

Our Lady of the Rosary Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101456
Local Authority	Bexley
Inspection number	355001
Inspection dates	6–7 July 2011
Reporting inspector	Angela Konarzewski

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	475
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Heather Mash
Headteacher	John Murphy
Date of previous school inspection	12 December 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The inspectors observed 26 lessons or parts of lessons. They saw 15 teachers and held meetings with groups of pupils, members of the governing body, parents and carers, and staff. They observed the school's work, and looked at work in pupils' books, tracking data showing pupils' attainment and the progress they are making, the school's development plans and the 232 responses to the questionnaires received from parents and carers.

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

- Action taken to reverse the fall in attainment in mathematics in Key Stage 2 and impact on pupils' current achievement.
- Achievement of groups whose circumstances make them vulnerable and measures taken to support their learning.
- Action taken to ensure that higher-attaining pupils make at least expected progress across Key Stage 2 in English and mathematics.
- Procedures for assessing pupils' progress and how they inform planning so that provision is adapted to meet the needs of individuals and groups.
- The impact of school development planning on school improvement to determine the rigour with which leaders and managers drive school improvement.

Information about the school

This is a larger-than-average primary school. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities at the school is lower than average, as is the proportion of pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds. A small number of pupils speak English as an additional language, although no pupils are at an early stage of learning to speak English. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is also below the national average. The school operates and manages a breakfast club and an after-school club. The Early Years Foundation Stage is made up of Nursery and Reception class provision. The school holds a number of awards including the Quality Mark, the Certificate of implementation of Key Stage 2 Modern Foreign Languages and the Green Council bronze medal.

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 of the Rosary is a good school where pupils develop confidence and independence and behave well. In the words of one child, 'We are like one big family... We respect the teachers and they respect us.' The school provides a warm, welcoming environment for pupils, parents and carers and visitors. The strong Catholic ethos permeates all aspects of the life of the school and makes a significant contribution to the personal development and well-being of the pupils. Relationships are positive and behaviour is good. In some lessons it is outstanding. Pupils feel safe in school and have an excellent understanding of how to live a healthy lifestyle. They are proud of their community and many take on additional responsibilities within the school such as helping to design their woodland play area and being fruit monitors.

As a result of well-focused actions, progress is particularly good in mathematics, as it is in reading, where pupils' attainment is significantly above the national average. The progress of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, and of pupils who speak English as an additional language, is also good because they are well supported. Although attainment in reading is exceptionally high for all groups of pupils, the improvements in writing, resulting from actions taken last year, have not been fully sustained. In particular, boys of average ability and above do not always make as much progress as they should with their writing. This is partly because pupils have insufficient opportunities to write at length across a range of subjects. In addition tasks set are not always challenging enough.

The quality of teaching is good throughout the school, enabling pupils to make good gains in their learning. Teachers have good subject knowledge and engage pupils well through appropriate questioning to challenge them. The progress of pupils is regularly checked, but actions are not always taken quickly enough to ensure that pupils, especially the more able, are challenged sufficiently to be able to make good progress. Marking is not used consistently well to inform pupils about how they can improve their work, particularly in writing.

Provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good because they are well looked after and they have a wide variety of opportunities to enable them to make good progress across all areas of learning. Their ideas are valued, and often utilised well within curriculum themes, as in the recent pirate theme.

Partnerships with parents and carers are outstanding, as is reflected in the highly positive response to the questionnaires. The headteacher and senior leaders are committed to improving the learning and progress of all pupils and to promoting their welfare.

School improvement planning is not always sharply focused enough as it does not consistently provide the timescale allowed for improvements to take place nor does it always specify success criteria. This makes it difficult, for governors in particular, to always

