

Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	109265
Local Authority	South Gloucestershire
Inspection number	337255
Inspection dates	23–24 June 2010
Reporting inspector	Martin Kerly

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	225
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Patrick Auger
Headteacher	David Cahill
Date of previous school inspection	23 May 2007
School address	Hanham Road Bristol BS15 8PX
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They observed 20 lessons and nine teachers, held meetings with pupils, governors and staff, and informally met parents at the start of the day. They observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documentation, including the school's plans, policies, records of progress made by the pupils and 83 completed questionnaires received from parents and carers.

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

- the consistency of progress by pupils, especially in Key Stage 2
- elements of outstanding personal development
- evidence of improvements in teaching and the curriculum and the balance between satisfactory and good practice
- the rigour and effectiveness of checks on the school's work carried out by leaders and managers.

Information about the school

This is an average-sized primary school in which there is an ongoing planned reduction in numbers. Pupils are taught in eight classes, mostly of a single age group. The very large majority of pupils are from White British families. The number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those with statements of special educational needs is average for a school of this size. The school has an International School award. The pre-school provision within the site is not managed by the school's governing body and so not reported upon here.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

This is a satisfactory school. It has a number of good features and is improving in several key aspects but it also has several important elements in need of further improvement. The most notable strength of the school is the pupils' outstanding levels of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school has a strong Catholic ethos. Pupils express their ideas on right and wrong with great humility and sensitivity, often through personal prayer. Their commitment to making a contribution to the school community, wider afield in Kingswood and in charity events is also exceptional. They relish the opportunity to take on leadership roles, for example when planning and leading activities on sports day, and fulfil these very conscientiously and enthusiastically. There is very effective care, guidance and support for all pupils and this contributes to their good personal development, including their good behaviour. Parents and carers appreciate these qualities and the very large majority of those replying to the inspectors' questionnaire confirmed that their children enjoy school.

Pupils make satisfactory progress in their work and their attainment is broadly average by the time they leave the school. It is often higher in mathematics and science than in English. However, the rate of progress is not consistent in all year groups and some pupils are still catching up on their relatively slow progress in the past. There is much good teaching in the school, but variations and inconsistencies mean that overall teaching remains satisfactory. Improved systems for assessing and tracking pupils' progress have been introduced. However, teachers do not always make best use of this information to match activities to the full range of pupils' abilities when planning lessons. Expectations are not always high enough. There have been some significant improvements within the Early Years Foundation Stage, notably with the creation of a designated outdoor area. Nevertheless, the school recognises the need to improve the way assessments are made and collated in order to have a clearer picture of children's starting points and progress within their first year in school. Within the broad and varied curriculum, opportunities for pupils to use information and communication technology are constrained, particularly by the poor access to computers, and this limits their use in work across the curriculum.

The leadership team is committed to making further improvements across the school, especially those relating to pupils' progress and the quality of teaching. The school's capacity for improvement is satisfactory. It carries out a sound range of checks on the school's work that give it a reasonably accurate view of its performance, although this is a little generous at times. It does not always have sufficiently systematic ways of recording routine practices, for example decisions made about future actions, findings made when carrying out checks, or the schedule of previous or planned staff training.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Promote sustained good progress by pupils of all abilities, particularly in English, through ensuring there is good or better teaching in the majority of lessons in all year groups by July 2011 by:
 - ensuring work is matched accurately to the wide range of pupils' abilities
 - there is good pace and levels of challenge in all lessons
 - feedback and marking regularly involve pupils in thinking about next steps in learning and how to improve
 - classroom displays are clearly designed to encourage and promote learning.
- Develop manageable systems for observing, assessing and recording children's learning and progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage by January 2011.
- Ensure pupils have ready access to computers in order to use them to support their learning across the curriculum and establish systems for assessing pupils' progress in the use of information and computer technology by January 2011.
- Strengthen systems to be used by the school's leadership for improving school performance by:
 - increasing the range and rigour of checks on classroom practice and its links to academic progress
 - ensuring there are clear systems for logging and monitoring significant incidents, actions and decisions, including outcomes from key meetings, in order for them to be followed up and for any emerging patterns to be identified and shared with staff and governors
 - establishing a manageable annual programme of checks and balances to monitor all aspects of the school's work to include all staff, where relevant, and the governors, by September 2010.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils enjoy school and are enthusiastic about the range of experiences. Their attendance is above average and almost all arrive punctually at the start of the school day. However, their overall achievement is satisfactory rather than good because a proportion of them continue to play 'catch-up' following earlier relatively slow progress and are not fulfilling their potential. In a significant proportion of lessons, learning remains satisfactory rather than good. Attainment on entry is broadly as expected nationally. Children get off to a sound start in the Early Years Foundation Stage in a welcoming and supportive environment, with some making good progress. Evidence from lessons, pupils' books, work displayed in classrooms, discussions with pupils and the school's much improved assessment records shows that pupils of all abilities make satisfactory progress overall. In individual lessons, they often make good progress as, for example, when enthused and inspired in writing poems in the style of Kit Wright in Year 6, or reflecting on baptisms in Year 4. Attainment by the end of Year 6 fluctuates

