

Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Primary School

The Green, Rottingdean, Brighton BN2 7HA

Inspection dates 13–14 November 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school because

- Pupils enjoy learning. They make good progress, sometimes better, in reading and mathematics, and achieve well.
- Following a small dip in attainment in 2014, pupils in Years 1 and 2 now make good progress from their starting points, with increasing proportions reaching national standards.
- By Year 6, attainment is often above that expected for their age. This has been the case for some years.
- Teaching is good, particularly in Years 5 and 6.
- Pupils' progress is regularly monitored and information is used quickly to address any underachievement.
- Strong leadership from the new headteacher and a highly effective leadership team are key strengths. Their well-focused leadership has helped to ensure that good-quality teaching, achievement and behaviour have continued to flourish.
- Provision in the early years is good. Children settle quickly in Reception. They make good progress as a result of consistently good teaching, a curriculum tailored to their needs and good, effective care and support.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and contributes well to pupils' learning.
- Pupils feel safe. Behaviour is good and at times is exemplary. The respect they show to each other and to adults makes a very positive contribution to this harmonious and successful school. Safeguarding arrangements are extremely thorough and contribute well to pupils' learning.
- Governors have a good knowledge of the school and use their skills to challenge the school to continue to improve still further.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There is not enough teaching that is typically outstanding to ensure pupils make as much progress in writing as they do in reading and mathematics.
- Marking of pupils' work is not fully consistent or effective in helping pupils to learn.
- Senior leaders need to provide more opportunities to share the most effective practice in order to further improve the quality of teaching.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed teaching and learning in 13 lessons or part lessons. Most of these lessons were observed jointly either with the headteacher or member of the senior leadership team. In addition, the inspection team made a number of shorter visits to lessons both in and out of the classroom.
- The lead inspector observed one whole-school assembly attended by parents.
- The inspection included observations of break and lunch time.
- The inspectors looked at pupils' work and heard some pupils read.
- Meetings were held with a group of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and three other members, the headteacher, senior staff and administrative staff. The lead inspector also met with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspection team took account of the 33 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View. Inspectors also talked to 18 parents as they dropped their children off at school and after a school assembly. The inspection team took account of three parents who contacted the inspection team either by letter or via the inspection service provider.
- The inspectors took account of the 26 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- The school's work was observed and a number of documents were scrutinised, including the school's own information on pupils' progress, and planning and monitoring documentation. Inspectors also looked at records relating to pupils' behaviour, attendance and safeguarding and the performance management of teachers.

