

Our Lady's RC Primary School Wigan

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106490
Local Authority	Wigan
Inspection number	355962
Inspection dates	24–25 November 2010
Reporting inspector	Robert Pye

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	175
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Kevin Foulkes
Headteacher	John Rushton
Date of previous school inspection	10 June 2008
School address	Holly Road Aspull, Wigan Lancashire WN2 1RU
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors observed 11 lessons taught by seven teachers. They held meetings with members of the governing body, staff and pupils, observed the school's work and looked at documents relating to safeguarding, pupils' progress and attainment, the curriculum, the school's development plan and the way in which the school evaluates its own performance. The views of parents and carers, through 102 returned questionnaires, were analysed and an evaluation of a sample of staff and pupil questionnaire responses made.

- Whether progress is fast enough across the school for boy's in English.
- How well teachers use assessment data to ensure all pupils are making equal progress.
- How effectively the curriculum has been adapted to engage pupils' interests and promote learning.
- How effective leaders and managers, at all levels, including governors are at driving improvements.

Information about the school

This is a smaller than average size primary school with significantly more boys than girls. Most pupils are of White British heritage. Very few speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is also below average. The headteacher was appointed in September 2009. The school has the Healthy School status, the Activemark award and the Eco Green Flag award.

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

2

Main findings

This is a satisfactory, but rapidly improving school. The school promotes a very caring and inclusive environment. Pupils are nurtured well and thrive in their personal development. Pupils make an outstanding contribution to their school and wider community and show an excellent understanding of what is needed to lead healthy lifestyles and stay safe. Adults are very attentive to pupils' personal needs and contribute to the care, guidance and support provided. As a result all pupils, including, the most vulnerable and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, display very high levels of self-esteem and confidence and develop successful personal qualities. Pupils' enjoyment of school is reflected in their consistently high levels of attendance. The good partnerships between home and school contribute well to pupils' learning and all round development. Comments such as, 'My child is happy and staff are very friendly and dedicated' reflect the very positive views about the school of most parents and carers.

Children enter the school with skills that are overall average for their age, but below average in reading and writing. They get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage where they make good progress. They follow a stimulating curriculum inside the classroom where they are taught well. Staff plan regular activities outdoors but the outdoor learning area is not fully developed or easily accessible for children to continually engage in planned, purposeful play. In Key Stages 1 and 2 pupils make satisfactory progress overall by the end of Year 6 and their attainment is average. A decline in attainment and progress which began before the last inspection has now been halted. The headteacher has been instrumental in this through the rigorous monitoring and evaluation of learning leading to raised expectations and improved attitudes of the pupils. Action taken by the leadership has led to improvements in attainment and progress, particularly in mathematics. The unvalidated test results for Key Stage 2 in 2010 indicate good progress and above average attainment in mathematics. Progress in English also improved and was satisfactory with average attainment. However, writing remains weak. The school has rightly identified this as an area for improvement, giving it the highest priority.

Teaching is satisfactory and improving quickly due to the close monitoring by senior leaders. Good aspects were seen, such as the 'Steps to success' which help pupils assess their learning, behaviour and relationships. In the best lessons, the pace of learning is brisk; activities are varied and interesting and matched to the pupils' abilities. However, this good practice has yet to be fully shared consistently across the school, and in English and particularly writing is not always secure. The good quality curriculum engages pupils' interest well and is enhanced by a wide range of extra-curricular and enrichment activities such as the business enterprise project. Learning is supported further by good partnerships that develop good workplace and other skills that will contribute towards their future economic well being. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding.

