

# Our Lady's Catholic Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	103449
<b>Local Authority</b>	Birmingham
<b>Inspection number</b>	355383
<b>Inspection dates</b>	24–25 May 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	David Shears

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	192
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Pauline Egan
<b>Headteacher</b>	Damian Ward
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	21 May 2008
<b>School address</b>	East Meadway Tile Cross, Birmingham B33 0AU
<b>Telephone number</b>	0121 464 4459
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 12 lessons taught by six different teachers, and held meetings with representatives of the governing body, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at policies, planning documentation, assessment data and pupils' work. They analysed the questionnaires returned by 41 parents and carers, nine members of staff and 72 pupils.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Inspectors evaluated the quality of teaching and learning and whether it consistently helps all pupils, including the more-able, to make good progress.
- They considered the development of core skills within the curriculum, particularly in literacy and numeracy.
- Inspectors assessed the effectiveness of the leaders and managers in bringing about improvements to ensure better progress.
- They explored the quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage, especially for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and the more-able.

## Information about the school

Our Lady's is a smaller-than-average sized primary school. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage, although there are an increasing number of pupils from a wide range of different minority ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is lower than the national average; their needs are mainly moderate learning difficulties. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is higher than the national average, as is the proportion of those known to be eligible for free school meals. The school has a breakfast club for pupils at the school, which is run by the governing body. The school has achieved Healthy Schools status.

**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

Our Lady's Catholic Primary School has made good progress since the last inspection when its overall effectiveness was satisfactory. In particular, the quality of teaching and learning has improved so that it is now good overall.

The school's leaders have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development and these are clearly identified in the school improvement plan. The headteacher has a keen sense of direction and this is communicated well to staff. The results of assessments have been analysed and initiatives put in place in areas that needed improvement. Meetings are held to discuss the progress of all pupils during the year and those at risk of underachievement are identified. Interventions are put in place to help these pupils and the vast majority make good progress as a result. The school has worked hard at improving the personal development of pupils, particularly their contribution to the school and wider community and their understanding of safe practices and healthy lifestyles. These are all now good. Through effective self-evaluation the school demonstrates a good capacity to improve further.

Teachers plan engaging activities that capture pupils' imagination and encourage them to want to learn. Consequently, the vast majority of pupils work hard and have good attitudes in lessons. The progress they make has been improving so that it is now good, particularly in their literacy skills, although their mathematical development is not as strong. Although activities in mathematics are planned to meet the needs of all pupils, they are not always fully effective because they are not consistently based on developing pupils' skills, particularly in problem solving. There are also not enough opportunities to practise these skills within the wider curriculum. Teachers address misconceptions as the pupils are learning and their marking encourages pupils well. However, marking does not always tell pupils what they need to do to improve, particularly in mathematics. Nevertheless, pupils from Year 2 to Year 6 have targets both in literacy and numeracy that are securely based on the level at which they are working.

The school has recognised that the quality of teaching and learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage is not as strong as it is in Years 1 to 6. This is because there has been a lack of expertise to drive forward improvements this year. While pupils are safe and happy and enjoy their learning, ongoing assessments are not used carefully enough to guide planning and improve progress further. This is because not enough structured activities are planned to challenge children sufficiently. Consequently, children make satisfactory progress towards the early learning goals.

The care of pupils is a significant strength of the school. Pupils are treated as individuals and good quality support given to those whose circumstances may make them vulnerable. This results in pupils feeling safe and secure within a caring environment.

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Leaders ensure that the school's work is monitored, although monitoring is not consistently focused on the school's identified priorities. This makes it difficult for the school to demonstrate how effectively it is making improvements in these areas. Subject leaders are keen to promote their subjects and monitor the provision well, although they are not fully involved in analysing and using progress and attainment data to drive further improvement. Attendance, although average currently, is improving and the levels of persistent absence are reducing, demonstrating the school's drive to make further improvements.

