

Holy Rosary Catholic Primary School

Oriel Drive, Aintree, Liverpool, Merseyside, L10 6NJ

Inspection dates

5–6 February 2014

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- This highly successful school never rests on its laurels.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make excellent progress from their different starting points.
- Pupils throughout school, including the most able, achieve exceptionally well, reaching standards that are significantly above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- Teaching is inspiring, imaginative and highly interesting. It is never less than good and much is outstanding.
- At times, pupils are not provided with information on exactly how to improve their work or opportunities to show that they can.
- The exceptionally positive relationships pupils have with staff help them to grow in confidence and mutual respect.
- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning are excellent. They are proud of their school and feel safe. The school rightly ensures that the care and safety of pupils is of a high quality.
- The inspirational headteacher and other senior leaders have led staff and governors outstandingly well in a shared desire to make the school the very best it can be. They have continued to pull out all the stops in further improving the quality of teaching and the achievement of pupils in this outstanding school.
- Staff and governors work as one team for the benefit of all the pupils and morale is exceptionally high.
- Leaders and staff promote wonderful relationships with parents and the wider community and receive much praise for their work. A typical parent comment was, 'I couldn't ask for more.'
- The headteacher and staff provide excellent support to other schools in helping them to improve.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 33 lessons or parts of lessons and checked closely on pupils' work in lessons, in books and on display around school. Inspectors also talked to pupils about their work and listened to them read.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher and other school leaders. Discussions were also held with governors and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspectors carefully examined school documents including, the school's checks on how well it is doing and pupil progress data, and school improvement plans, Inspectors also checked minutes of governing body meetings, documents relating to safeguarding and child protection and records of the attendance and behaviour of pupils.
- Inspectors took account of 59 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and spoke informally to some parents and other family members who were dropping their children off at school. They also took account of the school's own survey of parental opinion and the views of staff through 25 voluntary questionnaires that were completed.

Inspection team

Chris Maloney, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Maureen Hints

Additional Inspector

Clare Daniel

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is much larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- Fewer pupils than seen nationally are supported by the pupil premium. The pupil premium is additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, children looked after by the local authority and children from service families.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The school provides a breakfast club. The after-school club is provided by a private company off site which is subject to separate inspection arrangements. Reports for these provisions can be found at www.ofsted.gov.uk.
- The school is a member of the Maghull and District Community of Schools.
- The school is a National Teaching School, taking a leading role in the training and professional development of teachers, support staff and headteachers.
- The headteacher is a National Leader of Education, supporting other schools in helping them to improve. Two teachers in school are Specialist Leaders in Education for English and for the Early Years Foundation Stage. They also support staff in other schools.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that teachers consistently provide high-quality marking in all subjects which makes it crystal clear to pupils how to improve their work and provides them with regular opportunities to show that they can.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- Children begin the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that are below and for some, well below those typically expected for their age. Children make outstanding progress from their different starting points and are well-prepared for Year 1.
- Pupils continue to make excellent progress through Key Stage 1, reaching above average standards overall in reading, writing and mathematics which have been rising for three years. Standards in writing rose sharply in 2013, with increased numbers of pupils reaching the higher levels.
- This excellent progress continues in Key Stage 2 and the achievement of pupils is excellent by the time they leave Year 6. The standards reached are significantly above the national average and have been for the last three years. Although there was a slight dip in reading standards in 2013, this has been tackled very successfully and the standards across school and in the current Year 6 are rising quickly. The vast majority of pupils, including the most able, in all classes in school last year made outstanding progress in reading, writing and mathematics and this is also true for the current pupils in school.
- Standards in reading are rising due to high-quality teaching throughout school, the extra focus in Key Stage 2 on extending reading skills and the well-targeted extra help from excellent teaching assistants. In the 2013 Year 1 screening check on reading, pupils attained slightly higher than is expected from pupils nationally, reflecting pupils' increasing understanding of the sounds that letters make.
- Pupils enthusiastically told inspectors about their love of reading and their excitement about the new school library because they have helped to select the books that have been bought.
- Writing standards in school are high. Pupils are encouraged to review continually what they have written to make improvements. They are given many interesting and exciting opportunities to write, as seen when some pupils were dressed as characters from 'Little Red Riding Hood' to help inspire their writing. Spelling, punctuation and grammar are taught extremely well, resulting in standards in Year 6 in 2013 being significantly above average.
- In mathematics, pupils achieve outstandingly well in basic number work and calculation and lots of mathematical displays around school stimulate pupils' interests and knowledge. Pupils are given many opportunities to use their skills to solve problems in everyday life.
- Pupils make excellent use of information and communication technology (ICT) resources to support their work.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make outstanding progress due to the expert additional support they receive.
- School data and current work seen by inspectors show that pupils supported by extra funding, including those entitled to free school meals, are achieving as well as others in school in reading, writing and mathematics. In Year 6 in 2013, there were too few pupils supported by the extra funding to draw statistically significant conclusions about the attainment and progress of these pupils in relation to those of others in school.

The quality of teaching is outstanding

- The quality of teaching is always at least good with a great deal that is outstanding. Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is exceptionally strong. Teachers and support staff work very well as a team in grasping every opportunity to extend children's learning.
- Staff take every opportunity to get to know pupils as individuals and celebrate their achievements in and out of school. Such high-quality, caring relationships, built on mutual respect are much appreciated by pupils. A typical pupil comment was, 'Teachers are really friendly and always there for us.'

