

# Our Lady's Catholic Infant School, Wellingborough

## Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|----------------------|
| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | 122049               |
| <b>Local Authority</b>         | Northamptonshire     |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 359159               |
| <b>Inspection dates</b>        | 23–24 September 2010 |
| <b>Reporting inspector</b>     | David Shepherd       |

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>                      | Infant                                    |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Voluntary aided                           |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 4–7                                       |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed                                     |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 180                                       |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | The governing body                        |
| <b>Chair</b>                               | Deacon Peter Griffin                      |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Mr Clive Robinson                         |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b>  | 30 April 2008                             |
| <b>School address</b>                      | Henshaw Road<br>Wellingborough<br>NN8 2BE |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                    | 01933 224900                              |
| <b>Fax number</b>                          | 01933 224902                              |
| <b>Email address</b>                       | head@ourladys-inf.northants-ecl.gov.uk    |

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|--------------------------|----------------------|
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Twelve lessons were observed and six teachers were seen. Meetings were held with all teachers, the chair of governors and a group of pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at the school improvement plan, policies and procedures for safeguarding and assessment data. Seventy-nine parental questionnaires were received and analysed.

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

- Why has attainment risen in writing and mathematics and not in reading in 2010?
- What is the impact of the Assessing Pupil Progress initiative and target setting on accelerating progress and raising attainment?
- What impact are senior and middle managers having on raising attainment and accelerating progress?

## Information about the school

This is a small school that serves a culturally diverse community. Most pupils are White British. The next largest groups are White European and Black African. The number of pupils speaking English as an additional language is average. The proportion of pupils who leave and join the school during the year other than at the usual times, is lower than in other schools. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is higher than average. These mainly relate to speech, language and communication difficulties. Less than one per cent of pupils have a statement of special educational needs. The Early Years Foundation Stage is made up of two Reception classes. The Reception children attended part-time at the time of the inspection. This was because the inspection took place at the beginning of the year when entry is staggered. The school has achieved the Healthy School's Award and Activemark. There are no significant changes at the school since the last 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?**

**2**

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

**2**

## Main findings

The school provides a good quality education for its pupils. The headteacher and staff focus on driving improvement, particularly in developing the quality of provision for pupils. As a result, pupils' achievement is good and all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Most parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire were supportive of the school, for example in the typical comment made by a parent that "the teachers at Our Lady's work hard and are approachable".

The school provides a safe and caring learning environment for its pupils within its Catholic ethos. Pupils behave well, have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles and make a good contribution to the school and its community. Links with parents are good. The effective partnerships with a range of agencies successfully promote the well-being of pupils. Attendance is average overall but a small group of pupils are persistently absent.

Teaching and learning are good. A key feature of the teaching is the practical activities teachers prepare for pupils, which stimulates learning and enjoyment. Guidance to pupils during lessons does not always correct pupils' misunderstandings. The system of marking is not applied consistently in all classes. As a result, pupils do not always understand what they need to do next to improve their work. The curriculum is good, particularly in art and design which are strengths of the school.

The school has identified some of its strengths and weaknesses. Priorities for improvement have been agreed and these are having a positive impact on pupils' raising attainment and accelerating progress in writing and mathematics in particular. The school recognises that progress in reading did not improve as much as in other subjects last year because it has not been the main priority. Plans are in place to accelerate progress in reading during this current year. Leaders' evaluation of the work of the school has been successful and the monitoring of teaching and learning and pupils' progress across the curriculum has been rigorous. It has helped to raise attainment in all subjects. These factors, together with the track record of improvement during the past three years, indicate that the school has a good capacity to improve further.

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

- Improve teaching and learning further by:
  - providing pupils with guidance during lessons that corrects any misunderstandings
  - ensuring pupils understand what they need to do next to improve their work

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- Work more closely with the parents of pupils who are persistently absent to improve their attendance to average levels by the end of the spring term 2011.

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

**2**

Pupils get on well with each other and enjoy their work. For example, pupils in Year 1 enjoyed using their five senses in a range of activities in the classroom and outdoors. They spoke with enthusiasm at the end of the lesson as they reflected on the sweet smells from outside after the rain and described what they felt when they placed their hands into a 'feely' bag. Pupils in Year 1 are keen to illustrate their work with drawings, paintings and models and work well on these activities independently. In Year 2, pupils enthusiastically found their partners who had the other half of a symmetrical shape in an outdoor activity. They made good progress in learning about symmetry through the use of practical apparatus and materials. Pupils make good progress in all subjects, but their progress in writing and mathematics is especially rapid. This is because of the frequent changes of activity during lessons that keeps pupils' interest in learning.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make quicker progress than their peers in other schools. This is because teaching assistants encourage them to think for themselves and become independent in their learning. Occasionally, a few boys lose their concentration easily when they are not being taught directly by an adult and become too easily distracted. This disturbs the learning of others in the class and they only make satisfactory progress.