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Self evaluation is effective. The monitoring of pupils' progress is increasingly robust and teachers are now held more to account for the progress of pupils in their class. Any underachievement is acted upon quickly to get pupils back on track. Senior leaders are contributing well to improving the quality of teaching and monitoring of pupils' progress. Members of the governing body support the school well, particularly in ensuring good safeguarding of pupils and community cohesion. The improvements seen in pupils' achievement together with specific efforts initiated to improve writing indicate that the school has a good capacity to improve further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment and improve progress in English and particularly writing by:
 - increasing pupils' ability to write at length
 - widening the range of vocabulary to add more interest to their writing work
 - improving pupils' presentation skills.
- Improve the quality and consistency of teaching by:
 - setting clearer expectations about what pupils can achieve in lessons
 - using marking and feedback more rigorously to help pupils take next steps in their learning
 - ensuring work is always matched to pupils' ability
 - sharing existing good practice.
- Improve opportunities for learning outdoors in the Early Years Foundation Stage by seeking ways to provide continuous provision.
- Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils behave well, and mature into polite, thoughtful and considerate young people. Pupils enjoy learning particularly when lessons involve practical elements. For instance, in a Year 6 English lesson, pupils enjoyed working with partners in the hall to explore their feelings. They worked well, taking turns and listening attentively to each other's answers, creating ideas and identifying vocabulary which could be applied to writing. Discussion with pupils and scrutiny of their books show that overall progress is satisfactory over time. In some lessons, pupils' individual learning needs are not consistently met and, at these times, progress is not as rapid as it could be, especially in English and particularly writing. There are good opportunities to develop speaking and listening skills but at times pupils' range of vocabulary is limited. Expectations of what pupils' can achieve in lessons vary. This means the amount of work pupils complete is not always sufficient to accelerate their learning. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those at an early stage of learning to speak English also make satisfactory progress. Their work with specialist support staff and in small groups with teaching assistant support develops their self-esteem effectively and has a positive impact on their wider learning.

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Pupils develop an excellent understanding of safety. They say behaviour is good and that incidents of bullying and racism are rare. Pupils have an excellent understanding of why they need to lead a healthy lifestyle and participate in a wide range of sporting opportunities. A programme to develop the social and emotional aspects of learning makes a significant contribution to their emotional well being. Pupils have frequent opportunities to reflect on issues and consider the needs of others. Pupils say they value the responsibilities they have to contribute to the school. They take on roles such as school and ECO councillors with exceptional enthusiasm.

The business enterprise project for pupils in Year 6, involving them carrying out job interviews, appointing directors and making and selling products, enables them to develop good workplace skills and prepares them well for the future. Meaningful assemblies promote a joy in singing together and accelerate pupils' understanding and reflection on right and wrong actions. Pupils meet and work along side pupils from different schools and have opportunities to reflect through themed weeks about other cultures in the world. Attendance is monitored rigorously and ensures low levels of absence.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

¹ 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?

Teaching is satisfactory overall. This is because there are inconsistencies across the school and the good progress seen in some lessons is not yet always evident in pupils' books or in the schools' detailed tracking data. Across all classes the common strengths include

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good relationships that encourage confidence, the promotion of enquiry and shared opinions. In the best lessons, knowledgeable teaching, perceptive questioning and work that is well matched to pupils' abilities all contribute to good quality learning. However, this is variable throughout the school, partly because teachers are not using assessment data well enough to plan pupils' next steps in learning. Pupils' work is marked regularly but not always with the purpose of providing pupils with specific direction on how to improve.

The good curriculum meets pupils' needs and has a number of strengths that have been maintained since the last inspection. For instance a good range of enrichment activities include a very wide range of after-school clubs, extra curricular sports that help pupils develop self esteem and confidence, whilst, 'Demon Tables', help promote basic numeracy skills. Good use is made of information and communication technology (ICT) to enrich many areas of the curriculum. Additional adults provide a range of intervention strategies to help meet the learning needs of pupils of all abilities.

Pastoral care for all pupils and their families is given a high priority. Most parents and carers speak positively about the care and support their children receive from all adults, and how this contributes well to their children's development. The, 'Rainbow Nurture Room' typifies the school's sensitive well thought out use of resources enabling more vulnerable pupils to feel safe and grow in self-confidence so they can access their learning. Outstanding work with external agencies takes place ensuring there is continuity in care for pupils. Arrangements to prepare pupils for their next stage of education are well planned and help ensure a smooth transition.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher in a relatively short period of time, has put in place a rigorous system of tracking pupil progress. This, together with other school improvement strategies has brought a rapid reversal of the decline in pupils' achievement. Staff who completed inspection questionnaires unanimously agreed that the school is well led, they feel involved, their work is valued and their professional development needs are met. The governing body is well informed and involved in evaluating the school's strengths and areas for development. It has been instrumental in supporting a cohesive local community. Safeguarding requirements are fully met and meticulous attention is paid to child protection. Robust risk assessments ensure that learning areas within school are safe and secure.