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hold the school enough to account for its performance because they have insufficient criteria to measure improvements against. Nevertheless, as a result of its shared vision for school improvement and accurate self-evaluation, together with the outstanding support of parents and carers, the school is well placed to improve further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the progress made by pupils in writing by:
 - ensuring that activities are well matched to all pupils' abilities, particular those of the more able
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to write at length across a range of subjects
 - ensuring marking gives pupils more precise guidance on how they can improve their work.
- Improve the quality of development planning by:
 - ensuring that a timescale for improvement is clearly indicated on all plans
 - providing measurable success criteria against which to monitor and evaluate the success of actions taken
 - sharpening the skills of leaders and managers at all levels in monitoring and evaluating the work of the school.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Children start the Nursery with skills and knowledge that are broadly in line with those expected for their age. They make good progress across the school, so that by the time they leave Year 6, pupils' attainment is above the national average in English and mathematics. Progress for all groups is particularly good in mathematics. During the inspection pupils in Year 4 were locating positions on a map using coordinates. They worked with enthusiasm and confidence as the tasks they were given were well matched to their needs. For example, the more-able pupils were confidently working in all four quadrants. In addition, those who find mathematics difficult are provided with access to a computer program at home and this has had a significant impact on their progress. In English pupils often make good progress in lessons. Year 6 pupils made good progress when they analysed the language of performance poems. They showed clear understanding and appreciation of the imagery used, such as alliteration and onomatopoeia. Nevertheless, more-able girls, and boys of average ability and above, sometimes make less progress than they should, particularly in writing. This is because the work is not always challenging enough for them. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress with their learning because they benefit from targeted support from additional adults. The few pupils who speak English as an additional language also make good progress as a result of the specific support they receive.

Most pupils have positive attitudes to their work and behave exceptionally well. They have an excellent understanding of how to live a healthy lifestyle. At breakfast and after-school clubs and at lunch, they enjoy a variety of healthy options. They also participate with

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enthusiasm in a wide range of sporting opportunities provided both in and after school and in the wider Bexley community through sports partnerships.

Pupils are encouraged to take an active interest and develop their roles as young citizens. Fund raising for local, national and international charities helps develop awareness of those who are less fortunate. The school council has contributed well to school development by, for example, setting up a successful green eco council which promotes awareness of environmental issues around the school, reflecting the school's Green Council bronze award. Pupils' clear enjoyment of school life is reflected in their attendance which is above average. Above average attainment in the basic skills means they are well prepared for the future, a fact also reflected in the school's achievement of the Quality Mark award. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good with particular strengths in their spiritual development. Pupils are polite and helpful and benefit from the positive Catholic ethos which helps them to develop personal values and self-esteem.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

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 good with some examples of outstanding teaching. In the words of one parent, 'My daughter has progressed enormously to date in reading, writing and maths, socially and with her confidence. The teaching is stimulating.' Teachers have good subject knowledge and use questioning well to assess pupils' learning during the lesson and reshape their teaching accordingly. In an outstanding history lesson the teacher linked

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learning about the Royal family tree to pupils' own family history, engaging them through good use of film and role play. Information and communication technology is used well in lessons to promote enjoyment. Where teaching is only satisfactory, pupils have limited opportunities to be creative and the pace is slow with too much time given for them to complete tasks, so they make less progress. Marking is not used consistently well to inform pupils about how they can improve their work, particularly in writing, which means that progress is not always as good as it should be.

The good curriculum promotes learning and engages the pupils well. There is very good enrichment with a strong focus on developing pupils' understanding of their immediate environment, most notably the recently acquired woodland area adjoining the school grounds. The sports curriculum has been extended well through strong links with the Bexley Sports Partnership. The use of outside specialist coaches enables pupils to receive high-quality training in football and cricket. Pupils also have good opportunities to participate in high-quality arts events, including choral, instrumental and dance performances. The provision of Spanish is a strength within the curriculum and is reflected in the award of the Certificate of implementation of Key Stage 2 Modern Foreign Languages. There are some good cross-curricular links which make learning relevant and interesting. Good partnerships, visits and visitors together with opportunities to attend a wide range of clubs, enhance the learning opportunities and make a valuable contribution to pupils' high levels of enjoyment.