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from year to year, but is broadly average, frequently being higher in mathematics and science than in English, especially writing. However, pupils are articulate and reflective, with good speaking and listening skills. These well-developed skills, combined with their involvement and enthusiasm for taking on leadership roles within the school community and their good personal development, prepare them soundly for the next stage of education and adult life. Progress by pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is also satisfactory. In a few lessons, these pupils' learning, along with that of the gifted and talented pupils, slows when work is not sufficiently adapted to meet their specific needs or abilities.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary at times, as seen, for example, in those lessons where they are inspired, during the excellent sports day activities in the morning and in a whole-school assembly. In a few lessons, where work is not well matched to their abilities, they struggle to retain concentration and behaviour becomes only satisfactory. Pupils feel very safe in school and almost all parents and carers replying to the inspectors' questionnaire agree that the school keeps their children safe. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep healthy and are keen to participate in physical exercise. However, there are missed opportunities to strengthen this in the 'brain break' sessions each morning.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
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	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2

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

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

The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
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How effective is the provision?

The school demonstrates a strong and very effective commitment to the well-being of the pupils and there is good care, guidance and support for all pupils in a welcoming and secure environment. This applies throughout each day from the pupils' arrival each morning until their handover to parents and carers at the end of the day. The needs of vulnerable pupils are carefully assessed and good partnerships with parents, carers and external agencies combine to meet these pupils' particular needs, effectively enabling them to progress well, for example in their emotional development. There are good systems for introducing children to school in the Early Years Foundation Stage and the school works effectively and imaginatively to help pupils prepare for the transition to secondary school. The deployment of a learning mentor and play rangers has strengthened the care and support and minimised tensions and anxieties for specific pupils.

Relationships between teachers, teaching assistants and the pupils are good, often allowing for humour and fun to be injected into a lesson, as seen in a lively Spanish session that motivated the pupils. The large majority of teachers manage behaviour very well and establish a calm and purposeful learning atmosphere in lessons. Lessons are usually carefully planned from a broad curriculum designed to ensure skills are taught and practised progressively from one year group to the next. The school is aware that the difficult access to computers restricts the opportunities for pupils to use them routinely in their work. There are regular assessments and checks on pupils' progress, including some new and effective procedures to help teachers accurately gauge standards of work. Some of these are yet to be embedded across the school and are being used with varying degrees of success. Assessments are used well in some classes when planning and setting work but, at times, in other lessons, expectations are not high enough, particularly for the more able pupils. Work, particularly in English, is not matched sufficiently carefully to the needs of different pupils. Teachers diligently mark pupils' work and provide positive and encouraging feedback. There is little evidence, however, that pupils are encouraged to reflect sufficiently on the teachers' comments and on their next steps in learning. There is a good range of enriching experiences within the curriculum. Examples include tending the vegetable garden, visiting the National Gallery and Wigmore Hall in London, a residential visit to rural Somerset and the arrival of the school's own chickens a few days before the inspection.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

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The effectiveness of care, guidance and support

2

How effective are leadership and management?

The leadership team is very effective in promoting pupils' personal development. It recognises that the drive to improve attainment and progress needs an even sharper focus. The headteacher effectively shares responsibility for leading aspects of the school with an extended senior management team whose members fulfil their roles conscientiously. The school has made good progress in establishing comprehensive systems to track pupils' progress and is beginning to use the information well to identify variations and patterns in progress in order to decide where and when to deploy additional support. This is a feature of the clear and effective commitment to promote equal opportunities and eliminate discrimination, as variations in performance by different groups are gradually becoming fewer. All pupils are equally valued and there are frequent opportunities to celebrate their successes. The pupil profile books are an effective way of involving pupils and their parents and carers in this process. Another way of involving parents and carers is through the use of an electronic learning platform to keep them in touch about pupils' work. It already includes a good flow of information including photographs and updates on homework. The school works effectively to promote community cohesion. It is highly effective in responding to the needs and aspirations of its local community, within and beyond the parish, including charitable events, such as a 'rehab' centre, the shoe-box appeal and regular visits to a residential care home. The International School's award reflects the good work in developing links internationally, for example in Spain and India. These include exchange letter writing and themed days such as the Around the World theme day scheduled for later this term. There are frequent overseas visitors to school, such as the group from the United States during the inspection.

