

Our Lady of Walsingham Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	132198
Local Authority	Sefton
Inspection number	341306
Inspection dates	24–25 February 2010
Reporting inspector	Jennifer Platt

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	319
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Paula Boal
Headteacher	Mrs Bernie Shiels
Date of previous school inspection	21 May 2007
School address	Stand Park Avenue Netherton Bootle L30 3SA
Telephone number	0151 525 0395
Fax number	0151 636 3362
Email address	Head.OurLadyOfWalsingham@schools.sefton.gov.uk

Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	24–25 February 2010
Inspection number	341306

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 three additional inspectors. Approximately 70% of the time was spent looking at learning. Inspectors visited 20 lessons and 13 teachers were seen teaching. The inspectors looked at pupils' work, teachers' planning, documentation for safeguarding, the school's assessment and monitoring records, plans for future development and a range of policies. Meetings were held with governors, staff and pupils. In addition, inspectors analysed 61 questionnaires returned by parents and carers, 105 from pupils and 19 from staff.

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

- progress for boys in Key Stage 1 and for the more able pupils throughout the school
- the use of assessment information to track pupils' progress and guide teachers' planning
- the richness of the curriculum and its success in motivating pupils
- the provision for community cohesion and its impact on the school's ethos
- the accuracy of the school's self-evaluation.

Information about the school

This is a larger than average-sized school formed in September 2006 by the amalgamation of two schools. Building is ongoing to unite the school on one site. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is above average. A very low number of pupils are from minority ethnic groups. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. The school holds several awards, including Activemark, National Healthy Schools status and Intermediate Level International School status. Since the last inspection there have been several changes in staff. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have been in place for two years.

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

The school has come a long way since its amalgamation and now provides a good education for all pupils. The headteacher has been the leading player in driving changes through in an excellent way. This has led to effective teaching and good progress. Staff say they feel part of a united team all working together to meet agreed priorities.

Improved monitoring has been crucial to improvement. Staff have an informed picture of pupils' standards and are held accountable for the progress of the pupils in their class. Self-evaluation is detailed and accurate. It is effective in identifying the correct priorities to move the school forward and ensures capacity to improve is good.

The focus has rightly been on improving progress but this has not been at the expense of pupils' enjoyment of school. Pupils flourish because of the good levels of care, guidance and support the school provides. They have an excellent understanding of how to keep themselves safe. Pupils say they feel safe at all times and the older pupils are mature and very sensible. Behaviour is good and pupils play together happily and energetically.

Children start school with a variety of skills which tend to be below the levels usually seen. They make satisfactory progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage but attainment in communication and language, and mathematical development remains below average when they start in Year 1. Progress from Year 1 to Year 6 is good. Attainment is rising and is securely average. Reading is a real strength. In mathematics pupils are not always given enough opportunities to work independently at challenging activities and the more able pupils do not always make enough progress. The rise in overall standards is directly linked to good teaching. Many lessons include a variety of different methods that sustain pupils' learning. They enjoy practical activities and discussing their ideas with others. In the Early Years Foundation Stage it is not always clear what children are to learn. This leads to children enjoying activities but not always gaining new knowledge or skills.

Since the last inspection the school has improved as changes have embedded. Leadership teams have been established and all are involved in monitoring and evaluating the work of the school. Governors are supportive but do not have enough first-hand experience to be involved in setting priorities or challenging decisions.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure the more able pupils always make rapid progress in mathematics by:
 - checking that all aspects of the National Curriculum receive enough attention

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

- including more open-ended activities that encourage pupils to be more independent learners.
- Improve the progress children make in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
 - giving more attention to extending children's learning
 - clarifying the management role and making more use of assessment information in planning activities and deciding future priorities.
- Improve the governance of the school by:
 - involving governors more in making decisions about the school's priorities
 - extending governors' first-hand experiences of the school so that they are better informed to ask questions and challenge decisions.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Most pupils make good progress in lessons because they are keen to learn and want to do well. They take note of the comments teachers make when marking their books and try to improve and to reach their targets. Most give careful attention to presentation but handwriting is not always neat. Achievement is good and from starting points in Year 1 below average pupils make good progress and leave school with broadly average standards. The results of national tests show a clear rising trend at both key stages. A focus for the school has been to increase the number of pupils exceeding the level for their age. The new approaches to teaching letters and sounds and writing have led to more success in English than in mathematics. Boys and girls do equally well and enjoy their time in school. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are identified early and supported effectively. They make good progress and a few make very good progress overcoming their difficulties to attain the level expected for their age.

Pupils behave well and show good care and respect for each other. In the short term, the building work has reduced the amount of space available for play and pupils have adapted quickly and play cooperatively and safely. Pupils recall talks from the police, and road and rail safety officers and use the information to help them stay very safe. The vast array of trophies reflects pupils' enthusiasm for sport and they are keen to keep healthy. The high standard of art on display shows an appreciation of famous artists and pupils celebrate their local culture. They are less informed about life in multicultural society and links with a multi-racial school are being put in place to extend their experiences. Pupils eagerly take on extra responsibilities and politely help visitors by directing them around the school. Pupils are soundly prepared for the next stage of their education.

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	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
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	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	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Classrooms are attractive and result in an atmosphere conducive to good learning. Displays include prompts which pupils refer to for extra help. Time constraints are used effectively so that pupils settle to work well. Occasionally, teachers talk for too long and there is not enough time for pupils to work independently on tasks that are pitched at their level of ability. In the best lessons pupils are active and resources are well prepared to sustain interest. This was the case in a very successful history lesson when role play included a visit from Florence Nightingale followed by having pupils dressed as wounded soldiers and nurses. Pupils will recall this period of history for a long time.