Behaviour is good in lessons overall, around the school and at lunchtimes. Pupils feel safe in school. They say they do as the teachers tell them and know that running and fighting are wrong. They know about healthy foods and choose healthy options at lunchtimes. They enjoy physical activity in physical education lessons as well as at playtimes and lunchtimes. Pupils enjoy assemblies and embrace the strong Christian ethos of the school. They think about the main features of characters in stories and express delight at discovering about their surroundings by using their senses. They make a good contribution to the school and the parish. They raise funds for local, national and international charities. The links with a school in Ghana are particularly strong. Funds were raised to help with this school's building programme.

**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 pupils' outcomes*

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

<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

## How effective is the provision?

Teachers make learning intentions clear so that pupils know what they are expected to learn. Lessons are prepared well and include a range of stimulating activities. For example, pupils in Year 1 could choose at the appropriate times to engage in a range of activities that helped them use their senses, some of which were outdoors. As these pupils have just moved into Year 1 from the Reception classes, this range of activities helped to sustain their concentration and motivation. Good examples of teachers asking probing questions were observed both in Year 1 and Year 2 classes. These helped teachers to identify what pupils already knew and what they needed to learn next. Appropriate activities were then accurately pitched at the different levels of the pupils' abilities. For example, in Year 2, more able pupils were asked to draw lines of symmetry on various shapes while less able pupils folded shapes to enable them to see lines of symmetry from the folds in the paper. The teaching of writing is good. Clear developmental targets are included in the front of pupils' writing books. These are successful in helping to keep the focus on accelerating pupils' progress. However, marking does not always indicate to pupils what they need to do next to improve. Sometimes, pupils' misunderstandings are not corrected quickly enough by teachers. This means that these pupils are not always making enough progress during lessons. For example, in one Year 2 lesson, mistakes with inserting lines of symmetry were not corrected quickly enough by the teacher. The result of this was that some pupils continued to make the same mistake throughout the lesson.

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

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The school ensures that the curriculum is matched to the different needs of pupils. This is especially the case for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The curriculum includes teaching about cultures from around the world, for example, art work representing aspects of the life of North American Indians and life in Africa. The work in art and design is evident in displays around the school and is a strength of the curriculum. The school's links with the local parish helps pupils to consider the needs of others. For example, parish links with Ghana have led to fund raising to support the further development of a school.

The school is effective in providing a welcoming environment for pupils and their parents. Pastoral care is effective in supporting the needs of pupils, including for those pupils who are potentially vulnerable. This ensures they make good progress in their personal development. The school provides specific intervention programmes for pupils who are identified as having particular needs, helping them to make good progress. The school works closely with a wide range of external agencies to support pupils with specific needs, such as educational psychologists, social services and health services. Transition arrangements from Reception to Year 1 and from Year 2 to the junior school are good.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

|  |          |
|--|----------|
| <b>The quality of teaching</b>   | <b>2</b> |
| Taking into account:<br>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>2</b> |
| <b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>   | <b>2</b> |

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The morale of the staff is high and they are keen and enthusiastic in their work. The senior team provide good support to the headteacher and help to develop good provision and outcomes for pupils. They share a clear vision and drive for improvement. Self evaluation is generally accurate. Appropriate priorities have been established and good procedures are in place to raise achievement further. These include increasing the focus on reading and on improving attendance.

Senior leaders understand their role in securing improvement in teaching and learning. They have monitored and evaluated teaching and learning and pupils' attainment and progress effectively and this has accelerated progress and improved attainment. Assessment data being used by the school identifies clearly pupils who are making expected levels of progress and those who are improving at a faster rate than this. The progress of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is monitored against their individual targets but not closely enough against national curriculum levels. Governors are supportive of the school and keen for pupils to do well. However, they have not monitored some administrative procedures, such as persistent absentees, well enough. The school complies with safeguarding requirements, through, for example, appropriate policies and vetting procedures to ensure pupils are safe.