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

- Raise attainment by the end of Year 6 so that it is above the national average in English and mathematics, improving, in particular, the progress in mathematics by ensuring that:
  - activities in lessons consistently challenge pupils in terms of their skill development
  - mathematical skills are used and applied through the wider curriculum
  - marking always tells pupils the next steps in their learning.
- Improve the provision and outcomes in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
  - ensuring that planning gives more opportunities for pupils to engage in learning, particularly in the outdoor environment
  - further developing the use of ongoing assessment to inform the next steps in learning for all children.
- Improve the effectiveness of leaders and managers by:
  - involving the subjects leaders more in using progress and attainment data to drive improvements in their areas
  - ensuring that monitoring is closely aligned to the school's priorities
  - further reducing persistent absence by working more closely with the remaining few families for whom attendance is an issue.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**2**

Children begin school with levels of attainment that are generally below those that are expected nationally. They make sound progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage, entering Year 1 with attainment that is below average. In Years 1 to 6 they make good progress overall, leaving with attainment that is broadly average, including the current pupils in Year 6. However, due to the recent improvements in teaching and learning, the attainment of pupils in Years 4 and 5 is already on track to be above average. The progress of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities mirrors that of their peers and they make good progress overall. For example, in one lesson looking at fractions, less-able pupils were supported well by exploring how to halve quantities in practical ways, learning about sharing equally. More-able pupils are now making good progress too. In another lesson more-able pupils were further challenged during the teaching part of the lesson by having challenging extension activities giving time for other

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pupils to complete their tasks. Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those with English as an additional language all make good progress overall.

The vast majority of pupils behave well, both in lessons and on the playground. Where there are occasional issues, these are managed well. The good care pupils receive is reflected back in their care for others, for example, when they take on particular roles such as being play leaders at lunchtime. This care extends into the community, such as singing for older people and donating harvest goods to the local community. They have written to the local council about issues important to them, such as the closing of the local swimming pool and library. They have a good understanding of how to keep healthy both in terms of diet and exercise. This has resulted in the school achieving Healthy Schools status. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is good. In particular there is a strong ethos, based on Christian values, that is demonstrated through their spiritual development. In one lesson the use of music and a candle promoted a sense of awe and wonder that helped pupils to reflect in a calm and focused way.

*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>	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
<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?

Pupils are now making good progress because teachers plan interesting and relevant activities to engage them. Interactive whiteboards are used well to enhance teaching. For example, the introduction to one lesson was a humorous scenario about a character

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mixing up the weather, leading to a snowman sunbathing. This led to a lesson about investigating temperature. Teachers have good subject knowledge, and concepts are taught methodically to ensure that all pupils understand their work well, although occasionally this can lead to pupils listening for too long. Teachers make lesson objectives clear to pupils so that they know what they have to do to be successful in their learning. Teaching assistants are used well to support pupils of all abilities. The pace of learning in most lessons observed was good and pupils were able to work independently for the majority of the time. At the end of lessons teachers consolidated the learning and often added an extra challenge. There was evidence of pupils evaluating their own learning in lessons and in books.

The major strength of the curriculum is in the exciting enrichment activities that pupils enjoy. Trips out help to stimulate their thinking at the beginning of a new topic and there are opportunities for pupils to participate in residential visits. The school invests money and time for pupils to learn new skills such as having brass lessons for all pupils in Y4 and Y5 and some elective Y6, and learning both French and German. Pupils showing a particular talent in a subject are given extra support, such as free coaching in football. There is a wide variety of extra-curricular clubs ranging from some circus skills to judo and these are much enjoyed by many children. Good cross-curricular links, such as a project on Bollywood Visual Literacy, had a significant impact on the progress of pupils' writing skills. In lessons seen, pupils were making links between subjects. For example, in a lesson about venn diagrams pupils were distinguishing between consonants and vowels and in a lesson about the tessellation of shapes they had the opportunity to explore the artwork of Escher. However, regular opportunities to practise numeracy skills across other subjects have not been developed sufficiently and although there are examples of information and communication technology links, the planning for these is not robust enough.

Pupils feel well supported at all stages in their school life from when they start in the Reception class through to their preparation for transfer to their chosen secondary school. In particular, pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable are well supported and good use is made of outside agencies to enable them to make good progress, both academically and in their personal development. The breakfast club is well run and ensures that pupils are safe and happy. There is a high take-up and pupils eat a healthy breakfast. They enjoy the activities that are planned for them. While attendance is still broadly average, it is improving because the school effectively monitors absence, rigorously follows this up with parents and carers and encourages good attendance through rewards for pupils, including certificates and prizes.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
<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>

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## **How effective are leadership and management?**

Senior leaders, led by the headteacher, have a strong sense of direction and are able to identify clearly what needs to be done to make further improvements to the school. Assessment data is collected regularly and analysed well to ensure that all groups of pupils make good progress. This ensures equality of opportunity in learning with no discrimination. Subject leaders are enthusiastic and lead staff meetings to update and support staff with curricular developments, although their remit does not extend sufficiently to their involvement in the assessment of pupils in their subjects. The governing body is very supportive of the school and is increasingly offering higher levels of challenge in some areas, such as attendance. Governors, along with the school staff, have good links with parents and carers, who are very supportive of the school. Good partnerships with other agencies enable the school to give more support to pupils. The school works with the church, the Education Action Zone, educational professionals and other schools, including the local special school, with whom they are sharing a residential visit.

