

Holy Rosary Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	104940
Local Authority	Sefton
Inspection number	336391
Inspection dates	21–22 October 2009
Reporting inspector	Clare Henderson

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 of pupils on the school roll	379
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Fr John Butchard
Headteacher	Mrs AM Dimeck
Date of previous school inspection	7 March 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 21 lessons and held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of evidence including material on pupils' progress, safeguarding, the curriculum, 76 questionnaires completed by parents, together with others from pupils and staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- attainment, progress and learning for all pupils and especially how well their literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology (ICT) skills are used in subjects across the curriculum
- current levels of attendance
- the quality of learning and provision within the Early Years Foundation Stage
- the effectiveness of community cohesion.

Information about the school

The school is larger than average in size. The proportion of pupils eligible for a free school meal is below average. The proportion of pupils identified with special educational needs and/or disabilities is also below average. Most pupils are of White British heritage. A few are from minority ethnic groups. The Early Years Foundation Stage consists of a morning and afternoon class for Nursery-age children and two Reception-aged classes. The school has gained Healthy Schools status, Eco Bronze and Activemark Awards.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

This outstanding school continually seeks improvement, never settling for less than the best. Exemplary teamwork and drive from senior leaders, governors and staff ensure pupils' achievement is outstanding and standards in English, mathematics and science are consistently well above average for all groups of pupils by the time they leave in Year 6. Through extremely rigorous self-evaluation, the school identifies its strengths and areas for development and plans to address these issues. High levels of staff training and opportunities for career development ensure all staff are fully engaged in advancing learning. This commitment illustrates very well the outstanding capacity that the school has to improve further.

The care, support and guidance given to all pupils and, especially to those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are outstanding. The high quality of teaching and the very effective use teachers make of assessment to ensure all pupils achieve their potential are outstanding. As a result, from levels that are below expectations at the start of the Early Years Foundation Stage, pupils make outstanding progress and achieve exceptionally well. Pupils' exemplary behaviour and tangible enjoyment of school are reflected in above average levels of attendance. However, more could be done to raise attendance levels and to reduce the number of pupils who lose time in school through taking holidays in term time.

Within the highly creative curriculum, pupils have excellent opportunities to extend their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills very well across a range of subjects. Similarly, the curriculum is enriched with excellent features such as a wide range of interesting after-school clubs and many opportunities for pupils to excel in art, sport and music. The focus the school gives to developing pupils' understanding and tolerance of differences in local, national and global cultures and communities is outstanding.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve attendance levels by:
 - encouraging more parents to take their children on holiday at designated holiday times
 - to develop further strategies to reward pupils who attend regularly.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

In all lessons pupils display a real enthusiasm for learning, relishing and embracing the high level of challenge teachers set. 'I am proud to be at Holy Rosary. My teachers help

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me if I struggle at something'. Within such a positive climate of mutual trust and respect pupils work together very cooperatively and display an excellent range of learning skills. Such high quality learning ensures all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities make outstanding progress in their academic and personal development. When they begin Year 1, most pupils are working at or above the levels expected for their age. During Key Stage I, pupils make outstanding progress overall in reading, writing and mathematics to reach standards which are above average by the end of Year 2. This high rate of learning continues as pupils become increasingly independent and self-confident and, by Year 6, all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, consistently reach standards which are well above average in English, mathematics and science.

Pupils willingly take on a wide range of responsibilities. For instance, as school councillors, they engage in decision making and are especially proud of their part in designing the Early Years Foundation Stage outdoor classroom. They feel adults listen to them and respond positively to their ideas. Last year, a group spoke to councillors at the local town hall about their ideas for improving the quality of the environment in the neighbourhood. Behaviour is exemplary and pupils' attendance is above average overall. However, a few pupils miss too many days through taking holidays in term time. Pupils fully understand how to maintain healthy lifestyles and why they should do so. Surveys of packed lunches, undertaken by pupils, alert them to what will provide them with the best options for a healthy life. Their involvement in the wider community is equally impressive with strong links within the local community and further afield through links with schools in Rochdale and Zambia. Such links provide a rich contribution to pupils' outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	1
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	1
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms	
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	1
	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

Pupils are clear about each lesson's purpose and eagerly engage in well-thought-out inspiring activities. Their excellent behaviour and well-honed skills of evaluating their own work ensures learning proceeds at a lively and challenging pace. Thought-provoking questions and exciting visits are used to broaden thinking and pupils' experiences. For instance, during a visit by Year 4 to Aintree Racecourse, every pupil enjoyed riding a pony, mucking out the stables and undertaking some mathematical tasks in the jockeys' weight room. Teachers' ongoing review and assessment of pupils' work ensures pupils have a clear idea of what needs to be done next. Tasks are matched precisely to pupils' ages, interests and varying abilities. All staff work hard to make certain that any obstacles to learning are eliminated. Those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are expertly managed by a talented team. Corridors and classrooms are alive with stimulating displays. A play-based corridor with a toy museum where Year 1 pupils can learn about, and play with toys which were popular in the last century aids transition from the Early Years Foundation Stage extremely well. Pupils comment very positively on their enjoyment of the practical activities which they experience in the curriculum, especially during themed weeks. The design and technology week is an example of this. Literacy, numeracy and ICT skills which have been previously learnt are consolidated and, through practical investigations, learning is brought to life in a meaningful way. Skills of enquiry, problem solving, discussion, debate and decision making are interwoven into projects. First-hand experiences of other cultures, beliefs and religions prepare them exceptionally well for life in a diverse world. Governors feel that these experiences are so valuable that they earmark a good sum of money in the budget annually to fund them. French and Spanish is taught and pupils quickly become fluent in the speaking and understanding of another language. Residential visits and an excellent range of after-school activities add purpose to pupils' learning experiences in music, sport and the arts, while extending opportunities for them to show initiative.