Inspection team

Wendy Forbes, Lead Inspector

Additional inspector

Lee Selby

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Our Lady of Lourdes is smaller than an average-sized primary school.
- The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and of those who speak English as an additional language is below average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above average.
- The number of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional funding to support children in local authority care and those known to be eligible for free school meals) is below average.
- Pupils are taught throughout the school in single-age class, including in the full-time Early Years Foundation Stage.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- An independent pre-school setting shares the school site. It is not run by the governing body and is subject to a separate inspection.
- There have been a number of staff changes, including planned and unplanned staff absence covered by temporary staff and a number of new appointments, since the last inspection. These include the appointment of a new headteacher in September 2014 following the retirement of the previous headteacher in July 2014.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so that it is typically outstanding, and the rate of pupils' progress and achievement in writing rises, by ensuring:
 - teachers have further opportunities to share good practice and observe the impact of outstanding teaching on learning
 - all teachers have the same high expectations of the quality and quantity of pupils' writing
 - all pupils practise and develop their writing skills and accelerate their learning in writing in a wider range of subjects.
- Ensure that the marking policy is consistently applied and that the quality of marking clearly helps pupils to learn from their mistakes and improve their work.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The new headteacher, very ably supported by senior leaders, provides decisive leadership. This enables good teaching, achievement and behaviour to continue to flourish.
- Self-evaluation is generally accurate and provides a good basis for future improvement.
- Leadership and management are not outstanding because leaders have not yet ensured teaching is outstanding or writing matches higher attainment in reading and mathematics.
- Senior leaders provide very effective role models in their teaching. However, the school recognises the need to provide further opportunities to share such strengths of practice in order to make further improvements in teaching.
- Middle leaders are held to account for pupils' achievement in their area. They have the skills and increasing time to check on how well pupils are learning.
- Information about how well pupils are doing is collected regularly and used to inform discussions about how well pupils are achieving. The school is working appropriately towards full implementation of its preferred approach to assessment through the adoption of the local authority's 'assessment strategy'.
- The school has implemented the new National Curriculum with revised programmes and topics. Trips, visits and clubs enhance this new 'creative' curriculum, supporting pupils' academic and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Pupils learn about other religions and cultures through lessons and assemblies. The school actively promotes respect and tolerance through its key values, promoting equality of opportunity for all pupils and preparing them well for life in modern Britain. They leave school equipped for the next stage of their education.
- There are effective arrangements to spend the primary sports fund. Participation in the local sports partnership has increased teachers' confidence in physical education teaching, providing greater opportunities for competitive sport and developing a sports leader programme and multi-skills festival. The school has evaluated increased confidence in the teaching of and provision for physical education.
- Additional government funding is used well to support eligible pupils. Effective 'Closing the gap' support helps these pupils make similar progress to others. The impact of funding is regularly reviewed to ensure value is added to learning.
- Robust systems for setting targets for teaching staff are closely linked to pupils' progress. Teachers' salary increases are directly linked to their sustained performance.
- Child protection and safeguarding procedures are meticulous, ensuring pupils are cared for extremely well.
- The local authority and the diocese provide effective support. This has had an immediate impact and has been well received.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors provide strong leadership. They fully support the school's leadership, sharing their ambition for continued improvement. They have good knowledge of the school's strengths, improvement needs and performance. They use this information to provide an appropriate level of challenge, holding senior leaders to account. Governors closely check pupils' achievement, including that of disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils, and are aware of the impact of both the pupil premium and sports funding. They understand the quality of teaching in the school and actions taken to improve achievement. Governors oversee the performance of staff, and are aware of how any underperformance has been tackled and how good teaching is rewarded. They are aware of their strengths and training needs, carefully check school finances and ensure safeguarding meets statutory requirements extremely well.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- Behaviour of pupils is good. Around school, pupils are polite and courteous. As one pupil said, 'We are nice to each other; we follow our Golden Rules.' Almost all pupils and parents agree that pupils behave well.
- Pupils' social development is excellent. At playtimes, pupils of all ages play together well. Inspectors frequently saw older pupils acting as 'buddies', helping young ones at breaktime, who value older pupils' help, referring to them as 'special friends.'
- Pupils are enthusiastic about their roles as playground buddies, sports captains or elected school council members. As one pupil said, 'Its good to make a difference!'
- Pupils are taught skills they need to help their learning, such as perseverance. This helps them to develop

a good attitude to learning. When pupils' attitudes or behaviour are less than good, this is usually because of less effective teaching.

- The school is working hard to improve attendance. A determined position on ensuring pupils are in school and not withdrawn for holidays is helping improve attendance, which is now similar to the national average.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding.
- The new headteacher is single-minded in his commitment to ensuring pupils are safe and secure. Pupils work well together to keep themselves safe. They know who to go to should a problem arise. As a result, pupils have complete trust in the school's rigorous systems for keeping them safe, as do parents and staff. Any issues are very well managed and quickly resolved.
- Pupils who spoke with inspectors have an excellent understanding of different forms of bullying, including name-calling and cyber bullying. They say bullying is rare and believe teachers 'would always sort it out.'