A topic approach to teaching has enhanced the curriculum and the school is looking to extend its successful planning strategy. The school plans carefully for the mixed-age classes to avoid any repetition or omissions of key skills. Additional staffing enables Years 5 and 6 to be taught in smaller groups more closely linked to their ability. This is enabling staff to give more attention to all aspects of the curriculum for mathematics. Extra support is available when assessment shows pupils need extra help and this includes individual tuition. A good range of visits and visitors add interest and extend pupils' horizons. Sport is given a high priority and many pupils are members of teams and clubs. One pupil's comment sums up their views as, 'We go out on trips, do competitions, get treats and it is exciting to come here.'

The good care that pupils receive has been crucial in helping pupils to come together as one school. Parents and carers appreciate the care their children receive. Systems are in place to monitor and improve attendance and these are generally effective although attendance has varied over the short time the school has been open.

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

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching 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?

Since the last inspection much has been done to unite the staff and especially to improve the quality of leadership. Roles are clearly defined and a team approach to the coordination of subjects is appreciated by staff as it offers them opportunities to extend their management skills and professional development. The headteacher leads the way in driving ambition. Rigorous monitoring makes it clear to staff that attainment alone is not enough and that it is the progress of the individual that is paramount. As a result, nobody is complacent. The school has already sought advice to make mathematics more challenging and there are early indications of success. This focus on the individual ensures good equality of opportunity for all pupils.

The school's partnerships with external agencies are good. The very effective leader for pupils with special educational needs and/or learning disabilities diligently seeks out advice to provide the best guidance for staff. Links with parents and carers are similarly effective and they are invited to identify priorities.

The school is an harmonious community and has a good reputation in the local community. Discrimination is not tolerated. Links further afield are developing and the school's International Award recognises pupils' research about different countries. Evaluation of the impact of provision is at an early stage.

Safeguarding is good and pupils say they feel very safe. The local community police are available on site and parents and carers, and pupils make good use of this link to raise any concerns. All safeguarding procedures are met and staff are carefully checked to see they are suitable to work with children.

Governors have attended training and developed a committee approach to managing business. They have been influential in financial management, especially in moving forward the aim to bring the school onto one site. Even so, they do not play a large enough part in daily life, especially in deciding the school's priorities.

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
	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	
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	2
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 enter Nursery with skills at lower levels than are usual for their age. They make satisfactory progress overall but, nevertheless, attainment in the important aspects of communication, language and literacy, and mathematical development is below average by the time they enter Year 1.

A variety of practical activities ensure children enjoy themselves and their creative and physical development is better than their other skills. Outdoors is used well to extend learning as when children improved counting when washing cars. The space is not fully exploited when Nursery and Reception children do not use the space together. Planning identifies a variety of activities covering all of the required areas of learning. However, it is not always clear what children are expected to learn each day. This lack of focus makes it difficult for support staff to interact with children and ask questions to extend their knowledge and skills. Management roles are currently insufficiently defined. As a result, assessment information is not being used effectively in planning or deciding actions to improve the weaker aspects. Individual profiles are being introduced so that parents and carers are kept informed of the progress being made and how they can help at home. Staff form good relationships with children and watch over them carefully. Children are taught to keep safe and welfare requirements are met.

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

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

Views of parents and carers

A very large majority of parents and carers who returned the inspection questionnaires are very satisfied with the education their children receive. This was supported by comments from several adults who spoke to inspectors. A very small minority expressed concerns, including a concern about the way the school deals with bullying and unacceptable behaviour. Inspectors judge that the strategies employed by staff are generally effective. Pupils did not identify any concerns and behaviour overall is good. A small number of parents and carers would like more information on individuals' progress. Good information is provided and the school has an open-door policy for anyone who requires more information. The positive comments are numerous and include, 'The pupils are fine citizens with a good moral outlook.' The inspection team agrees.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Our Lady of Walsingham 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 61 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 319 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	41	67	15	25	2	3	1	2
The school keeps my child safe	42	69	14	23	1	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	31	51	24	39	3	5	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	32	52	21	34	2	3	1	2
The teaching is good at this school	36	59	21	34	1	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	33	54	20	33	4	7	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	30	49	24	39	2	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	41	23	38	4	7	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	34	56	21	34	4	7	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	30	49	22	36	5	8	1	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	26	43	29	48	0	0	1	2
The school is led and managed effectively	33	54	24	39	1	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	39	64	18	30	2	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.



26 February 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Our Lady of Walsingham Catholic Primary School, Bootle, L30 3SA

Thank you so much for the friendly welcome you gave the inspectors when we visited you recently. It was exciting to see the start of the building of your new school as the big chimney disappeared. You behave very sensibly and your behaviour is good as you adapt to sharing a small playground. You are cared for well and you know a great deal about keeping safe. The fantastic number of cups and trophies on display shows how much you enjoy sport and keeping fit and healthy. You go to a good school and make good progress. Well done! You are taught well and your headteacher leads your school very well.

To make your school even better I have asked your headteacher and governors to do the following things.

- To make sure you all make enough progress in mathematics.
- To improve management for the children in the Nursery and Reception classes to help them make better progress by ensuring activities help them to learn new skills and knowledge.
- To involve the governors more in school so that they can play a bigger role in asking questions and making decisions.

You can help by continuing to behave well and listening carefully to your teachers.

I am sure you will all have many wonderful memories of your school and will enjoy watching the new school being built. I wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Jennie Platt

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.