Parents overwhelmingly agree that care, support and guidance are outstanding. 'The school is dedicated to helping my child develop into a well-rounded little person', and, 'carry on the exceptional work the school delivers' are comments typical of the vast majority of parents who replied to the questionnaire. Provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is outstanding. Transition arrangements are carefully planned and are appreciated by parents. Although the school promotes regular attendance, there is more that could be done to reduce the instances of children going

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on holiday during term time.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	1
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	1
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

Pivotal to the school's continued success is visionary leadership from the headteacher, excellent staff expertise and commitment from all staff and governors. Equal opportunities for all and giving every pupil the best are at the core of all the school's activities and all pupils are helped to succeed. Links with parents and carers are excellent. The school grasps every opportunity, through frequent information meetings for parents and carers, and questionnaires to gauge and respond to their views. Governance is excellent. It is self-critical and reflective and enables governors to challenge and hold the school to account in equal measure. Exemplary safeguarding procedures contribute very effectively to pupils feeling extremely safe and enjoying school immensely. Risk assessments and health and safety procedures are in excellent order, with expertise on the governing body very effectively supporting this. The quality of community cohesion is outstanding. The success of this is evident in pupils' mature understanding of the impact their actions have on local, national and global issues, such as protecting the environment. Through excellent partnerships and links with schools within different religious and socio-economic areas of the United Kingdom and, through a partnership with a school in Zambia, pupils' life experiences and knowledge of cultural and religious differences are advanced very effectively.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	1
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms	
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	1
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children begin school with skills that are below those expected at this age and, for a few, their speaking and listening skills are low. Excellent quality teaching from extremely caring adults and an exciting indoor and outdoor environment ensure children make rapid progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. 'She has settled well and is happy and confident', a view of many parents which confirms children get off to an excellent start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children really relish their time here. This is reflected in the sheer joy on their faces as they choose to investigate and play in the well planned and continually improving outdoor spaces or to undertake a wide range of indoor play opportunities. For instance, children skilfully use computers to play number games, extending their problem-solving and decision-making skills very effectively. Relationships with home are firmly established before the children start and ensure children settle quickly. These continue to be fostered through, for example, the weekly 'stay and play' sessions in the Reception classes when parents and/or carers join their children at play. Progress is outstanding and, by the time they move to Year 1, the skills of most children, especially in speaking, listening and social skills, match or surpass the expected levels in all areas of learning. Leadership is outstanding. The manager has an in-depth knowledge of how well children progress. Ongoing observations of children at play are collected by all adults. These are highly reflective and informative and used effectively to plan children's next steps in learning.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

Views of parents and carers

The overwhelming majority of the parents and carers who replied to the questionnaire are very content with the quality of education and care provided at Holy Rosary. Comments include: 'very supportive headteacher and staff', and, 'all children are treated as an individual'. The inspectors found no reason to disagree with these views.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Holy Rosary Catholic Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 76 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 379 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	61	80	15	20	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	58	76	17	22	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	45	59	30	39	1	1	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	47	62	26	34	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	55	72	21	28	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	48	63	27	36	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	46	61	28	37	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	46	61	27	36	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	50	66	22	29	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	45	59	28	37	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	34	45	38	50	1	1	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	57	75	16	21	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	57	75	17	22	1	1	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



23 October 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Holy Rosary Catholic Primary School, Liverpool, L10 6NJ

We thoroughly enjoyed inspecting your school and appreciated your warm, friendly welcome. We were extremely impressed by how each one of you is eager to do as well as you can. We thoroughly enjoyed talking to some of you and seeing how much you enjoy your lessons, playtime and lunchtime with your friends.

You go to an outstanding school. These are some of the things the school does very well.

- You are taught exceedingly well and receive excellent care, support and guidance. You make outstanding progress in lessons and your behaviour is excellent. We were very impressed with your responsible attitude and the way you consider each other's feelings often before your own.
- You thoroughly enjoy the many interesting activities arranged for you. Your school's leaders are determined to continue to improve your school, so that you all continue to do as well as you possibly can. You are exceptionally well looked after and your headteacher and staff work extremely hard to make certain that no one is left out. Your parents are very pleased with your progress in school.
- You all have an important part to play in continuing to make sure your school remains outstanding. I have asked your teachers to work more closely with you and your parents to improve attendance levels.
- You can help by listening very carefully to the advice of the staff and by working as hard as you possibly can. This will help you continue to achieve well and reach even higher standards.

Thank you for helping us with this inspection. I hope the school will keep building on its strengths.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Clare Henderson

Lead inspector

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