

Our Lady of The Rosary Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101456
Local Authority	Bexley
Inspection number	307691
Inspection date	12 December 2007
Reporting inspector	Jacqueline Krafft HMI

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	3-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	454
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs H Mash
Headteacher	Mr J Murphy
Date of previous school inspection	6 October 2003
School address	Holbeach Gardens Blackfen Sidcup DA15 8QW
Telephone number	020 8850 4470
Fax number	020 8294 0157

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of her Majesty's Inspectors, who evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and particularly investigated the impact of teaching, guidance and leadership on the achievement of pupils. The inspector met with staff, two governors and pupils. Parts of some lessons were observed, parents' questionnaires and a sample of pupils' work were examined and school information, including self-evaluation, was scrutinised. The inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in the report.

Description of the school

Our Lady of the Rosary is a large Catholic primary school with a Nursery. Most pupils are of White British heritage and there is an increasing number from minority ethnic groups. There are more girls than boys currently on the school roll. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals and the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is lower than average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

'The school is committed to the welfare, happiness and education of the children' is a sentiment echoed by many parents and pupils of this good school, which also has outstanding features. At Our Lady of the Rosary Primary School, pupils are confident, very well behaved and eager to learn. They work hard and make good progress to meet challenging targets, consistently reaching standards that are above average in English, mathematics and science.

The school places a high priority on promoting the self-esteem and well-being of every one. As a result, pupils and staff feel valued, respected and well supported. As one pupil said, 'What I like about school is the kindness of the teachers. People are always willing to help.' This is underpinned by a strong Catholic ethos and has made a significant contribution to the excellent personal development and well-being of the pupils. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. They have a well-developed sense of responsibility and demonstrate a mature understanding of the needs of others in school and the wider world community from a young age. For example, they speak knowledgeably of the need to be aware of health and safety issues when out on school visits, cycling to school or when tasting different foods. They also explain with pride why they raise money for various charities such as Water Aid and 'Love in a box'.

The excellent care and support that the school provides ensures pupils feel extremely safe and very well cared for. Links with parents, other agencies and the church are strong and make a valuable contribution to their care and well-being. Pupils explain that they know what to do if they need help or are worried about anything. They say, 'Any bullying is stamped out quickly and everyone is always willing to listen'.

Excellent relationships are a key feature of the good teaching that enables pupils to achieve well. Pupils say, and parents agree, that they enjoy school. They say teachers make lessons 'fun' and particularly enjoy the good range of practical activities they are given. Teachers plan well-structured lessons in detail. Expectations are made clear and pupils know what they will be learning. Pupils are given good opportunities to work together and they collaborate well. In the best lessons, the pace is brisk, pupils use a wide range of well-chosen resources and good questioning challenges pupils to explain and develop their ideas. In some lessons, pupils are encouraged to assess how well they have achieved but this is not yet a consistent feature in all lessons. Assessment information is used to give pupils targets for improvement in English and mathematics and provide those who need it with good additional support. Teachers know their pupils well and plan a range of different activities but assessment and tracking information is not used consistently to ensure all activities are well matched to pupils' needs. When tasks are not sufficiently challenging, or are too difficult, the pace of learning slows. Pupils' work is marked regularly and identifies what they have done well. The best marking also clearly explains what pupils need to do to improve further.

Strong leadership has developed the school as a learning community that meets the academic and pastoral needs of all pupils and is committed to maintaining good standards of attainment. Leaders at all levels have an accurate understanding of what the school does well and where improvements need to be made. This shared understanding is developed through a well-established system to monitor the quality of provision. Governors have a clear schedule of planned visits and subject leaders conduct regular lesson observations. Governors are provided with relevant information, provide good challenge and support and meet their statutory duties

well. Assessment information is analysed and used to identify areas for improvement and set targets. Staff are held to account for the standards attained by pupils through effective performance management. They are provided with relevant training opportunities to develop their skills and expertise. Subject leaders use monitoring information to develop subject action plans that are included in the whole school development plan. Subject plans identify tasks to be carried out through the year but lack a clear focus on the impact of actions on pupils' achievement and precisely how this will be measured. This is because the system to analyse the progress pupils make year on year, and over time, is still being developed. Improvements since the previous inspection, good achievement and the excellent personal development and well-being of pupils demonstrate that the school has good capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children make good progress in the Nursery and Reception classes and reach their learning goals by the time they start Year 1. They make particularly good progress in their creative, physical and social development. Trusting, supportive relationships and clear routines are quickly established. This helps the children to settle well so they are confident, happy and motivated to learn. Their needs are identified effectively and good, practical activities are planned inside and outside the classroom using an interesting variety of resources, which the children enjoy. For example, a group of children were excited by using their number and letter skills to program directions into a robotic bug to make it move. Children's independence is developed well. They are given good opportunities to take on responsibilities, such as being milk monitors and setting up activities for each other. They are able to act on their own initiative, work well independently and with each other. The learning environment is well planned with resources that are easily accessible to them. For example, one child was engrossed in using the interactive whiteboard, which he was able to reach with ease. There have been recent changes to the leadership of the Foundation Stage and closer work between the Nursery and Reception classes is being developed well.

What the school should do to improve further

- Use assessment information to ensure tasks and the pace of learning are consistently well matched to pupils' different needs.
- Focus plans for improvement, particularly subject action plans, on pupils' achievement and how their impact will be measured and evaluated.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ 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

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
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

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

¹ 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.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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

19 December 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Our Lady of The Rosary Catholic Primary School, Sidcup, DA15 8QW

Thank you for making me feel so welcome when I visited your school recently. I especially enjoyed looking at your work, seeing you in lessons and talking with so many of you. You were extremely polite, confident and told me what you thought very clearly.

You and your parents are rightly proud of your school. Your school is a good school where you make good progress in your work and are extremely well cared for. You are confident, happy and work hard. You told me that your teachers make lessons fun because they know you well and are always willing to help you. I was very impressed with how much you know about keeping safe and healthy and how caring you are of each other. You are a real credit to your school. Well done!

Your headteacher and teachers are always trying to make things even better for you so I have suggested they check that all the work you are given makes you think hard but is not too easy or too difficult. I have also asked them to check that all the plans they make help you to make even better progress than you already do.

Thank you again for making me so welcome and I hope that you carry on working hard and enjoying being at school.

With very best wishes

Jackie Krafft

Her Majesty's Inspector