

# Convent of Jesus and Mary RC Infant School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	101544
<b>Local Authority</b>	Brent
<b>Inspection number</b>	355021
<b>Inspection dates</b>	28–29 September 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Susan Vale

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>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	323
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Lourdes Fernandes
<b>Headteacher</b>	Teresa O Higgins
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	22 May 2008
<b>School address</b>	21 Park Avenue London NW2 5AN
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors, one of whom visited specifically to evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding procedures. Inspectors visited 22 lessons during which 12 teachers were observed. Meetings were held with pupils, staff, and a small group of parents and carers, the vice-chair and a foundation governor of the governing body. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at its monitoring and assessment records, safeguarding documents and those relating to health and safety. In addition, 117 questionnaires returned by parents and carers were considered, together with those returned by staff.

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

- If and how the school has managed to maintain high standards.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and for those with English as an additional language.
- How the school has tackled the underachievement of boys.

## Information about the school

The Convent of Jesus and Mary RC Infant School and Nursery serves a community that is socially, economically and culturally very diverse. Over two thirds of the school population, much higher than is typical nationally, is from a wide range of minority ethnic heritages. There are 45 different languages spoken, of which Polish, Portuguese and Konkani are the main ones spoken after English. Many children begin school with little knowledge of English. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is just above the national average, but that of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is lower than average. The major needs identified are for autism. The Early Years Foundation Stage is made up of 60 part-time children in Nursery and three Reception classes. The school has achieved the Healthy School award, Activemark and 'Sing Up'.

**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?**

**1**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**1**

## Main findings

The Convent of Jesus and Mary provides an outstanding education for the pupils in its care. It is held in high regard by parents and carers, who typically comment that 'the staff, teachers and headteacher do a fantastic job at the school. There is a lovely caring family atmosphere, with the Catholic faith at the heart of its teaching'.

Pupils really enjoy learning and feel safe at school. This is reflected in the pupils' enthusiasm for school. When talking to inspectors they said, 'We have to work hard, think hard and produce our best work and teachers demand this of us every day'. From the moment they first start at school either in the Nursery or Reception classes, children respond very well to the high expectations. This results in all pupils, whatever their starting points, making outstanding progress in their learning. Consequently, the standards pupils reach by the end of Year 2 have been consistently well above average over the last three years.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding and stems from the dedication of the staff and the strong sense of teamwork and high expectations amongst all. Teachers know their pupils well and plan effectively to meet the needs of individuals and groups. This personalised learning is a great strength and contributes to pupils' excellent progress. Teaching assistants are well trained, understand their role and also know the pupils in their charge very well. Because teachers and teaching assistants plan together in detail, this accurately targets their support. Thus they make an exemplary contribution to lessons and this is why teaching is outstanding overall.

Teachers use a range of styles to meet the needs of all pupils and this leads to innovative and exciting lessons which pupils enjoy and, as a result, achieve exceptionally well. Assessment and learning are outstanding. They engage pupils so that all understand what their next steps for learning are and it allows teachers to personalise the learning opportunities for their pupils. These, along with an outstanding enriched curriculum, support pupils' learning and progress.

The school's work in partnership with parents, carers and other agencies is excellent and makes a significant contribution to pupils' preparation for their future economic well-being. The wide diversity of cultures and languages represented in the school are welcomed and celebrated so that all feel safe, valued and special.

Drive and determination by the leaders and managers empower all staff to take a shared responsibility for sustained improvement. A hands-on approach to pupils' learning, along with a willingness to adapt and change to differing circumstances, ensures that pupils are at the heart of all that they do. With this in mind, the school has rightly identified the need to further develop the outdoor learning environment for the

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Reception classes.

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

- Develop the outdoor learning environment for the Reception and Nursery classes, by:
  - providing a sheltered area outside that can be accessed in all weathers
  - supporting children's physical and gross motor development
  - further developing role play activities outdoors.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**1**

National assessments for pupils in Year 2 have remained well above average over the last three years. As yet unvalidated data for 2010 show that the proportion of pupils reaching the expected Level 2 in reading, writing and mathematics remains high, with around a third of pupils reaching the higher Level 3 in reading and over a quarter reaching the higher level in writing and mathematics. Due to excellent support and intervention, the school has halted the underachievement of boys. The school's excellent assessment records for last year show that progress across the school continues to rise and pupils' achievement is outstanding.

