

Our Lady and St John's Roman Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102526
Local Authority	Hounslow
Inspection number	335920
Inspection dates	24–25 November 2009
Reporting inspector	Sue Vale

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	217
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Andrew Donovan
Headteacher	Mrs G Morland
Date of previous school inspection	3 February 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 21 lessons, or parts of lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at documentation, including the school improvement plan, the tracking of pupils' progress, provision for those pupils identified as more able or having special educational needs and/or disabilities, minutes of governors' meetings and 77 parental questionnaires with staff and pupil questionnaires.

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

- what the school is doing to support those pupils it has identified who need to improve their performance, particularly in writing
- what the school is doing to raise teaching and thus standards
- the use of assessment in lessons
- the provision and quality of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Information about the school

Our Lady and St John's Roman Catholic Primary is an average sized school situated in the London Borough of Hounslow. Some pupils live in the immediate locality, while others choose to travel from further afield. There are approximately half the pupils whose first language is not English but only a small percentage of these are new to learning English. The main group of minority ethnic pupils are Polish speakers. Few children at the school are eligible for free school meals. The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities is lower than the national average. These mostly relate to language, literacy and communication, mobility difficulties and emotional difficulties. Provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage is in a Nursery and a separate Reception class.

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

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Our Lady and St John's Roman Catholic Primary is a good school. It provides an effective education based on consistent pastoral care and support for all pupils, whatever their background. The strong Catholic ethos pervades the school and all that it does, so that the care and support elements for the pupils are central to everything. One parent wrote to the inspectors saying, 'We feel there is a lovely community spirit within the school, parish and parents, and we are glad that our children are a big part of it.'

The leadership team provides effective, distributive leadership. The day-to-day management of the school is particularly effective and all runs smoothly. The leadership team knows the school's strengths well and what needs to be refined further. The school's view of itself is mainly accurate, albeit a little modest on occasions, teaching is good and pupils achieve well, reaching high levels of attainment. This shows that it has a good capacity to continue improving.

Nursery and Reception children start with skills and understanding that are in line with expectations for their age. They make very good progress during their time in the Early Years Foundation Stage, so that they start in Year 1 in many cases above average. The provision of an improved outside area for the Early Years Foundation Stage is one of the school's priorities, as it is currently underdeveloped and does not aid children's physical development.

Thanks to the very good care shown by all adults, pupils of all abilities make good progress throughout the rest of the school. By the time pupils leave at the end of Year 6, test results show that individuals often achieve well above expected levels for their age in mathematics, reading and science. While results in writing remain above average, they have fallen in the past year. The school has recognised this and consequently there is a whole-school focus on improving writing through improved assessment procedures and better cross-curricular links. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities benefit from well-focused support and make good progress. Most attain average standards. In response to the previous inspection, the school has instigated a programme for gifted and talented pupils. While this is good provision for the individuals concerned, the school has not currently shared this information with parents and a small number wrote to the inspectors expressing their concern about not knowing what was happening.

Pupils' good personal development and well-being help their all-round achievement. They acquire a good understanding of how to keep safe, make healthy choices and contribute well to the school and wider community. Attendance is good and above the

national average. Pupils' overall good behaviour, together with their good progress in English, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT), prepares them well for the next stage in their learning and later life.

The quality of teaching throughout the school is good. Lessons are planned to enable pupils to enjoy their learning. Planning is thorough and based on assessments made of what pupils know and understand. This ensures that tasks are generally pitched at the right level for all pupils. There is some good support from the teaching assistants for those pupils who find learning more difficult. In the best lessons, pupils are given the maximum opportunities to practise and reinforce their skills and learning in English and mathematics, and there are interesting and relevant activities that are linked across subject areas. This was seen in an outstanding Year 2 lesson where pupils were learning about electricity through literacy.

The curriculum covers all subjects well and is enhanced by a range of additional activities, visits and visitors. Some parents commented that they did not feel that the curriculum was exciting but in all the lessons seen pupils were motivated and keen to learn and appreciated what they were learning about.