The quality of teaching is good

- Pupils learn and achieve well from good-quality teaching, most notably in Years 5 and 6.
- Classrooms have a calm and purposeful atmosphere for learning, which engages pupils in learning.
- Most teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. They plan interesting lessons that motivate pupils to do well, planning work that matches their abilities. However, occasionally teachers do not have a clear enough picture of how well pupils are doing and expectations are not high enough. This means that work set, particularly in writing, does not always provide enough challenge for pupils to make the progress they should.
- Many teachers are skilled at using questions to check pupils' understanding and change tasks to help pupils make rapid progress. This was seen in Year 5, where pupils worked with real determination and enthusiasm to improve their writing. The teacher's good subject knowledge and careful questioning helped pupils quickly identify 'main and subordinate clauses' and 'descriptive vocabulary', enhancing their descriptive writing.
- A consistent approach to mathematics teaching has helped pupils become secure in basic calculation skills. Pupils have developed confidence in how to use these skills to solve problems.
- Similarly, consistency in the teaching of English is helping pupils develop good reading and basic writing skills. However, there are insufficient opportunities to write across a wide range of subjects to develop skills further.
- In most year groups, teaching assistants are used well and guide pupils how to improve their work. Pupils readily act on this advice. This helps those with special or additional needs to make similar rates of progress to others.
- The most able pupils benefit from challenging work to strengthen their thinking.
- The school has developed a clear marking system to help pupils make more rapid progress in their learning. They have correctly identified that this system needs to be consistently used so pupils can fully understand how to improve.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils' achievement is consistently good; most make at least good progress because they are taught well.
- Improved teaching in Years 1 and 2 has led to an increase in the proportion of pupils attaining nationally expected standards at the end of Key Stage 1. School information shows that although the proportion was lower than pupils nationally in 2014, current standards are higher, particularly in reading and mathematics. These pupils make good progress from their starting points.
- School information also shows that in 2014, standards briefly dipped for a few pupils currently at the top end of Key Stage 2. These pupils now make rapid progress, benefitting from exceptional strengths of teaching in Year 6.
- In 2014, Year 6 national tests indicated a higher-than-average proportion of pupils exceeding expected levels in reading and mathematics; most pupils make at least good progress from Key Stage 1 to the end of Key Stage 2.
- Improving writing is a school priority. Work seen in books and school information show standards in writing are improving. However, not all teachers have the same high expectations of what pupils can

achieve. Activities do not always provide sufficient challenge. As a result, pupils' progress is sometimes slower than might be expected.

- In the 2014 Year 1 phonics check, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard was slightly lower than the national average. The teaching of phonics to form words is systematic and generally successful. The effective teaching of reading, enhanced by guided reading, helps pupils make at least good and often better progress. Year 6 pupils are very confident readers and enjoy reading.
- Effective support means disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and those new to learning English progress at a similar rate to other pupils. Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds are also supported well, so they progress at a similar rate.
- The school's own information, confirmed by inspection evidence, shows that the most able pupils are appropriately challenged. They reach high standards in reading and mathematics, progressing well as a result of the excellent support they receive.
- There were no Year 6 pupils eligible for additional funding in 2014. However, current school information shows that any differences in attainment between those eligible and others are being reduced effectively by teaching and support so they make good progress in their learning.

The early years provision

is good

- Children get off to a good start and progress well because of consistently good teaching, high levels of care and a stimulating environment. Parents are full of praise for the way their children quickly settle to school.
- Children have positive attitudes to learning and behaviour is good. This helps them to learn quickly. Activities take good account of the high number of boys in the class. Staff make sure all children have equal opportunity to learn, regularly checking progress to see if any need additional support or challenge. Effective support is given to disadvantaged and vulnerable children so they do not fall behind in their learning.
- Effective phonics teaching helps children understand how to make different sounds accurately through well-planned, practical activities.
- Well-chosen equipment and resources extend children's knowledge of the world. This created great excitement when a small group worked out which curled-up ropes were longer and how fast different-sized objects travelled along connected chutes. The most able children are set challenging activities and are already starting to recognise numbers beyond 20.
- Staff make the best of the indoor and relatively small outdoor areas to support learning. There are many planned opportunities to extend creativity, language development and number work.
- Leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Staff get to know children well and identify their needs, paying rigorous attention to safeguarding and children's welfare; this all benefits their learning considerably.

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	114544
Local authority	Brighton and Hove
Inspection number	448779

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Catholic
Age range of pupils	4–11 years
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	210
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rose Mcfarlane
Headteacher	Paul Beverton
Date of previous school inspection	15–16 March 2010
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