

Our Lady's RC Primary School

Holly Road, Aspull, Wigan, WN2 1RU

Inspection dates 13–14 September 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The achievement of all groups of pupils across the school is good. Pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Their attainment has risen, year on year, especially in writing. In 2012 attainment was above average in all subjects in Key Stage 1 and in Key Stage 2.
- Teaching is consistently good across the school, sometimes outstanding. It is underpinned by regular and accurate assessment. Teachers have high expectations of pupils. They make lessons interesting, with activities that are matched well to the learning needs of all pupils.
- Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. Warm, supportive relationships and a 'family' atmosphere mean that they feel very safe and secure in school. A strong partnership between home and school is reflected in pupils' excellent attendance and punctuality.
- The headteacher is a very effective leader. His clear focus on continuous school improvement is shared by all staff and by well-informed governors. The improvements he has brought about in teaching are making a significant difference to pupils' achievement.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Achievement is good rather than outstanding. Most pupils make nationally expected progress. An increasing number do better than this and make more than the progress expected of them, but, as yet, this is still a relatively small proportion of the school's pupils.
- Although teaching is good, with some outstanding elements, it is not yet outstanding overall, mainly because more-able pupils are not always provided with sufficient challenge.
- The role of senior staff in checking the quality and impact of teaching is increasing, but is not yet fully developed.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed eight lessons, including a joint observation with the headteacher. They also made a number of short visits to lessons. They listened to pupils read in Years 1, 2 and 6 and they observed the teaching of letters and the sounds they make in Key Stage 1.
- They held meetings with four members of the governing body, with the headteacher, with staff members, with a group of pupils and with a representative of the local education authority.
- They reviewed information from 29 responses to Parent View (the online parent questionnaire) and they also met with a group of parents to hear their views about the school.
- They took into account the views that staff expressed in the questionnaire they completed.
- They observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school development plan, documents relating to safeguarding, behaviour and attendance records and the school's own data on pupils' current progress.
- Inspectors also considered the school's previous inspection report and a report by Ofsted on a mathematics subject survey visit to the school in July 2012.

Inspection team

Diane Auton, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Geoffrey Yates

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than most other primary schools.
- Most pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups who attend the school is lower than average and very few pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is smaller than average; the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is similar to that found in most primary schools.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding is considerably smaller than the national average.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' achievement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Reinforce the ongoing drive for excellence in pupils' achievement by
 - increasing the proportion of outstanding teaching through checking its quality and impact, continuing to guide improvements and sharing excellent practice
 - ensuring that more-able pupils are consistently provided with appropriate challenge.
- Further developing the part played by senior staff in monitoring the quality of teaching and its impact on pupils' learning and progress.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Pupils' achievement is good and is improving rapidly. A gap in attainment between English and mathematics seen at the school's previous inspection has now been closed. Writing, which was a relatively weak area, has improved greatly. Pupils now use their literacy skills confidently: their progress in English is now good and attainment in English is above average across the school. They continue to achieve well in mathematics: attainment in mathematics has consistently been above average for the past three years.
- Most children join the Reception class with skills at expected levels for their age in most of the areas of learning although, each year, a significant minority of children start school with immature speaking and listening skills. Children make good and often rapid progress in the Reception Year. As a result, they move up into Key Stage 1 with well established early literacy and numeracy skills and with positive attitudes to learning which they sustain throughout the years that follow.
- Regular teaching of letters and sounds is having a positive impact on developing pupils' reading skills. Pupils from Key Stage 1 read enthusiastically to an inspector, showing confidence and accuracy in tackling new or difficult words. Attainment in reading was above average in Year 2 and Year 6 in 2012. A discussion with a group of Year 6 pupils showed that they read a good range of materials, enjoying non-fiction as well as fiction, and are developing an evaluative approach to the books they read.
- Pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs achieve well in relation to their abilities and starting points, because of the good provision the school makes for them.
- Pupils' progress in Key Stages 1 and 2 is consistently good. Although it is not yet outstanding overall, it is often a little above national expectations. The school's records show an improving trend over the last two years, with more pupils exceeding national expectations for progress each year and doing so by an increasing margin.
- Pupils are responsive and hard-working in lessons, showing interest and enjoyment in learning. They work productively with a partner or in a group. They listen carefully to each other's ideas and are learning to take part in constructive discussions. They take a pride in their work and do their best to present it very neatly.
- Most parents' responses and comments indicate that they are pleased with their children's achievement.

