



# Our Lady of Lourdes RC School

Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 114544  
**Local Authority** Brighton and Hove  
**Inspection number** 289961  
**Inspection dates** 9–10 January 2007  
**Reporting inspector** Sheila Browning

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>	The Green
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided		Rottingdean
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11		Brighton BN2 7HA
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01273 306980
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	212	<b>Fax number</b>	01273 308809
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Carol Plater
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Elizabeth Prior
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	2 July 2001		

<b>Age group</b> 4–11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 9–10 January 2007	<b>Inspection number</b> 289961
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Most pupils are from White British families. A few are from minority ethnic backgrounds and most speak English as their first language. In recognition of its work, the school has received an Active Mark award. Pupil mobility in Year 6 is high. Following a period of significant changes to staffing, including those at senior management level, the school now has a stable complement of staff. The school is part of a primary project to raise boys' writing skills through information and communication technology (ICT) and humanities.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

This is a good, popular and improving school. It successfully meets its aim for pupils to learn within a strong Christian family ethos. Children in Reception make good gains from their broadly average starting points because the work they do is stimulating. Pupils continue to achieve well and attain well above average standards in English and exceptional standards in mathematics and science by the end of Year 6. This represents improvement since the last inspection. Sharply focused teaching and monitoring and tracking of pupils' relatively weaker writing skills are beginning to impact positively on standards. Teaching and learning are consistently good. Lessons are well planned with challenging learning experiences. Teachers' high expectations and good relationships contribute well to pupils' learning. Assessment information is being used increasingly effectively to identify areas that need improvement. Procedures are constantly being refined and embedded. The school's pastoral care and successful promotion of pupils' personal development are good. In this safe, inclusive and welcoming community pupils meet challenging targets and receive good academic guidance. They enjoy school, behave well and have positive attitudes. The good curriculum enhances their development. The majority of responses to parent questionnaires were overwhelmingly positive though some had concerns about the school not taking account of their views. The school recognises this and has plans to increase parental involvement in development planning. Despite the school working hard to encourage parents not to let their children miss school in term-time, attendance is satisfactory. Leadership and management are good. The headteacher, very ably supported by her senior managers, has a very accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. Effective action has improved standards, the curriculum, resources and accommodation. Nevertheless, there is scope to develop the role of all subject leaders in monitoring provision. Governors are effectively involved in all aspects of school life.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Provide more well planned opportunities for pupils to use a broader range of writing skills throughout the school to secure higher levels in writing.
- Develop the role of all subject leaders through ensuring that they are given regular opportunities to monitor the quality of teaching and learning in the subjects for which they are responsible.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Children enter the school with skills broadly at the level expected for their age in most areas of learning, though many have lower than expected communication, language and literacy skills. To overcome this they receive well focused teaching and speech therapy support. Pupils make good progress in Reception and the great majority attain the expected goals by the beginning of Year 1. In Years 1 and 2, pupils continue their

good progress to attain well above average standards. By Year 6, most pupils continue to achieve well, particularly in mathematics and science. Year 6 results have been high for the past five years with girls significantly outperforming boys. To address this, the school is part of a local primary project to raise boys' achievement in writing and this is beginning to raise standards further. The school's test results for pupils in Year 2 and in Year 6 dipped in 2006 reflecting both cohorts' lower abilities and acute learning needs. Nonetheless, standards in Year 2 were broadly average and were well above average in Year 6. The school is tackling pupils' relatively weaker writing skills through good quality literacy support and rigorous monitoring and tracking of writing targets. More able pupils and those with learning difficulties and disabilities make good progress because of challenging intervention programmes and tailored support. Since the last inspection improvements in ICT in terms of teaching and resources have supported pupils' ICT skills effectively. Standards overall have improved since the last inspection.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils settle quickly and enjoy school. Their good attitudes and behaviour are underpinned by very good relationships. As one pupil stated, 'There is a special bond between us, just like a large family.' Pupils say bullying is rare and that adults deal with inappropriate behaviour quickly and fairly. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, as illustrated in their sensitivity to the needs of others. Attendance, although improving, is only satisfactory due to holidays taken during term-time.