Pastoral care of pupils is good so pupils feel safe and well cared for. The school works closely with parents and carers and involves outside agencies where necessary to meet the diverse needs of the range of pupils. Adults provide good role models and pupils are polite and respectful to adults and to each other. The Catholic ethos helps pupils to develop their self-esteem and personal values exceptionally well. Good-quality guidance enables pupils to reflect on their contribution to the community and to make confident and well-informed choices about their future.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

Good leadership and management promote good outcomes for pupils. The school runs very smoothly on a day-to-day basis and planning for improvement is generally good. However, these plans do not always identify success criteria so the impact of actions taken is sometimes difficult to evaluate. The governing body is well informed about the school and is involved well in its self-evaluation. Senior leaders review progress data regularly but do not always intervene quickly enough when progress of groups and individuals has

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slowed. The school has excellent relationships with parents and carers, keeping them extremely well informed, regularly seeking their views and involving them purposefully in their children's education. Partnerships with agencies and other schools further promote pupils' learning and well-being. Our Lady is an inclusive school which actively promotes equality of opportunity. Safeguarding procedures are rigorous and governors ensure that the school is a safe and harmonious community. This is recognised by parents and carers and pupils. The school has responded satisfactorily to its duty to help pupils gain a greater understanding of communities beyond the locality, although links with schools in contrasting areas are limited.

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	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make good progress in their learning, especially in their personal and social development, in the Nursery and Reception classes. Adults have high expectations and activities are well matched to children's needs because assessments appropriately identify children's next steps in learning. This has a positive impact on their behaviour and attitudes to learning. Adults care for children well, while promoting their confidence and independence.

Parents and carers appreciate the good teaching that enables their children to enjoy school so much. Teachers plan an inspiring range of activities well, taking children's ideas and interests into account. For example, some boys wanted to find out about pirates. A pirate theme evolved with activities to promote children's learning and development including building a pirate ship, acting out pirate sea adventures and painting and drawing pirate pictures.

The curriculum is planned well to enable children to learn well through play, including the use of information and communication technology. Good opportunities to develop cultural

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awareness effectively promote children's understanding of other lifestyles and cultures. For example, after reading Handa's Surprise, children explored and played with African artefacts, including dolls, dressed up in patterned African clothes, and ate African food. Children enjoy learning and playing in the well-resourced outside area, however, sometimes these opportunities are rather limited particularly for the older children.

Effective leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage by senior school leaders enable staff to ensure that children are safe and happy and progress well. Partnerships with parents and carers are positive because their views are taken into account. In the words of one parent, 'The nursery staff have been very welcoming and dealt with any concerns I have had effectively.'

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

Parents who responded to the questionnaire and those spoken to during the inspection were extremely positive about the school. No significant concerns were expressed and a number made specific comments praising the school. A few parents do not agree that unacceptable behaviour is dealt with appropriately but inspectors found no evidence to endorse this view during the inspection.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Our Lady of the Rosary 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 232 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 470 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	141	61	84	36	4	2	1	0
The school keeps my child safe	179	77	48	21	1	0	3	1
My school informs me about my child's progress	95	41	127	55	9	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	119	51	102	44	6	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	139	60	90	39	2	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	125	54	95	41	9	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	131	56	96	41	3	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)	106	46	105	45	6	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	113	49	109	47	6	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	94	41	113	49	15	6	4	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	82	35	129	56	13	6	1	0
The school is led and managed effectively	119	51	102	44	3	1	2	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	147	63	80	34	4	2	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).

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"> ■ 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.



8 July 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Our Lady of the Rosary Catholic Primary School address!

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school. We very much enjoyed our visit and particularly enjoyed talking to you about your learning and found your comments very helpful. Your school is a good school.

These are the things we most like about your school.

- You enjoy learning, behave well and make good progress in your learning.
- You are polite, friendly and helpful to everyone.
- You enjoy taking responsibility and you have an excellent understanding of how to live a healthy lifestyle; all the adults look after you well and you feel safe and happy in school.
- The Catholic ethos helps you to develop your self-esteem and personal values exceptionally well.

Even though your school is a good one, there are some things we have asked your headteacher and governors to do to make it even better.

- Help you to improve your writing by giving you more opportunities to write at length, making sure tasks are challenging enough for you and giving you more help when marking your work.
- When planning how the school can improve, saying what the success criteria are and helping senior leaders to measure how effective improvement has been.

Thank you for making our visit so enjoyable. You can help to improve your school too, by working hard and always trying your best.

Yours sincerely

Angela Konarzewski

Lead inspector

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