

St Monica's Roman Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102039
Local Authority	Enfield
Inspection number	335828
Inspection dates	1–2 February 2010
Reporting inspector	Mike Capper

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	419
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Gloria Wells
Headteacher	Michael Ross
Date of previous school inspection	8 May 2007
School address	Cannon Road Southgate London N14 7HE
Telephone number	020 8886 4647
Fax number	020 8882 8424
Email address	office@st-monicas.enfield.sch.uk

Age group	4–11
Inspection dates	1–2 February 2010
Inspection number	335828

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It rates council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 08456 404045, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester M2 7LA

T: 08456 404045

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2010

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The majority of time was spent looking at learning; 21 lessons were observed and 15 teachers were seen. Meetings were held with governors, staff and groups of pupils. The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at teachers' planning, the school's assessment information and safeguarding policies and samples of pupils' work. Inspectors analysed questionnaires from staff and pupils, as well as 104 from parents and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- how well pupils develop investigative skills in science
- the use of information and communication technology (ICT) to support learning in different subjects
- the effectiveness and rigour of school self-evaluation
- how well pupils take responsibility and understand how to improve their work.

Information about the school

Most pupils come to this large school from the local community. Very few pupils are eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities is well below average. Most, but not all, of these pupils have moderate learning difficulties. Pupils come from a wide range of cultural backgrounds, but most are of White British heritage. A very small number of pupils are at the early stages of learning English.

At the time of the inspection the Deputy Headteacher was Acting Headteacher.

The school has an Activemark award for its work in physical education, as well as Healthy School accreditation.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This good school supports pupils' academic and personal needs well. Pupils' spiritual development is especially strong, and is supported by very close links with the parish church.

Pupils' achievement and enjoyment are outstanding. Children get off to a steady start in the Early Years Foundation Stage, where teaching and learning are satisfactory, and then build on this well in the rest of the school. Consequently, pupils' attainment is high by the end of Year 6. There are several contributory factors to the good progress being made by most pupils. Teaching is often good in Years 1 to 6, and the care and support given to pupils are outstanding. This ensures that pupils feel extremely safe at school. The school's excellent partnership with parents also contributes enormously to its success as parents offer considerable support at home to help their children learn more quickly.

Leaders know that although the large majority of teaching is good, there is still some satisfactory teaching. In many lessons, differing needs are met well and resources are used very effectively to bring subjects alive, but where teaching is satisfactory, it is because of inconsistencies in the quality of assessment for learning; namely, teachers do not always make enough use of assessment information to plan the next steps in learning and to provide the right levels of challenge for all. This slows the pace of learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage and is also the key factor in the remaining inconsistent teaching in the rest of the school.

Pupils are rightly proud of their school. As one commented, 'We have fun and learn lots of things.' The school's very good efforts to promote positive values are reflected in the pupils' excellent understanding of the importance of staying healthy and their outstanding contribution to the school and wider community. Pupils take a very active role in community events and very keenly take responsibility; for example, a conscientious school council gives pupils a good voice in the day-to-day running of the school.

The calm and purposeful leadership of the acting headteacher is setting a clear direction for school improvement. He is well supported by other members of staff and they share his ambitions and aspirations for the school. In Key Stages 1 and 2, thorough self-evaluation systems are supported by the sharp use of data to check pupils' progress. However, in the Early Years Foundation Stage, insufficient use is made of data to check that all groups are doing well enough. There has been some helpful monitoring of teaching but it has not always been rigorous enough or strongly enough focused on pupils' learning to improve teaching where it is satisfactory. Leaders rightly acknowledge

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

that the pace of change, especially in improving teaching, has been significantly affected over the last 18 months by the need to support a high number of new teachers as well as by unavoidable absences amongst senior managers. Nevertheless, the school has built on its strengths from the last inspection and attainment is higher, demonstrating that there is a good capacity for improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Move remaining satisfactory teaching to good by:
 - ensuring that teachers, particularly in the Early Years Foundation Stage, consistently make sharp use of assessment information to plan the next stage of learning and to provide the right levels of challenge for all pupils
 - ensuring that the monitoring of teaching focuses clearly on how well pupils are learning and gives clear guidance about what needs improving.
- Strengthen monitoring procedures in the Early Years Foundation Stage so that leaders check more closely the progress of groups of children.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**1**

Pupils' achievement is outstanding, and the high attainment seen in assessments at the end of Year 6 is also evident in their everyday work. Pupils greatly enjoy school and are keen not to miss it. They develop a love of learning and this, as well as their good behaviour, contributes significantly to the good progress that is seen in many lessons. In a good Year 5 numeracy lesson, pupils learnt well because the activity that involved solving problems was well planned and was sharply focused on developing key skills. In a good Year 6 literacy lesson, good questioning engaged pupils, and carefully planned work helped them to improve their spelling. Where progress in lessons is satisfactory rather than good, it is because work does not move learning on quickly enough. For example, pupils' progress in learning about symmetry was slowed because they were all working on the same activity, regardless of their differing ability levels.