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Leaders' at all levels show commitment and enthusiasm for continuous improvement. Subject leaders are taking wider ownership of developments through greater involvement in pupil progress meetings and target setting. The school works effectively with a number of partners to promote pupils' learning and well-being, both in the school and the community. For example, the school is working with two other schools to develop the curriculum further. This is leading to many varied opportunities for pupils to work and perform with others. The school has good communication systems for involving parents in their child's work and wider life of the school. Parents hold mostly positive views about the school and feel it is well led and managed. Rigorous monitoring ensures that equality of opportunity is championed and attainment gaps between groups are closing rapidly. A strong feature of the school is the inclusion of a high number of pupils in sports tournaments allowing many to experience success.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

Good provision in Reception leads to children making good progress and they make a good start to early reading and writing. As a result, by the end of Reception children are well prepared for the transition into Year 1. There is a good balance between adult-led and child-initiated activities and this leads to children developing their independence and learning skills through play and exploration. The indoor provision is used as effectively and provides a bright stimulating learning environment. There is no direct access to the outdoors and consequently staff are unable to plan for continuous outdoor play. They compensate well for this by making good use of the Pirate Ship, an outdoor resource which allows for some outdoor learning to take place.

Good care and support for children and the development of strong relationships with parents and carers ensure that children settle well, are happy and clearly grow in

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confidence and self-esteem. Children share toast and drinks at talking tables, sharing their experiences and feeling of belonging to the school. Children's individual developmental and learning needs are carefully assessed and their progress records are good. Children with additional learning and developmental needs are identified quickly and catered for well. Leadership and management are good. Adults work well as a team and foster the motivation, enjoyment and interest shown by children as they move into Key Stage 1.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
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 parents and carers who returned inspection questionnaires were extremely positive about the school and what it provides for their children. A very small minority of parents felt progress was not good enough and that the school did not deal with behaviour well, keep them informed or provide help to support learning at home. Inspectors found that pupils' behaviour was good during the inspection. They observed no incidents of poor behaviour and pupils say that if this does occur, staff deal with it quickly and fairly. Inspectors found that overall pupils made satisfactory but improving progress and there are good communication systems within school to keep parents informed about progress and support learning at home.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Our Lady's RC Primary School Wigan 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 102 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 175 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	59	58	40	39	3	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	77	75	23	23	1	1	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	46	45	47	46	7	7	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	52	51	43	42	6	6	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	58	57	39	38	2	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	54	53	42	41	4	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	60	59	41	40	1	1	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)	44	43	51	50	3	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	47	46	48	47	5	5	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	50	49	43	42	4	4	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	44	43	51	50	2	2	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	57	56	38	37	4	4	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	61	60	38	37	3	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 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). 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"> ■ 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 pupils' 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 November 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Our Lady's RC Primary School Wigan, WN2 1RU

On behalf of the inspection team, may I tell you how much we enjoyed being in your school recently. It was a great pleasure and privilege to work with you and the staff of the school. We were delighted when many of you talked freely with us and we were impressed by your courtesy and the help you provided. We have judged your school to be satisfactory, but we also recognise its strengths.

What we particularly liked about your school was:

- the good progress made by children in Reception
- the improved results in the 2010 tests, especially in maths
- your excellent knowledge and understanding of the need to lead healthy and safe lives
- your improving attitudes to work and school
- the important role the school council and eco council plays in the school on your behalf
- the good curriculum
- the exceptional care adults take making sure you feel safe and secure
- the good work that the headteacher and staff are doing to ensure that you are treated equally and fairly, benefit from partnerships and ensure that your parents and carers are supported.

In order to improve your school further we have asked your teachers to speed up your progress, particularly in English and particularly writing. You can be a great help in this by continuing always to do your best work and by following closely the guidance of your teachers. For children in Reception we would like your teachers to give you more opportunity to learn outdoors.

The inspection team wishes you well for the future.

Yours sincerely,

Robert Pye

Lead Inspector

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