- Staff use their excellent knowledge of pupils, particularly the most able, to plan interesting and exciting tasks that stretch their abilities and move them on quickly to harder work that deepens their understanding. Teaching assistants are highly skilled and provide superb support for those who need it.
- Teachers throughout school inspire pupils to have a love of learning. A typical pupil comment was, 'Staff are wonderful. They help us learn something new every day.' This enjoyment of learning was seen in a Year 6 English lesson. Pupils excitedly explored their view of one of the characters in the novel 'War Horse'. All pupils made outstanding progress because each time they found evidence the teacher rewarded their efforts and spurred them on quickly to harder work that challenged their thinking. This deepened their understanding of the ways in which an author influences the views of the reader.
- Teachers use their excellent subject knowledge to question pupils in order to check on their progress and move them on swiftly to the next steps. This was seen in a Year 2 mathematics lesson, where the most-able pupils were challenged to show just how much they had understood about using 'I spy patterns' and a 'family of facts' in solving word problems using a mixture of multiplication and division calculations. It was given real-life meaning by relating it to a pet shop owner selling three fishes for the price of one.
- All staff manage pupils' behaviour exceptionally skilfully. Indeed, two members of staff have completed the 'specialist leaders in behaviour and attendance' course, which helps them to support pupils and their families in addressing any concerns they have.
- There is some high-quality marking, particularly in writing. However, this is not always the case and then pupils are not provided with information on exactly how to improve their work. Teachers do not check that pupils have responded successfully to the guidance given or set aside time for pupils to do so.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. It contributes well to their highly successful learning. Pupils really enjoy school and eagerly await the start of lessons. This is reflected in their improving attendance which is getting close to above average.
- Pupils are proud of their school, courteous and welcoming to visitors. A typical pupil comment was, 'We are all like a big family, where everyone is welcome.'
- Pupils know that staff care about them and celebrate their achievements in and out of school. This is reflected in this typical pupil comment, 'Staff make you feel at home. You can talk to them about any problems.'
- Pupils show great respect for other cultures and faiths and understand the rights of people to hold different beliefs. They benefit greatly from the strong links the school has with a school in Rochdale with a different mix of cultures and backgrounds.
- Pupils really enjoy the responsibilities they are given. Every class has an eco-monitor who checks that energy is used wisely. Older pupils love acting as 'Peer Mediators', helping to ensure that any worries or concerns are sorted out on the playground. Indeed the pupils benefit greatly from the 'Restorative Justice' programme that helps them take responsibility for their actions and appreciate the effect they have on others.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Staff ensure that pupils know a great deal about how to stay safe and healthy and the possible dangers posed by strangers, new technology and the Internet in particular. A typical pupil comment was, 'Teachers always try to keep us safe and teach us about not sharing information on the Internet that might put us in danger.'
- Pupils show a really good understanding of the different forms of bullying and deepen their understanding through sensitive discussions in school and anti-bullying weeks. They are adamant that bullying very rarely happens, but are confident that they can trust staff to sort it out fairly.
- Parents' responses to 'Parent View', to the school's own surveys and in conversations with

inspectors, all show that parents are delighted with the standards of behaviour and safety in school.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher, ably supported by the deputy headteacher, demonstrates an absolute passion and a clear vision for making the school the very best it can be. This unfailing determination to improve the school continually is shared by senior leaders, staff and governors. Morale is exceptionally high because all staff feel valued and that their hard work is appreciated. A typical staff comment is, 'The school is at the heart of every single member of staff and that is the reason for its success.'
- Teachers are supported exceptionally well and are given a wealth of opportunities to improve their teaching through training, sharing practice and regular checks by senior leaders. Expectations are extremely high and only the best teaching is acceptable.
- Regular and detailed checks are made to ensure that pupils are making the best possible progress and steps are taken swiftly to provide just what is needed to support those who are not. This shows the school's commitment to giving every pupil an equal opportunity to succeed.
- Senior and middle leaders use their excellent understanding of how well pupils are learning to plan priorities for improvement and their impact on the pupils is carefully measured. This has led to rising standards in reading, writing and mathematics across school.
- The range of subjects planned offers stimulating and creative opportunities to learn. All pupils get the opportunity to learn a musical instrument. Pupils are also taught life skills such as business enterprise and Spanish and French.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development exceptionally well with many visits and visitors to deepen their understanding.
- Outstanding links exist with parents and the community where all feel valued and supported. A typical parent comment was, 'You feel there is a relationship of love across the whole school.'
- The school offers excellent support to other local authority schools and in improving the quality of schools further afield.
- Superb use has been made of additional sport funding to improve the quality of sports coaching and the wide range of sports for pupils to try, such as American football and fencing.
- The school has received good support from the local authority.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance is outstanding. Governors know the school exceptionally well, because they visit regularly and receive high-quality information from senior staff. Governors are very well-trained and are highly skilled in asking probing questions to check that the highest quality teaching and learning and the outstanding achievement of all groups of pupils is not just being maintained, but improved. They spare no effort in making the school the best it can be. Extra funding is used well for the benefit of those pupils who are eligible for this support and their progress is tracked. Governors have an excellent understanding of how well pupils are doing in comparison with those in other schools.
 - Governors ensure that the progress of pupils is rigorously linked to teachers' pay rewards and that safeguarding arrangements meet requirements.

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	104940
Local authority	Sefton
Inspection number	440709

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

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	468
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Monsignor John Butchard
Headteacher	Ann Marie Dimeck
Date of previous school inspection	21 October 2009
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