

# Our Lady's Catholic Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	123215
<b>Local Authority</b>	Oxfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	340308
<b>Inspection dates</b>	28–29 January 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Keith Sadler

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Boys
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	313
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Bernard Collard
<b>Headteacher</b>	Hilary Webb
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	3 November 2006
<b>School address</b>	Oxford Road Cowley Oxford OX4 2LF
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Inspectors observed teaching by all 11 class teachers and spent about a third of the available time observing learning, visiting 14 lessons. The inspectors held meetings with governors, staff, and groups of pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at a wide range of documentation, which included the school's analysis of pupils' progress, teachers' lesson plans, the school's improvement plan and pupils' work. In addition, the 108 responses of parents' and carers' questionnaires were analysed and their comments taken into account.

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

- pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6 and whether current Year 6 pupils are achieving well
- aspects of teaching that need to be strengthened in order to boost pupils' learning
- the quality of teachers' assessments of pupils' learning
- how much influence school leaders have in improving the school's performance.

## Information about the school

Our Lady's Catholic Primary School is bigger than most primary schools and is heavily oversubscribed. It serves a number of local Catholic parishes with some pupils travelling some distance to the school. Half of the pupils are of White British heritage and an increasing number of pupils are from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds. Currently, over a third of the pupils speak English as an additional language and there are 43 who are at an early stage of learning English. Thirty-six different home languages are spoken by the pupils. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is average. Most of these pupils have moderate or severe learning difficulties. There has been a significant turnover of staff since the previous inspection.

**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

The school provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. It has some strengths. Pupils' personal development is good and supported well by the very positive ethos of care and support that stems from the school's strong Christian foundation. It is a highly caring community where pupils' welfare is a high priority. Relationships are positive and pupils enjoy school and learning and behave well both in lessons and around the school. Parents recognise these strengths and are overwhelmingly supportive. Their highly positive views are summed up by the parent who wrote, 'The atmosphere is caring and nurturing. My children love school and would rather be there than at home even when they are ill.'

Children enter Year 1 with levels of skills and knowledge that are broadly typical for their age. By the time they leave in Year 6, standards are average and pupils' progress and achievements are satisfactory. Rates of progress are improving but are uneven through the school. In mathematics and science, there are too few opportunities for pupils to apply their skills in real life situations. In English, standards of presentation and spelling restrict progress. Provision for the very many pupils who speak English as an additional language is good and these pupils make good progress in their learning.

The quality of teaching is satisfactory with a significant minority that is good. In all classes, teachers manage the pupils well and create a positive and purposeful atmosphere. However, there are inconsistencies in the quality of teachers' questioning that lead to missed opportunities to extend pupils' learning. Furthermore, assessment information is not always used well enough and some lessons lack challenge, particularly for the higher-attaining pupils in writing and science.

There are effective systems in place for checking on the progress that pupils make particularly in English and mathematics. The leadership team is focused well on improving the school but is hampered by being too small. This has resulted in some senior staff having too many responsibilities. In addition, there are some areas, particularly the Early Years Foundation Stage, where there is no designated leader. Furthermore, subject leaders are not sufficiently involved in the checking of provision and progress in their areas, and do not make a full contribution to self-evaluation processes. Nonetheless, good and accurate evaluation systems are in place resulting in the identification of the correct areas of improvement. In consequence, the capacity for further improvement is satisfactory.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment and accelerate pupils' progress by ensuring that:

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- more opportunities are provided for pupils to use and apply mathematical and scientific knowledge in practical situations
- strengthening pupils' presentation and spelling skills.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning by:
  - making use of assessment information to set work that challenges all groups of pupils, especially more able pupils
  - ensuring that teachers' questions are sufficiently probing to deepen pupils' understanding and assess future learning needs.
- Strengthen leadership and management by:
  - improving the role of subject leaders in the checking of provision and progress in their areas of responsibility
  - reducing the range of tasks currently held by senior leaders
  - establishing responsibility for leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****3**

Rates of progress vary through the school. In some lessons, such as a mathematics lesson for upper ability Years 5 and 6 pupils, progress was very good. This was because teaching was focused and questioning extended pupils' understanding so they were able to apply their understanding of mode, mean and median when constructing data tables. Similarly, in a science lesson in Year 1, pupils made good progress. The teacher and teaching assistants were rigorous in ensuring that the pupils' knowledge about types of paper was applied well in an investigation to see which paper was the most suitable for using to wrap a parcel. However, this is not always the case and inspection findings confirm the school's evaluation that learning and progress are satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported appropriately and they make steady progress towards their learning targets. Pupils at an early stage of learning English make good progress, particularly in their speaking and listening skills, because they receive good specialist support.

Pupils enjoy school and respond well to the school's strong promotion of their personal development. They make good progress in their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and respond thoughtfully in assembly. Pupils have a clear understanding of right and wrong and this contributes to their good behaviour. A small number of pupils present challenging behaviour, but this is invariably well managed by staff, with no loss of pace to the lessons. Pupils have a good understanding of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle and they say that they feel safe in school. They delight in taking responsibility, for example in the influential school council and managing the school office during lunchtime. Charity fund raising is important to the pupils and termly fund raising initiatives are organised by them together with staff and parents for those in need, such as currently in Haiti. Pupils' attendance is average and their satisfactory attainment means that they are satisfactorily prepared for their transfer to secondary school.

