



# Holy Rosary Catholic Primary School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 104940  
**Local Authority** Sefton  
**Inspection number** 287073  
**Inspection dates** 7–8 March 2007  
**Reporting inspector** Allan Torr HMI

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Aintree Lane
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided		Liverpool
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11		Merseyside L10 2JD
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	0151 5267549
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	379	<b>Fax number</b>	0151 2848760
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Fr J Butchard
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs A Dimeck
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	2 December 2002		

<b>Age group</b> 3–11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 7–8 March 2007	<b>Inspection number</b> 287073
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Holy Rosary is a large primary school located on two sites which lie a mile apart. The Nursery class was opened in 2005 and it shares a site with the Key Stage 2 classes. Reception and Key Stage 1 classes occupy the other school site. Pupil numbers have increased by over 15% since the last inspection and approximately one third of the school population live outside Sefton. The proportion of pupils eligible to receive a free school meal is well below the national average and the proportion with a learning difficulty and/or disability (LDD) is below the national average. In 2005 the school was designated as an extended school. This means there are extra-curricular and adult education activities run by the school. It has achieved several awards including National Healthy School Status, Active mark, the Basic Skills Award and Investors in

## Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

Holy Rosary is an outstanding school. Visitors are immediately struck by the warmth of welcome from staff and children and the vibrant, happy atmosphere. This is reflected in comments from parents who describe it as "home from home" and the staff as "approachable and friendly". Pupils enjoy school and talk positively about it. Unsurprisingly, they appreciate the lively teaching, wide range of interesting activities in and outside of lessons, and opportunities to contribute to the school and wider community. Pupils influence the curriculum and give direct feedback to teachers about their lessons and the topics being taught; this contributes to the strong partnership that exists between pupils and staff. Extensive links with outside agencies and a meaningful curriculum prepare pupils well for life and work skills.

From low starting points in the Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception) children make outstanding progress. By the time they leave Year 6 almost all pupils reach or exceed the standard expected for their age. Around a half achieve the higher Level 5 in English and mathematics and over half in science. Pupils receive good guidance about their targets in writing and what they need to do to achieve them. In other areas of the curriculum pupils are less clear about what they need to do to improve their work and reach higher standards.

The school's Christian ethos pervades everything that it does and has a positive impact on pupils' personal development and well-being, which are outstanding. Pupils undertake at least two hours of physical education (PE) each week and they are active at play and lunchtimes, using a good range of school equipment. They take the opportunity to drink water during the day and although most pupils are aware of how to eat healthily some do not follow this through by eating healthy food from their packed lunches. Pupils feel safe and free from harassment and make use of the trained peer mediators if they feel isolated or in any way threatened.

Outstanding provision in the foundation stage enables children to get off to a good start. Routines and strong relationships with staff are established quickly which helps children to be confident independent learners. The structured, purposeful role-play activities strengthen children's speaking and listening, creative and communication skills. This is built on later in each Key Stage 1 class.

Central to the school's success is the dedication and commitment of the teaching staff, and the headteacher's excellent leadership and management. She steers the school with clear vision, summed up in her comment that "we make sure that everyone excels at something". At all levels of the school there is a constant drive to improve teaching and achievement. This is evident in the rapid improvements in the areas identified within the school improvement plan, for example, in raising standards in mathematics. The deputy headteacher likened the school's effective self evaluation to an athlete continually searching for advice from coaches on how to improve his or her performance. Inspectors agree as it is very clear that teachers have learnt from rigorous but supportive monitoring of their work. This, and the good improvement since the last inspection, makes the school's capacity to make further improvements outstanding.

## What the school should do to improve further

- Enable pupils to have an even clearer idea about what they need to do to improve their work in foundation subjects.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 1

Pupils' achievement is outstanding. Most pupils enter school with skills, knowledge and understanding below those appropriate for their age. They make good progress in the Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1 so that by the end of Year 2 they attain a level in line with national averages in reading, writing and mathematics. A small proportion of pupils reach the higher grade of Level 3 in the end of Key Stage 1 assessments in reading and writing. In 2006, over a quarter of pupils attained Level 3 in mathematics. By the end of Year 6, over 90% of pupils meet or exceed their targets, reaching expected levels in English, mathematics and science and a slightly higher than average percentage reach a higher level. Relative to their starting points, this constitutes outstanding achievement. Standards in other subjects are equally high, particularly in music, art and modern foreign languages. Although girls outperform boys in some cohorts, the gap between the genders has narrowed over time because the school has made adjustments to the curriculum and the teaching. Pupils with LDD make good progress because of the high standards of care, teaching and support they receive.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 1

Pupils' social, spiritual, moral and cultural understanding are excellent. They understand ethical issues such as wealth and poverty and are positive about giving to people who are less well off than themselves through charities and fundraising activities. Pupils value diversity and appreciate other people's faiths and cultures, for example by learning about languages, art and music from around the world. For example, pupils created an outstanding musical composition based on an African expression using a range of percussion instruments. Pupils speak warmly about the very close links with a school in Zambia and they show their pride in how they have collected equipment to send there. They collaborate and cooperate with each other and behave well. They are polite and show respect for pupils and adults alike. There are very low levels of disruption and formal sanctions are used rarely. Attendance is satisfactory and the school has introduced a range of initiatives which has led to recent improvements.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 1

