in promoting knowledge of the many religions in Britain. Extra-curricular provision is good for older pupils but is more limited for others.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Systems to ensure that pupils are kept safe and to support their welfare are sound. For example, attendance is beginning to improve because absences are followed up rigorously. However, systems to reward good attendance are not as well developed. Procedures to record and monitor racist incidents have just been put in place and those to develop the confidence of a small

minority of girls are planned for the future. Pastoral care is good and is much appreciated by parents, especially induction processes in the Reception class. Academic guidance is improving. Pupils' progress is carefully tracked and pupils are set suitable short-term targets. However, whilst they are aware of their targets, they frequently do not use them to improve the quality of their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The acting headteacher is providing a clear sense of direction for the school. Self-evaluation and planning are sound. Over the last year teaching, assessment, academic guidance and the curriculum have improved rapidly, because of well targeted staff development. This has resulted in improved achievement for pupils in writing and mathematics. Subject coordination is satisfactory and subject leaders are working hard to acquire the skills they need to monitor and evaluate the areas for which they are responsible. Governors provide good support to the school, but have not ensured that all their statutory responsibilities have been met. The school makes a satisfactory contribution to community cohesion, but pupils' understanding of the range of faiths within Britain is rather limited and girls do not make as much progress as boys.

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

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?	3
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?	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

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?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

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/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?	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	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of 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?	3

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	3
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	3
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	3
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**

25 September 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Our Lady and St Teresa's Catholic Primary School, Leamington Spa, CV32 7LN

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school. A number of your parents replied to our questionnaire, so please discuss the contents of this letter with them. Your school provides you with a satisfactory education overall and a good education in the Reception class. Children in the Reception class make good progress, because teaching and the programme of activities are well planned and led and children are cared for well.

In Years 1 to 6 you make satisfactory progress, reaching average standards. You do best in science and reading. Some of you, especially girls, make slower progress in writing and mathematics than in reading and science, but many of you, especially boys, have been making faster progress over the last year. This is because teaching, the curriculum, monitoring your progress, and assessment of your work are getting better. A number of you have been helped to catch up when you have fallen behind.

School staff work hard to provide good care for you, so you enjoy school, behave well, pay good attention to safety, and you have a good understanding of how to live a healthy lifestyle. You have positive attitudes to learning, but a few girls are not quite as confident, especially in mathematics, as boys. The acting headteacher and staff team are working hard and successfully to ensure that you do even better.

In order to make sure things continue to improve we have asked the school to:

- help you achieve better in writing and mathematics, by making sure that lessons interest and involve all of you and develop your confidence, especially if you are a girl
- make sure you use your targets to help you to improve your work
- help teachers to support each other more effectively in the subjects they are responsible for
- help children in the Reception class to become more independent through providing more opportunities for the free choice of outdoor activities.

Best wishes

Yours sincerely

Marion Thompson Lead inspector