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*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	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
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

**How effective is the provision?**

Where teaching is good, explanations are clear and pupils know what is expected of them and what steps they have to take in order to make good progress. Good questioning enables teachers to be clear about what subsequent tasks should be. In most lessons, teachers provide interesting activities that engage the pupils. However, the quality of teaching is inconsistent across the school and this leads to slower progress overall. Although teachers' plans identify work to meet pupils' learning needs they are not always sufficiently challenging particularly for the more able pupils.

Opportunities for paired pupil discussion in literacy help to promote speaking and listening skills well, particularly for those who are learning English as an additional language. The strong focus on developing pupils' spelling skills is paying dividends as staff are giving more emphasis to the systematic development of pupils' key writing skills. However, writing tasks are not always sufficiently interesting to stimulate pupils' writing, especially for the boys. Good links are being made across subjects. For example, Year 4 pupils enjoyed finding out about the Second World War by extracting information in the information and communication technology (ICT) suite and taking notes for future

<sup>1</sup> 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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work. There is good provision in the arts. Provision in music is a particular strength and is reflected especially in pupils' excellent singing skills.

Pupils are cared for and supported well. Parents are justifiably confident that their children are well looked after by all the staff. The school works well with external agencies to support pupils when this is required.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

## How effective are leadership and management?

The school's leadership team is committed to school improvement and to ensuring that outcomes for pupils improve over time. The effectiveness of the leadership team in embedding ambition and driving improvement is satisfactory. A much sharper analysis of pupils' progress data means that senior staff are clear about whether each pupil is making sufficient progress. These data are now being used well both to target and support pupils who may be dropping behind, and also to hold teachers to account for their pupils' progress. The school's work in promoting equal opportunity and tackling discrimination is satisfactory. A working party to investigate equality has been formed by staff and parents led by the assistant headteacher and this group have produced an action plan to further assure equality of opportunity. However, as yet, the impact of this has not been evident particularly for the more able pupils. There are robust and good quality safeguarding procedures to protect the pupils and to secure their well-being.

The school has good relationships with parents and carers, most of whom agree that their views are taken into account. The school is active in its local community and makes a contribution to it by, for example, accommodating the very popular pre-school group and also involvement in the Cowley Road Carnival. The school has a suitable understanding of how it contributes to community cohesion locally, although its monitoring of the impact is largely informal. Further afield, the school is twinned with schools in Gambia and the Philippines. Governors support the school well, although their work in providing strategic direction is limited.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3

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<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children's welfare is at the heart of the new staff team's work and they provide a safe and secure environment in which children grow in confidence. Their personal, social and emotional skills develop well. Many parents and carers commented about how quickly their children settled into school because of good quality induction arrangements. There is good support for the many children who enter the school at an early stage of learning English and these children make good progress in their communication skills due to well-tailored provision.

Children's progress is satisfactory. An appropriate balance is provided between activities that are directed by adults and those that are chosen by children. Recent improvements in the outdoor provision have resulted in activities being provided across all areas of learning. Children are provided with a suitable range of activities that engage their interest and questions from adults extend their thinking and language skills well. For example, children enjoyed talking about their digging in the vegetable patch and explained how their vegetables were going to be cooked in the outdoor café. Staff make regular assessments of children's skills and knowledge and these are used suitably to plan the learning activities.

All staff are committed to ensuring that children's needs are fully met. However, progress has slowed since last year because responsibility for leadership and management is not yet deployed. This results in some lack of focus in checking provision and children's progress. However, there are plans to address this issue.



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*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>3</b>
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

Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the work of the school and the progress their children are making. Their responses show that they are pleased that their children are happy, safe and enjoy attending the school. Inspectors agree with these positive views. Almost all say that teaching is good, but inspection findings confirm the school's view that teaching is satisfactory. A very small minority of parents and carers say that the school does not deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour. Inspectors disagree and judge that the school has very effective systems for dealing with misbehaviour and pupils' behaviour is judged to be good.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Our Lady's 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 108 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 313 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	68	63	38	35	2	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	67	62	37	34	1	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	43	40	55	51	6	6	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	43	40	60	56	3	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	61	56	44	41	2	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	41	38	58	54	6	6	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	38	35	63	58	5	5	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)	46	43	48	44	5	5	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	40	37	57	53	5	5	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	43	40	46	43	11	10	2	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	31	29	61	56	7	6	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	51	47	50	46	3	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	59	55	45	42	2	2	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

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	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"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
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.**



2 February 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Our Lady's Catholic Primary School, Oxford OX4 2LF

Thank you very much for the warm welcome you gave the inspectors when we inspected your school. We were impressed with your good behaviour and your friendliness towards each other. All the adults care for you well and make sure that you have a good understanding of how to keep yourselves safe and healthy. We were particularly impressed with your singing in assembly and were delighted to see how much you enjoyed Mass.

Teaching is satisfactory and you make satisfactory progress in your learning. The curriculum is also satisfactory and there are many opportunities for you to make visits and have after-school clubs. Overall, we judged that yours is a satisfactory school. To help your school become even better, we have said that your headteacher and governors should:

- help you to learn quicker in science and mathematics by having more practical tasks to do; in English, we have said that you need to improve your handwriting and spelling skills
- ensure that information about how well you are doing is used to set work which makes everyone think hard, especially those of you capable of reaching the highest standards
- make sure that a member of staff is responsible for checking that everything is as it should be for the Reception children and for your teachers with responsibilities for different subjects to check how well you are doing.

You can help by continuing to try your best and working hard.

Yours sincerely

Keith Sadler

Lead inspector

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