Central to the pupil's rapid progress are outstanding teaching and learning. Interactive whiteboards, ICT and other resources are selected carefully and used skilfully to engage and motivate pupils to learn. For example, pupils joined in enthusiastically with a mathematics CD, moving and singing as they calculated halves and doubles. After the track had ended they were so excited that they wanted to do more. Lessons are lively, vibrant and are taught with enthusiasm. They are planned well, and based precisely on what teachers want pupils to learn. Pupils' progress is tracked closely and assessment is used effectively to set activities which challenge pupils of all levels of ability. Pupils follow orderly and efficient routines and, as a result, no time is wasted in lessons. Teachers make good use of all learning time and this results in rapid progress. Specialist teachers enable pupils to achieve particularly high standards in some foundation subjects such as music, Spanish and PE through their excellent subject knowledge and structured teaching based on high expectations of pupils.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 1

The curriculum is planned carefully to ensure that pupils make progress in their skills and understanding across all subjects. For example, pupils in Year 3 and 4 were asked to complete a spider diagram to identify their current knowledge about a topic and to assess their skills. The teachers then crafted lessons which built on this prior learning. Pupils have a voice in what is taught, for example, at the end of a design and technology project about cars, pupils and staff expressed negative views about the topic so teachers removed it from the curriculum. It was replaced by a different topic which still required pupils to learn and to use similar skills. This pupil voice, combined with a wide range of enrichment activities, theme days, trips and visits makes the curriculum outstanding. Pupils learn Spanish from Year 1, and PE for over two hours a week. They extend their own learning and develop work based skills. For example, Year 3 pupils choose an area to research for twelve weeks under the topic of the weather around the world. They use different reference materials and work with a range of people to produce and present their work.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 1

The effect of the school being split over two sites is minimised by teachers who work effectively to ensure that pupils' progression from year to year is continuous. For example, although the reception and nursery classes are located a mile apart, the transition between them is smooth. This is because teachers swap classes regularly to make sure children know all members of staff and have experience of each location. It also enables teachers to ensure that children are building on their prior learning.

Excellent links with the church, community and local schools help pupils understand about their place in the local community and the wider world. A local secondary school provides art, sport and science workshops for pupils who have been identified as gifted or talented in those areas. Teachers meet with teachers from other schools in networks to share ideas and to learn from each other. For example, Holy Rosary played host to Foundation Stage teachers from other schools to discuss aspects of planning.

Pupils with LDD are supported well by able teaching assistants, most of whom participate very actively in lessons. Pupils' progress is supported through their individual education plans and profiles that identify their specific needs. This then leads to carefully selected support programmes being introduced to match precisely the specific needs of individual pupils. They are aware of their targets and of what they need to do to improve their writing but are less clear about how to do this in other subjects. Marking is supportive.

Comprehensive procedures are in place to ensure the health and safety of pupils and staff. This has been particularly important because of the on-going building work at one of the school sites.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 1**

The outstanding leadership of the headteacher, supported by a very able senior management team, sets a clear direction for the school which is understood at all levels. The well constructed improvement plan is based on detailed and continual evaluation of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. Subject leaders, while monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of work in their own subjects, never lose sight of the whole school areas for improvement. This dynamic self evaluation and determination to improve continuously makes leadership and management outstanding. Subject leaders make representations at some governing body meetings. This helps governors to be well placed to challenge and to question what the school is doing. Much of the school's budget surplus is being used to build new classrooms so that all pupils can be taught on one site. Staffing and other resources are deployed thoughtfully to ensure that pupils achieve as well as they can. For example, a teaching assistant is employed to provide extra curricular activities for pupils and to support PE and games lessons. This has resulted in pupils' increased participation in extra-curricular clubs, and in physical activities. Capacity to improve is outstanding.

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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	1
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	1
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	1
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	1
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	1

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Thank you for making us feel so welcome during your school's inspection and for talking to us so openly about your school. You are right to be proud about your school because it is outstanding. You play a big part in making it such a happy place to learn. Everyone at the school works together all of the time to make improvements so that you achieve the best standards possible. We agree with a comment from Mrs Dimeck who said that the school works hard to make sure "everyone excels at something". These are some of the best things about your school:

- You are given the chance to give feedback about lessons, the teaching and what you are taught
- You make very good progress in all subjects
- You get the opportunity to learn Spanish from Year 1 and to be active in PE lessons for over 2 hours a week
- Most lessons are good or very good
- You get the chance to join in with trips, theme weeks and after school and lunchtime clubs
- Your school is very well led and managed.

Your teachers will be trying to give you an even clearer idea about what you need to do to improve your work in all your subjects. You can play your part in this by looking carefully at what you have done in lessons and thinking about what you should do in the next lesson to get even better.

Thank you again for being so friendly and making us feel so welcome. You really showed off your school to us well. Well done and we wish you a successful future.