Pupils' outstanding learning and progress are reflected in the lessons seen during the inspection. This is particularly the case when expectations of them are appropriately high. Across the school, pupils apply themselves diligently and are keen to improve. In an outstanding mathematics lesson in Year 1, pupils made rapid gains in their understanding of three dimensional shapes. They benefited greatly from opportunities to express their ideas verbally. This is of particular pertinence for those pupils new to learning English. In another highly successful small group lesson specifically targeting children identified with special educational needs and/or disabilities, pupils visibly showed their growing confidence and pride in their work as they developed their report writing skills.

Pupils report that they enjoy school and attendance levels are greatly improved since the previous inspection and are now average. Behaviour is good overall. Where on the rare occasion it lapses, staff have consistently high expectations and are clear in their explanations of what is and is not acceptable. An understanding of what constitutes healthy lifestyles, the contribution pupils make to both the school and the wider Catholic community and the outstanding development of their spiritual, moral, social and cultural skills prepare pupils very well for their future economic well-being.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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

### How effective is the provision?

The inspection confirmed the school's view that the quality of teaching is at least good and often outstanding and there is a consistency of approach between classes and year groups. Teachers have very good subject knowledge. Good questioning and, on many occasions, outstanding adult input encourage pupils to explain their ideas and develop their speaking skills, resulting in pupils new to learning English making outstanding progress. For example, in an outstanding literacy lesson seen in Year 2, where pupils were writing an account of their recent trip to the Welsh Harp, all pupils, including the more vulnerable, were extremely well supported by very well planned, specifically-targeted help. This really allows pupils to sustain concentration and focus on their work, resulting in them making outstanding progress in their learning. Classroom assistants are a real asset to this school. They are very well deployed and are actively engaged in planning which enables them to give the support exactly where it is needed. Outstanding assessment procedures feed very well into planning. Regular assessments ensure that any possible underachievement by different groups of pupils are identified and acted upon immediately. For example, in a close analysis of results the school noted some underachievement by boys. Staff reviewed the already excellent curriculum, and developed topics such as work on 'Super Heroes' to encourage the development of boys' writing skills. This excellent intervention has lifted boys' attainment and progress. Pupils are encouraged to assess their own learning, identifying where they need further help and what they have understood. Marking is regular and also identifies clearly the next steps in pupils' learning and what pupils need to do to improve. This self review by the pupils is totally embedded in the assessment procedures for the school and is

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outstanding practice in supporting pupils' learning. Teaching and learning are kept under close review by senior staff and there is an open approach to sharing good practice in lessons which raises the quality of learning and progress made by all groups of pupils across the school.

The curriculum is highly enriched by a planned programme of high-quality art, drama, dance, sport and music, thus enhancing pupils' learning and experiences. The aim of the school is to enable pupils to have a more creative experience than they would get in class. Alongside this, the excellent teaching of basic skills means that pupils are exceptionally well prepared for their future education, and supports the rapid progress they make.

The care, guidance and support provided by the school are of a very high order. Parents and carers are overwhelming in their views of how well the school supports their children. As one parent commented, reflecting the views of many, 'The school creates a caring environment and nurtures a community spirit. Teachers and management clearly care for the building, the children and their progress.' Very good links with a range of agencies and support services, and with the junior school most move onto, extend the excellent care and guidance provided in school.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

**How effective are leadership and management?**

There is a united drive and ambition in the school which promote outstanding progress for all pupils. Pupils are at the heart of all that the school does. High expectations by all staff, along with the setting of ambitious targets, ensure that all pupils achieve to the best of their ability. The management of teaching and learning is excellent. This is because it is distributed effectively amongst senior and middle managers. Leaders and managers expect very high standards and demand accountability of all, although on occasions self evaluation is over modest. It leads to persistently improving teaching, high accountability and a shared responsibility to sustain improvements. This shows why the school has outstanding capacity to improve. The governing body is supportive of the school; planned focused visits and rigorous evaluation of the work of the school enhance what governors offer. All safeguarding requirements are met at the time of the inspection and the school is an harmonious and inclusive community in which each pupil is valued.