The school's capacity to improve further is satisfactory. Observations of lessons and checks on pupils' work are satisfactory, but are relatively infrequent and do not always result in sufficiently clear information about how further improvements can be made. Some of the judgements made by the school of its performance are a little over-generous and tend to reduce the sense of urgency about the need to improve. There is a sound development plan based on findings from monitoring. Subject leaders have a reasonably clear view about their areas and have ideas for how they can be improved. There is little in the way of formal action plans, however, to structure their work and help them check their success. Governors are supportive and meet their legal responsibilities. Several of them visit frequently to keep informed about the school's work but there is little evidence of how the governors challenge the school to do even better or hold it to account. The governors' required safeguarding policies are in place and the school administers them satisfactorily as in, for example, procedures to ensure the safe recruitment of staff. The school is continuing to review ways of improving how its policies are implemented and how they inform staff training.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
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	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

The welcoming and stimulating environment, along with the carefully planned induction programme, enables children to settle quickly into school. They arrive each day full of anticipation about what things they might be doing, and listen very attentively to the teacher and one another. Their welfare is a high priority throughout, with, for example, a very careful handover to parents and carers at the end of the day. The children confidently join in whole-school events such as the sports morning activities and special assemblies. They make satisfactory progress in all areas of learning, with some making good progress, especially in language and mathematical skills. The school recognises it has had difficulties establishing accurate assessments on entry because of changes to its systems for assessing and recording. This makes it more difficult to match expectations to particular children's potential or to fully judge progress over time. Towards the end of the year, the children are attaining the learning goals expected nationally. A proportion are exceeding them, especially in early phonic and writing skills, as seen when they chose to write their own sentences independently and almost completely accurately, in the writing area, which included, 'I like my teacher' and 'I am Happy.' The two part-time teachers plan carefully together, and along with the teaching assistant, they provide a good range of experiences in and out of doors, making good use of the recently established protected and designated outdoor area, with children able to move freely in and out of doors.

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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

A significant minority of the parents and carers replied to the inspectors' questionnaire. Each question gained positive responses from the very large majority of parents and carers replying, particularly in relation to the school keeping their children safe and helping them to lead healthy lifestyles. A very small minority disagreed with each question. There is no clear pattern in these disagreements. Although the large majority agreed overall, the level of support is somewhat muted, with only a relatively small proportion strongly agreeing with each question, except about their children enjoying school and being kept safe. Inspectors agree with this overall level of support.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Our Lady of Lourdes 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 83 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 225 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	52	63	28	34	2	2	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	40	48	42	51	1	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	29	35	43	52	9	11	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	24	29	47	57	10	12	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	30	36	48	58	2	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	28	34	40	48	11	13	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	26	31	52	63	3	3	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)	25	30	41	49	9	11	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	29	35	41	49	10	12	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	24	29	51	61	5	6	2	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	20	24	42	51	10	12	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	30	36	39	47	10	12	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	31	37	43	52	7	8	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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

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 is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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.



30 June 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Primary School, Bristol BS15 8PX

Thank you for helping us when we visited your school. We enjoyed talking to you and seeing some of your work. Yours is a satisfactory school with lots of good things, and some that need to improve. We were particularly impressed by the brilliant way so many of you help out around the school, for example, planning and leading the sports day activities and acting as buddies or school councillors. You make a difference to people's lives in Kingswood and further afield by working hard to organise charity appeals and performing at a local care home for the elderly. Very well done! You are particularly thoughtful and sensitive towards one another, and are very dear about what is right and wrong, and the power of prayer. Many of you told us you feel safe in school. Your parents and carers agree. This is because all the adults in school take good care of you and are always there to help those of you who have a problem from time to time. We are pleased you recognise how important it is to eat healthy food and do lots of exercise.

In lessons, you nearly always behave very well, listen carefully and get on sensibly with your work. This helps you to make progress. Your teachers plan interesting things for you to do and provide lots of special events. Your headteacher and other leaders are thinking hard of ways to improve the school. We have asked them to work together with all the staff and the governors on four things to make it even better. They are:

- help you make even more progress with your work by ensuring teachers always give you work that is not too hard or too easy, and give more time for you to think about what you have learnt and how to improve
- find better ways of checking the progress of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage
- make sure you all have opportunities to use computers in your classrooms and find ways of being clear about how skilled you are at this
- improve the way leaders check up on how well the school is doing and how information is kept for use when planning improved ways of working.

You can help by telling teachers if you think your work is too hard or too easy.

Yours sincerely

Martin Kerly
Lead Inspector

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