Pupils contribute well to the school and local communities. They show initiative and enjoy taking responsibility, as, for example, when acting as playground leaders and buddies. The school council and 'school family groups' are effective in contributing to the day-to-day life of the school. Pupils raise money for charities and take part in activities that develop teamwork and decision-making, as when working to put together a successful bid for a grant toward playground improvements. Such activities develop a good awareness of wider social and economic issues together with the situation of those less fortunate than themselves. Work relating to the school's quest for 'Healthy School' status gives pupils a clear understanding of the need for safety, regular exercise and healthy eating.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

The quality of teaching is consistently good. Teachers have high expectations and this, combined with the sustained brisk pace of lessons, results in pupils' enthusiastic participation in learning. Teachers have good subject knowledge and explain clearly at the start of lessons what pupils are expected to learn. They provide tasks that are well matched to pupils' diverse stages of learning. Recently acquired interactive

whiteboards are used well to give an effective visual stimulus to pupils' learning. Such was the case in a numeracy lesson where the board was used thoughtfully to enhance pupils' understanding and ability to work with decimals. Teachers' perceptive questioning, together with frequent use of 'talking partners', helps pupils clarify their thinking and carefully consider their responses. Throughout the school, teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning. However, their time is not always used well in the whole-class introduction to lessons.

Effective use of assessment information, particularly in English, mathematics and science, helps to monitor and track pupils' performance and to set challenging targets for learning. The school is now developing whole-school procedures to assess performance in other subjects. Teachers' marking of work helps pupils understand what they should do to improve. Pupils are becoming increasingly involved in evaluating their own progress, which is helping them to become more involved in their learning and to achieve even better.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum includes modern foreign languages and focuses effectively on developing pupils' basic skills. Lessons are challenging and interesting. Children in Reception have a good range of activities to develop their skills and independence. The good quality support for those more able and those with learning difficulties and disabilities is well matched to their individual needs and supports their good achievement. New personal, social and health education programmes are being established alongside SEAL (social, emotional aspects of learning) to further enhance provision. Whole-school priorities to develop pupils' writing skills, and increased sporting opportunities have resulted in productive partnerships with local schools. A satisfactory range of out-of-school activities, including Latin, music and a residential experience, extend pupils' personal development and skills. Breakfast and after school clubs are well attended and enjoyed by pupils. Though pupils increasingly use ICT, opportunities to develop ICT skills in other subjects are developing.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils receive good care, guidance and support. Health, safety and child protection arrangements are secure. Opportunities to work with other schools in writing, music, sports and ICT support pupils' achievement and personal development well. Links with parents, and outside multi-agencies such as behavioural support and partnerships across the community are strong and contribute significantly to pupils' well-being. The personal support for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is very effective so they achieve well, whilst provision for gifted and talented pupils is developing. Pupils' attainment is effectively assessed in English, mathematics, science and ICT. The school is refining its tracking system across other subjects. Pupils say teachers' marking and comments help them to improve their work. Pupils' views are regularly

sought, as through the school council, and they feel listened to. Good advice and support prepare pupils well for the next stages in their lives.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The headteacher provides strong leadership. Despite a period of significant staffing difficulties, she has, with good support from her deputy, staff and governors, established a caring and supportive environment in which learners achieve well both in academic and personal development. Since the last inspection, she has led improvements in curriculum provision, accommodation and resources. Such developments have resulted in improved standards and greater achievement.

The school has an accurate understanding of its strengths and areas for improvement. This is shown well in its self-evaluation and development plans. Whilst the latter is detailed, well constructed, and a useful tool for improvement, the school is exploring ways in which parents can play a greater role in its preparation. Whilst the headteacher and deputy headteacher check the quality of teaching regularly, not every subject leader has been fully involved in this process. As such, this has prevented them from playing a full part in managing and leading subjects for which they are responsible. However, teachers' good knowledge of pupils' progress, stemming from improved assessment procedures, enables challenging targets to be set.

Governors carry out their duties effectively. Under the guidance of an experienced and knowledgeable chairperson, governors manage finances well, play a full part in strategic planning, and are purposeful as 'critical friends'. Given the determination of the headteacher, together with her understanding of the needs of pupils, the school has good capacity to improve.

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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>	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
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>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2

<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>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
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 helping us when we visited your school recently. We very much enjoyed talking and listening to you and seeing your work. Your school is a good school and you are well taught.

These are some important things we found out about your school:

- You make good progress and you work hard.
- Your school is a happy safe school.
- The youngest children get a good start in Reception.
- You enjoy school, are eager to learn and behave very well.
- Your headteacher leads the school well.
- You know how to stay fit and healthy.
- The curriculum is good.
- The staff look after you very well, and those of you with learning difficulties and disabilities are well supported which helps you achieve well.
- Your teachers give you interesting work to do and help you to do well in lessons.

This is what we have asked the school to do to make it even better:

- Help you to build on the good progress you are making in writing.
- For all teachers with subject responsibilities to make sure that you are helped to do your very best.