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

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The school has positive relationships with parents and carers. It has good links with a range of partners, such as the local parish, outside agencies and local schools. These contribute significantly to pupils' achievements and well-being, particularly those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Leaders and staff promote equality of opportunity and tackle discrimination well. They know that pupils, whatever their needs, make good progress. Community cohesion is good, with good links within the local and international communities in particular. Pupils from different backgrounds get on well with each other and this contributes to the school being a harmonious school community.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

|  |          |
|--|----------|
| <b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>  | <b>2</b> |
| Taking into account:<br>The leadership and management of teaching and learning   | 2        |
| <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>2</b> |
| <b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>  | <b>3</b> |
| <b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>   | <b>2</b> |
| <b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>  | <b>2</b> |

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children start in the Reception classes with skills that are in line with those expected for their ages. They make good progress in their learning and, by the time they start Year 1, their attainment is securely at expected levels in all areas. Attainment is highest in personal, social and emotional development and physical development. It is lowest in writing and calculating but these outcomes are higher than their peers in other schools. Children enjoy the many activities that are prepared for them indoors and outside. They are happy, feel secure and well looked after. They are beginning to understand key aspects of healthy living through washing hands, eating fruit, drinking water and milk and having physical exercise both inside and outside. Provision is extremely varied, stimulating and well organised. There is a good balance between child initiated and teacher led activities. There is a good emphasis on developing children's speaking and listening skills. Staff work effectively as a team because leadership and management are good. Links with parents and carers are good. Induction procedures are effective and children quickly settle into school routines.



**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 Early Years Foundation Stage*

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

## Views of parents and carers

The majority of parents and carers who completed the questionnaire are very supportive of the school. In particular, parents and carers feel their children enjoy school and are kept safe. They consider the teaching is good and meets the needs of their children. Their children lead a healthy lifestyle and parents are happy with their children's overall experience at the school. In written comments, parents and carers find the staff approachable and hard working. Inspectors found no evidence to support the views of the few parents who consider that their child is not making enough progress. Inspectors found that a few pupils exhibit challenging behaviour at times but that, on these occasions, it is dealt with effectively.

## 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 Infant School, Wellingborough 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 79 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 180 pupils registered at the school.

| Statements  | Strongly agree |    | Agree |    | Disagree |    | Strongly disagree |   |
|---|----------------|----|-------|----|----------|----|-------------------|---|
|   | Total          | %  | Total | %  | Total    | %  | Total             | % |
| My child enjoys school  | 56             | 71 | 20    | 25 | 2        | 3  | 0                 | 0 |
| The school keeps my child safe  | 49             | 62 | 28    | 35 | 1        | 1  | 0                 | 0 |
| My school informs me about my child's progress  | 33             | 42 | 32    | 41 | 8        | 10 | 2                 | 3 |
| My child is making enough progress at this school   | 31             | 39 | 36    | 46 | 2        | 3  | 1                 | 1 |
| The teaching is good at this school   | 53             | 67 | 18    | 23 | 2        | 3  | 0                 | 0 |
| The school helps me to support my child's learning  | 40             | 51 | 30    | 38 | 4        | 5  | 1                 | 1 |
| The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle   | 36             | 46 | 38    | 48 | 0        | 0  | 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) | 34             | 43 | 28    | 35 | 5        | 6  | 2                 | 3 |
| The school meets my child's particular needs  | 40             | 51 | 33    | 42 | 2        | 3  | 2                 | 3 |
| The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour  | 38             | 48 | 28    | 35 | 6        | 8  | 3                 | 4 |
| The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns   | 26             | 33 | 38    | 48 | 7        | 9  | 2                 | 3 |
| The school is led and managed effectively   | 39             | 49 | 29    | 37 | 5        | 6  | 2                 | 3 |
| Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school   | 49             | 62 | 23    | 29 | 1        | 1  | 2                 | 3 |

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 all 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 pupils' 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.**



27 September 2010

Dear Children

**Inspection of Our Lady's Catholic Infant School, NN8 2BE**

Thank you for making inspectors so welcome when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed meeting and talking to you about how you feel the school is preparing you for the future. We think that you go to a good school. There are a number of good things about your school that we liked:

- you enjoy school and work hard
- you do especially well in learning how to read, write and calculate with numbers
- your behaviour is good and you get on well with each other
- the Reception classes give you a good start to your schooling
- you like your teachers and teaching assistants and try your best to please them.

We have asked your headteacher, teachers and the governing body to do a number of things to make your school even better. These are to:

- provide you with more help during lessons so that you do not keep making the same mistakes and letting you know what you need to do next to improve your work
- improve the attendance of a few of you who are often absent so that you all attend regularly by the end of the spring term.

Keep working hard.

Yours sincerely

David Shepherd

Lead inspector

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