The school has developed highly effective engagement with parents and carers; a

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typical comment to inspectors included, 'We are happy that our youngest daughter is valued, cared for and encouraged to reach her potential'. Equality of opportunity is promoted very well; any unevenness between different groups is tackled well, as in the case of the underachievement of boys. Monitoring and evaluation are highly influential in maintaining and improving the school's effectiveness. Languages of the month, currently Polish, ensure that all the different ethnic groups are valued within the school. Community cohesion is well planned to ensure pupils have an awareness not only of their local community but also of other parts of Britain and cultures in other parts of the world. Staff are extremely efficiently deployed and resources are used very well to ensure the school achieves outstanding value for money. Issues identified in the last inspection have been addressed well.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
<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>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>1</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enjoy their time in the Early Years Foundation Stage and they achieve really well. When they first start school, they arrive with widely differing needs and skills. On entry to Nursery overall around half are at expected levels for their age and half are below what is expected particularly in communication, language and literacy. They settle in to both Nursery and the new intake into Reception classes remarkably quickly. This is speeded up and helped by individual slots of 'Getting to Know You', where parents, carers and their children have time to try out activities on offer and get to know their teachers. Consequently, even at this very early stage of the term, many routines are well established. Very good links with families and pre-school settings ensure that children's needs are well known to staff from an early stage, so that children and staff



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can 'hit the ground running'. Excellent planning enables regular access to all areas of learning. There has been an increased emphasis on encouraging boys to write across the whole school, and this remains a priority in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Staff provide a good balance of activities selected by children and those led by adults, and much of the work planned stems from children's own interests. The adults engage well with children, posing questions and making thoughtful suggestions to extend children's understanding. They make excellent regular assessment and observations which build up a helpful picture of each child's achievement and progress. These 'learning journeys' provide an attractive record and accurate view of children's time in Reception. While staff use the outdoor area well, it is tired and tatty and in need of considerable refurbishment. A lack of large climbing or balancing equipment means that children cannot choose to do these activities as part of their daily play. The leaders and managers of the Early Years Foundation Stage are outstanding and have identified what needs to improve. Comprehensive monitoring and planning across classes and age groups help the children to make the outstanding progress that they do. Leaders ensure that the provision is under constant review and all staff have high expectations of what can be achieved. Welfare needs are well met.

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

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

**Views of parents and carers**

All parents and carers who expressed an opinion say that their children enjoy school, are kept safe and are happy with their children's experience at school. Most of those who responded to the questionnaire agree or strongly agree with the other statements included in the consultation. In the main, inspectors endorse these views. Inspection evidence shows that the proportion of good teaching is high. A very small minority felt that more could be done to inform parents and carers about how they can help their children at home and about informing them of forthcoming events. Inspectors felt that parents and carers are kept well informed.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Convent of Jesus and Mary RC Infant 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 117 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 323 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	86	74	30	26	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	76	65	40	34	1	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	61	52	52	44	2	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	57	49	56	48	1	1	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	66	56	46	39	0	0	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	59	50	53	45	2	2	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	65	56	49	42	2	2	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	51	44	50	43	3	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	59	50	50	43	2	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	58	50	42	36	5	4	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	50	43	51	44	5	4	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	64	55	43	37	2	2	2	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	76	65	39	33	1	1	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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 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"> <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.**



29 September 2010

Dear Children

Inspection of Convent of Jesus and Mary RC Infant School, London NW2 5AN

Thank you for welcoming us to your outstanding school and being so helpful and polite to us. I hope that you are still looking after Pippin and Peppa in Nursery and that you are all singing as beautifully as you did when we were in school.

We were impressed to see how much you enjoyed your lessons and you told us you find learning fun because teachers make your lessons interesting. You get on well together and behave well. You know a lot about being safe and healthy. We think that you make outstanding progress in your time at school and that you are extremely well cared for. You make an excellent contribution to both your school community and your Catholic community and are learning a lot about the world in which you live. Your headteacher, other staff and the governing body work extremely well together to make your school a happy and successful place in which to learn.

There is only one area which we have suggested to your school that can be improved and that is the outdoor learning space for the Reception classes.

You can help by continuing to work hard and doing your best at school and making sure that you attend regularly. We wish you every success for the future.

Yours sincerely

Sue Vale

Lead inspector

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