The quality of teaching

is good

- The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection and has moved up from satisfactory to good. Teaching seen during the inspection was never less than good and in a few lessons was outstanding.
- Consistently good teaching is enabling pupils to learn and progress well. Typical features include:
 - well-planned lessons with a brisk pace of learning and activities matched well to their interests, so that pupils' engagement is sustained
 - the effective use of 'steps to success' and good advice provided through marking, so that pupils have a clear understanding of what they need to do to move their learning forward purposefully
 - good teamwork between class teachers and well-trained teaching assistants, ensuring that all learners, especially those with additional needs, are supported appropriately.
- Where teaching is outstanding, there is a high level of challenge for more-able pupils. They respond very well to this, making excellent progress. For example, staff in the Reception class are watchful to ensure that children develop and extend their play and their thinking, while having fun together. Because of encouragement and support provided by staff, two of the

more-able children made excellent progress in numeracy through a water-play activity. In the session that followed, when the class sat down together to talk about what they had been doing, they were able to give a clear account of what they had learned.

- Where teaching is good, rather than outstanding, pupils achieve well overall. Sometimes, however, teachers miss opportunities to raise the level of challenge in the activities for the more-able pupils. This can mean that their achievement in some lessons is not as high as it could be.
- Parents indicate that most are very happy with the teaching their children receive.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils thrive in an environment where every child is known, cared for and valued. This is helping them to achieve well. Pupils' behaviour in school is excellent. They feel very safe and secure in school, they trust the adults who care for them. They are confident that help is always on hand should they have a problem.
- Parents' comments and their responses in Parent View indicate that they have great confidence in the care the school provides. A very small number of Parent View responses were negative about the school's management of pupils' behaviour. Inspection findings support the majority view that behaviour is managed very well.
- Pupils are able to explain a clear understanding of different types of bullying. They say that bullying is not tolerated in their school and that staff would act quickly to sort out any such problems that might occur.
- Older pupils enjoy taking on responsibility, making their contribution to a happy, well-organised school. For example, they act as play leaders at break times: they share dining tables with younger children at lunch times, helping to look out for their welfare as they settle into school.
- The school's Rainbow Room project provides extensive and sensitive nurture group support for potentially vulnerable pupils and their families.
- The well-attended breakfast club gets the day off to a happy start.
- The school has successfully sustained the excellent attendance reported at its previous inspection.

The leadership and management are good

- Since the last inspection the school has continued to develop effective systems for assessing, tracking and recording pupils' achievement. The information gained from regular progress reviews is used well to identify where extra support is needed and to plan its implementation.
- Constructive monitoring and an appropriate professional development programme have helped to ensure that the quality of teaching is never less than good.
- Senior staff make a strong contribution to designing and implementing the school development plan; the school chooses and plans appropriate actions for raising attainment and promoting pupils' learning and progress. For example, actions taken over the period since the previous inspection have resulted in raising pupils' achievement in writing, so that it is now above average.
- The headteacher currently leads in monitoring the quality of teaching. Increasingly, however, senior staff and subject leaders are starting to assist in the drive to make teaching quality more consistently outstanding, but this development is at a relatively early stage.
- Self-evaluation is rigorous and accurate.
- The school's creative curriculum contributes well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. It brings subjects together in topics that are interesting, relevant and engaging for pupils. It is enriched by plentiful opportunities for pupils to develop skills in sports and the arts and by a wide range of after-school activities. Visits and visitors contribute well to

promoting pupils' academic, personal, social, health and citizenship education.

■ The local authority provides light touch support for this good school.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body challenges and supports the school well. Governors have a detailed overview of pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching and learning in school and this enables them to play an active role in monitoring school improvement.
 - Governors contribute well to performance management, ensuring that all staff are held to account for pupils' progress.
 - They carry out their statutory duties effectively. They ensure that procedures for safeguarding pupils are well managed and kept under regular review. Equal opportunities are promoted well and discrimination of any kind is not tolerated.
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What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	106490
Local authority	Wigan
Inspection number	405039

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	167
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Father Kevin Foulkes
Headteacher	Mr John Rushton
Date of previous school inspection	24 November 2010
Telephone number	01942 832299
Fax number	01942 776598
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