Links with the local community and the parish are good. However, the development of pupils' knowledge and understanding of wider and global communities is an area in need of further development.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards in writing by:
 - continuing to develop opportunities for cross-curricular writing
 - monitoring writing outcomes on a regular basis
 - ensuring that pupils know and are aware of their individual writing targets and how they can improve their own work
 - ensuring that the recently introduced termly levelling of writing across the school is consistently used in order to inform teachers' planning of writing activities.
- Develop the outdoor learning environment for the Early Years Foundation Stage with particular reference to improving children's physical development.
- Improve the provision for community cohesion to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding of wider and global communities.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Observations of lessons and work showed that all pupils are making good progress. Pupils' achievement across the school is good although a little less so in writing. The results of the 2009 national tests showed that the level of progress in Years 2 and 6 was above expectations for pupils' ages, and in line with the school's challenging targets. The provision for vulnerable pupils, those who have special educational needs and/or

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

disabilities, and the small number who are new to learning English, is good and leads to these pupils making similar progress to their peers. The recent introduction of group targets across the school for developing pupils' writing is starting to have an impact on raising attainment in this key area, but it is still too soon to see the full impact and if the improvement can be sustained. This has also had a positive effect on their learning in other subjects. Consequently, pupils are well prepared for their future well-being. This was seen in an outstanding Year 6 lesson where pupils were using connectives from their own writing to aid their presentations and delivery of their points of view in a whole-class discussion on the captivity of animals. They really learnt about each other's views and opinions which strengthened their own understanding. Activities for younger pupils that involve them using all of their senses to learn letter sounds and clusters of sounds aid their confidence in writing for different purposes.

Despite a few parental concerns, pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. Attendance is good. Pupils' contribution to the local community is good and they are avid fund raisers for children who are worse off than themselves. The school council has a voice in the school and the pupils' questionnaire shows that pupils feel safe and are aware of whom to go to if they have a problem. Pupils' spiritual awareness is outstanding and their moral, social and cultural development is good.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	2
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	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
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	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

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

How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching and assessment is good. For example, in most lessons there is a brisk pace to learning, pupils settle to tasks quickly and maintain good concentration. Occasionally, teachers have limited experience of classroom management and the pace of learning is not as quick. There was some interesting science work going on throughout the school at the time of the inspection. Pupils in Year 1 were enthralled by discovering about reflective and non-reflective objects and they made good progress in their learning. There were missed opportunities to then link this with recording and practising writing techniques. In some lessons, skilful questioning develops pupils' understanding and enables teachers to pick up on misconceptions and use them as teaching points; this was regularly seen in lessons in both Year 2 and Year 6. Teaching assistants' skills are used well to support and extend learning.

Pupils enjoy lessons and there are a number of extra-curricular activities on offer which enhance the curriculum. Trips and visits are popular occurrences, for example the Reception class thoroughly enjoyed their trip to the park and 'hunting for bears'. Their learning was enhanced by being able to watch themselves on film and remembering all the things that they had just found in the park. This was an interesting, stimulating, well-planned activity that really supported the children's learning. Assessment is improving and the tracking of pupils' progress is much improved. In some classes, feedback to pupils about how to improve their work is excellent; in others, it is not quite as thorough.

The school's warm and welcoming family atmosphere is appreciated by pupils and parents alike. Our Lady and St John's Roman Catholic Primary is a very caring school, and on a number of occasions, inspectors saw pupils looking after each other and showing care and support towards their friends and others.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

There is effective distributive leadership in the school, which allows senior teachers and coordinators to develop their leadership skills and responsibilities well. This has resulted in the introduction of recent innovations in core areas of the curriculum, for example the improved termly assessment being used in writing. These are now being developed to ensure that they are used consistently by teachers. There is a common purpose