The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development extremely well. Pupils show excellent concern for the needs of others by raising funds for charity and saying prayers for children in difficult situations. They have a very clear understanding of the differences between right and wrong. Activities such as opportunities to sing with a Jewish choir ensure that pupils develop a good awareness of different cultures and beliefs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education; their use of basic skills in ICT is beginning to improve since it has become a whole-school focus for development.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	1
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

Adults place pupils' well-being at the centre of their work and do all they can to make school a happy and safe place to be. There is a good partnership with outside agencies to get additional support when it is needed.

Teachers get on well with pupils, and make good use of interactive whiteboards to introduce new skills. Teaching assistants make a good contribution to learning, especially when supporting pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. This ensures that they make good progress most of the time. Pupils in the early stages of learning English are supported equally well and also make good progress. Many teachers assess learning carefully and where teaching is good, they are becoming increasingly adept at using this information to plan what to teach next. Such good practice is not yet evident in all lessons, and this is the main reason why the quality of teaching is not yet consistently high. Recent improvements in marking and target setting mean that most pupils are now clear about the next steps in their learning.

The curriculum is developing well. There has been a successful focus on improving pupils' investigative skills in science and these are much stronger than at the time of the last inspection. Leaders know that pupils do not have enough planned opportunities to use their good ICT skills to support learning in different subjects, due to limitations in resources in classrooms. A good range of clubs are greatly enjoyed by pupils. Learning is enhanced further by good partnerships with other schools and outside professionals in subjects such as music and sport.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms	
---	--

The quality of teaching Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

Senior leaders and middle managers have ensured that the school continues to move forward. Their good ambitions and drive for improvement are firmly embedded and there is a good understanding of remaining priorities. They are aware of how to go about ironing out remaining inconsistencies in teaching, including monitoring and supporting some teachers more rigorously. Governors provide good challenge and support to the school.

The school promotes equality and tackles discrimination successfully. There is a harmonious atmosphere in school and pupils show good respect to each other. The school's contribution to community cohesion is good. Leaders respond well to local needs and work very closely with parents to promote learning. Leaders are now working to establish links with a community in another part of the world to widen pupils' knowledge of life beyond St Monica's.

The school has good safeguarding procedures. Good account is taken of potential dangers, and adults are vigilant about keeping pupils safe.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Early Years Foundation Stage

A parent summed up some of the key strengths of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage when writing, 'My child is becoming confident and loves learning.' When children start school, the vast majority are working at or beyond the expected levels for their age. They make satisfactory progress in the Reception classes and attainment remains above average at the start of Year 1. There is a happy atmosphere in lessons. Children work together well and develop positive attitudes towards learning. They respond especially enthusiastically when subjects are linked together; for example, a 'bear hunt' was greatly enjoyed by children and gave them good opportunities to practise different skills. Teachers plan many interesting activities and, when learning is good, they use questioning well to extend learning. However, work is not always pitched at the right level for all children, especially the more able, and this slows the speed at which skills improve.

Leaders have a clear understanding of where weaknesses lie. They liaise well with parents when children first start school. A new outdoor area is taking shape and, once building work is finished, will greatly enhance facilities. Leaders know that they do not make sharp enough use of assessments to check the progress of different groups.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

Most parents and carers are happy with the work of the school. They especially like the school's Catholic foundation and feel that their children are well cared for, are kept safe and have fun. Parents' and carers' views are typically summed up in comments such as, 'The atmosphere in school is warm and positive' and 'St Monica's is a very civilised and happy place to be.' A few parents made negative comments, but they related to individual children and followed no particular pattern.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Monica's RC Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 104 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 419 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	73	70	29	28	2	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	81	78	23	22	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	48	46	49	47	6	6	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	53	51	43	41	5	5	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	60	58	41	39	3	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	46	44	48	46	7	7	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	56	54	46	44	2	2	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	34	33	53	51	4	4	2	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	45	43	49	47	6	6	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	39	38	56	54	4	4	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	28	27	62	62	5	5	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	62	60	40	38	1	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	67	64	34	33	3	3	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



3 February 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Monica's RC Primary School, London N14 7HE

Thank you for welcoming us to your school and for talking to us about your work. You were very polite and friendly. We agree with you that your school is good and that you learn new things quickly.

Some of the things we found out about your school.

- Children in the Reception classes settle very quickly and make steady progress. There are exciting things to do; the 'bear hunt' was great fun!
- In Years 1 to 6, you are taught well much of the time and this helps you to make good progress.
- You are very happy at school and try your best most of the time. There are lots of fun things to do outside lessons. Your singing in assembly is delightful and it is great that you do so well in sporting competitions.
- You have an excellent understanding of how to stay safe and healthy and you take responsibility well.
- All of the adults in the school are very kind and they look after you extremely well. They give you good help when you are struggling with your work.
- The school is led and managed well, and all the adults are working very hard to make the school even better.
- Your parents and carers are very pleased that you come to this school.

What we have asked your school to do now.

- Make sure that teachers always plan work that is not too hard or too easy for you so that you can learn even faster.
- Make sure that leaders carefully check teaching so that it gets even better.
- Use assessments of learning to check children's progress in the Reception classes.

We thoroughly enjoyed watching you learn. You can help your teachers by continuing to be so positive about your work.

Yours sincerely

Mike Capper

Lead inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 08456 404045, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.