Safeguarding arrangements are robust in all areas. There are good procedures to ensure the safety of pupils, both on site and when on school trips. The quality of care in first aid and for pupils with specific medical needs is a particular strength. The school has conducted an audit for community cohesion and an action plan is in place to improve this. Pupils from different backgrounds get on well together and there are good links with the local community. There are many opportunities for pupils to learn about other cultures through the mix that already exists within the school. These are enhanced by visitors to the school, engaging pupils in cultural activities such as Indian dance. The school has international links, such as one with Australia and another in Thailand, where pupils support the Pattaya Orphanage. Plans are in place to forge links with another school within the United Kingdom which has a different context.



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*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: 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>2</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>2</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 settle quickly into the Early Years Foundation Stage. This is because there are very good arrangements for their introduction to school life, which include home visits before they start. Good relationships with parents and carers are forged and routines for children in school are quickly established. Children are cared for well and enjoy coming to school. They have a good rapport both with the class teacher and teaching assistant. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are identified early and appropriate support is given to ensure that they make satisfactory progress, along with their peers. The classroom is bright and interesting and shows evidence of learning. Planning ensures that there is a balance of child-initiated and adult-led activities but there are missed opportunities for staff to interact with children and extend their learning and this limits their progress, particularly for the more-able. Teaching is satisfactory overall because the activities are not sufficiently focused to engage pupils in learning, particularly outdoors. Consequently there are not enough opportunities for staff to observe and record assessments about specific aspects of their learning. The leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are satisfactory. Although summative assessments at the end of each term are collated these are not being used well enough to tackle areas of development within the classroom.

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

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

## Views of parents and carers

The very large majority of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire were positive in their views about the school. Almost all agreed that their children make enough progress and that they were well informed of this. A similar proportion agreed that the school helped their children to have a healthy lifestyle and that their children enjoyed school. A few parents and carers were concerned about receiving enough support to help their children learn. Inspectors found that there are ways the school does this such as through 'inspire workshops' where parents and carers have the opportunity to work alongside their child in learning, helping them to understand how to help their child improve. A few parents and carers were concerned about the needs of their particular child being met. Inspectors found that the school was active in meeting the personal needs of pupils through its good care, and is rigorous in identifying pupils at risk of underachievement, giving them extra support so that they do not fall behind in their learning.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Our Lady's Catholic Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 41 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 192 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	22	54	18	44	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	21	51	17	41	3	7	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	13	32	27	66	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	15	37	25	61	0	0	1	2
The teaching is good at this school	17	41	20	49	3	7	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	13	32	23	56	4	10	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	12	29	28	68	1	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)	10	24	26	63	3	7	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	11	27	25	61	4	10	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	12	29	24	59	2	5	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	15	37	22	54	4	10	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	15	37	21	51	2	5	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	17	41	20	49	2	5	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	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 2010 to 31 December 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

## 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.**



26 May 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Our Lady's Catholic Primary School, Birmingham B33 0AU**

Thank you for the welcome that we received when we visited your school recently. It was lovely to meet you all and find out about your school. We agree with you that you go to a good school.

You told us that that you enjoy coming to school and feel safe when you are there. You have a good understanding of how to keep yourselves safe and know how to lead a healthy life. You also told us about the wide range of clubs that you can attend and we know lots of you enjoy these. We saw that you have good relationships with your teachers and that they plan interesting activities for you to take part in. We noticed how well teaching assistants gave extra help or challenge to those who needed it. All this helps you to make good progress.

We have asked your teachers to check that you always make good progress, particularly in mathematics, by making sure your activities help you to learn new skills that you can practise in other subjects. We have also asked that teachers always tell you how you can improve your work when they mark it. We have also asked for the youngest children to make better progress and for the senior leaders to keep checking that you are doing the best that you can. You can help by telling your teachers if you find the work too easy.

Finally, we have asked the school to make sure that you all come to school regularly. All of you can help by telling your parents and carers how important it is to come to school every day, when you are not too ill.

Thank you again for a lovely two days. We wish you all the very best in your future lives.

Yours sincerely

David Shears

Lead inspector

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