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

amongst the staff and the school is successful in the introduction and support for newly qualified teachers. Equality of opportunities for all learners is strong, extra-curricular activities are open to pupils from Year 1 through to Year 6. Governors are supportive and knowledgeable about the strengths and areas for development. They act as a critical friend. There are some good links with parents and carers, as one mother commented, 'The preparation for the parents and children starting Nursery was excellent.... when one of us couldn't attend the open morning we were given our daughter's portfolio to take home!' Others feel that there is not enough clear and informative communication. The recently introduced newsletter is intended to help address this issue. Community cohesion within the school and the local community is good. However, there is a need to further extend pupils' knowledge and understanding of wider and global communities. Procedures for safeguarding pupils' well-being are thorough and robust.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
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	2
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	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children start in Nursery with typical skills for their age. They make good progress in their time in both the Nursery and the Reception class, so that by the time they start in Year 1 the majority of children are achieving standards which are above average. The Early Years Foundation Stage is led well and there are excellent links between Nursery and the Reception class. This aids a smooth transition between year groups.

Provision is good. Parents comment how welcome they are made to feel when their children first start. Children settle in quickly and learn to become independent as they

select activities and take responsibility for tidying up. Close liaison between the teacher and teaching assistants ensure that all are monitoring children's progress and supporting their learning throughout the day. The adults pay good attention to children's welfare and promote healthy eating and good hygiene. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are provided for particularly well. Teachers plan exciting and varied experiences to engage the children and develop their knowledge, skills and understanding. Children in Reception, for example, were building a castle out of building blocks outside. At least 10 children were involved in the building project; the concentration and collaboration amongst them were of exceptionally high quality for their age. This enhances their personal, social and emotional development as well as increasing their ability to work as a team. While the outside learning environment is used well, there is scope for it to be developed further, particularly to support children's physical development.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

The majority of parents and carers who returned questionnaires or who spoke to the inspection team are happy with the school. There were no particular trends in the negative comments received by inspectors, but they did include a feeling amongst some parents that communication between home and school was not as frequent and informative as they would like. This included a number of comments about the introduction of a new school uniform for the Early Years Foundation Stage, without canvassing parental opinion first. Inspectors agree that this was an oversight on behalf of the governors and the school. Some parents felt that behaviour in the school was not good enough. Inspectors did not see any poor behaviour, either in lessons or at playtime. Teachers used good behaviour management strategies to engage and sustain pupils' attention during lessons.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Our Lady and St John's Roman Catholic 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 77 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 217 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	41	53	30	39	4	5	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	46	59	25	32	5	6	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	23	30	42	54	11	14	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	22	29	42	54	11	14	2	3
The teaching is good at this school	28	36	40	52	8	10	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	27	35	38	49	11	14	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	38	49	32	42	3	4	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)	21	27	42	54	8	10	2	3
The school meets my child's particular needs	24	31	42	54	5	6	2	3
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	27	35	36	47	7	9	3	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	21	27	43	56	6	8	2	3
The school is led and managed effectively	26	34	44	57	5	6	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	38	49	33	43	4	5	1	1

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.



25 November 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Our Lady and St John's Roman Catholic Primary School, Brentford, TW8 9JF

Thank you for your warm welcome when we visited your school. We were impressed by your good behaviour and were pleased to hear how much you enjoy school. Your school is a good school.

You make good progress and achieve well. By the time you leave in Year 6 you are reaching standards in reading, mathematics and science which are above average. As you know, some of you are not doing quite as well in writing and your school is focusing on helping you all to improve in this area. We agree that this is a good idea and have asked the school to help you to continue to get better at writing, by making sure that your writing work continues to be levelled termly and that teachers regularly track the progress that you are making.

All of the adults take good care of you and keep you safe and you get on very well together. Some of your teachers write very helpful comments in your books to show you what you have done well and what you need to do next to improve, but you are not always aware of your individual targets and do not use them enough to help improve your work.

Pupils in Year 1 to Year 6 are very lucky to have such a lovely playground. We have asked the school to improve the Reception and Nursery playgrounds so that it can help the children with their physical development.

We also want your headteacher and staff to make sure you are given the chance to look at and understand about how children and adults live in places that are different from where you live.

I hope you continue to work hard and enjoy your lessons.

Yours sincerely

Sue Vale

Lead inspector

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