

Our Lady Immaculate Catholic Primary School

Northumberland Terrace, Everton, Liverpool, Merseyside. L5 3QF.

Inspection dates

18 - 19 September 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils achieve well due to effective teaching. They are happy, enjoy school, display positive attitudes and good relationships between staff and pupils exist.
- Although pupils' starting points are much lower than expected nationally, they quickly settle into school life and meet nationally expected attainment levels when they leave school.
- Teaching is good across the school with some that is outstanding. Teachers deliver interesting lessons as a result of a finely tuned curriculum which is focused on the pupils' interests.
- There is a positive climate for learning. The school provides a safe and caring environment resulting in pupils ready to learn.
- Professional development is integral to the development of the school. Teachers' standards are used to inform a focus of monitoring by senior leaders.
- Behaviour is good across the school. A consistent approach to behaviour ensures pupils are clear about what is expected from a very early age. Pupils respect their school environment and each other.
- The newly appointed headteacher has galvanised the support of all staff and they are working well towards common agreed aims. This is leading to improvements in teaching and learning. The governing body provides support and challenge and is involved in all aspects of school life.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Occasionally teaching is not consistent which results in more-able pupils not always making as much progress as they might.
- Pupils' progress is not tracked closely enough.
- Attendance remains low

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors took account of the nine responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View)
- Meeting were held with groups of pupils, a representative of the local authority, representatives from the governing body and members of staff.
- A range of documentation was scrutinised, including the school development plan, pupils' work, progress data, minutes of governing body meetings, attendance data and safeguarding records.
- Seventeen lessons were observed taught by 12 teachers.

Inspection team

Jane Millward, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Elaine Murray

Her Majesty's Inspector

Rebecca Lawton

Additional inspector

Full report



Information about this school

- Our Lady Immaculate Catholic Primary School is an average sized primary school where the proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is higher than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action and school action plus or with a statement of educational needs is above average.
- Fewer pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds than the national average, as is the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language. The majority of pupils are from White British heritage.
- The school meets the current floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure the quality of teaching is consistently effective across the school by:
 - sharing the best practice
 - promoting challenge in all lessons, especially for the more able pupils.
- Further refine tracking procedures to ensure that interventions enhance pupils' progress.
- Further improve rates of attendance by:
 - promoting positive rewards to encourage pupils to attend school.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Children join the Nursery class with skills and experiences that are well below those for their age, particularly in communication, language and literacy. They make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage where the range of activities and the support of the staff helps children to develop their skills well. By the time pupils leave the school their attainment is broadly in line with national expectations in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils enjoy their time at school and make good progress. Some pupils make accelerated progress. They show self-assurance, are keen to learn and are enthusiastic in lessons. They show good concentration, apply themselves well and engage in activities. The rates of progress pupils make are improving and the school is closing the gap in attainment levels for groups of pupils.
- Pupils with a disability and those with special educational needs make good progress and achieve well in all areas. This is due to effective and targeted interventions to provide appropriate and relevant support.
- Those who receive support from the pupil premium also make good progress because the school knows its pupils well and works hard to meet their needs. The learning mentor provides valuable support which enables pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable to access learning. For example, the rainbow club helps pupils overcome emotional issues of loss.
- The school quite rightly is focused on promoting pupils' basic skills and evidence shows pupils' reading, writing, communication and mathematical skills are developed through a rich and varied curriculum. Their interests are used to inform what is taught and a recent development of using books as the starting point for topics is bringing about improved attainment.
- Improving reading is a focus for the school. Unvalidated results for 2012 in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 show an improvement in pupils' attainment in reading. Pupils make good progress from their starting points and they are encouraged to read regularly. Pupils value 'story time' in school and enjoy reading.

The quality of teaching

is good

- The overall quality of teaching over time is good and as a result pupils make good progress. Improving teaching is regarded as the main priority across the school and leaders work hard to promote and develop high quality teaching. Performance management is rigorous and informed by lesson observations and monitoring by the senior leadership team. There are however, some variations in the quality of teaching across the school.
- Overall, lessons are well tailored to pupils' needs. However, in some cases the higher-ability pupils are not challenged enough.
- In the best lessons, pupils are energised and committed to learning because of teachers' high expectations and good subject knowledge. Information and communication technology makes learning interesting and exciting and teaching assistants provide well targeted support. Teachers use questions effectively to probe pupils' understanding and pupils work well together to investigate learning.
- Teachers' marking of pupils' work supports them making progress. Teachers provide them with guidance of how to improve their work as well as celebrating what they have done well.
- A positive learning environment is created to ensure learning can take place. Pupils are not afraid to 'have a go' and enjoy the challenges that teaching provides them. For example, younger pupils made towers from blocks to understand addition.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils behave well, show respect for each other and are polite and courteous. They know who to turn to if a problem arises and say incidents of poor behaviour are rare. Staff take good care of the pupils and particularly those whose circumstances make them vulnerable. Staff know pupils well and aim to provide careful guidance and support to ensure their well-being and personal development.
- Pupils show a good understanding of different types of bullying and information delivered through the curriculum ensure pupils' awareness of a range of risks, including internet safety. The harmonious atmosphere results in pupils' acceptance by each other for who they are. As a result, pupils feel safe in school and have a mature awareness of risk. Even the youngest children in school know about dangerous situations.
- A few pupils display challenging behaviour, but this is well managed by all staff. Pupils report that incidents of bullying are rare, and the school monitors pupils' behaviour through useful behaviour logs. This practice provides evidence to ensure the school deals with any incidents of bullying well. Effective liaison between class teachers and the learning mentor results in effective support for pupils who find behaving well a challenge.
- Attendance remains stubbornly low. The school works hard to reduce absence rates and rigorously monitors attendance. This work is paying dividends as pupils are beginning to attend school more regularly and the number of pupils who are persistently absent has recently declined.

The leadership and management are good

- The senior leadership team shares a common focus of improving outcomes and providing the very best care for all pupils. Its approach is united and consistent and well supported by all staff. It has high aspirations for pupils and meets regularly with teachers to monitor the attainment and progress of all individuals and groups of pupils. This work is developing and the school is now beginning to intervene at an earlier stage when pupils begin to fall behind, to provide targeted support.
- A coherent programme of professional development is in place which supports the exciting curriculum and helps improve teaching and learning. While there is some useful coaching and mentoring, the best teaching is not shared regularly enough, resulting in some variation in the quality of provision between lessons. Leaders focus on improving teaching and learning through staff appraisal and use this as a means to improve the quality of lessons.
- The school has worked closely with the local authority, engaging their support to improve the quality of teaching. This has most recently been to improve mathematics, focusing on improving pupils' problem solving skills and developing the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- The headteacher has developed a team where leaders at all levels are valued and contribute to school improvement. Middle leaders are making a difference and are aware of strengths and weaknesses in their subject areas. For example, the science subject leader has improved attainment through the introduction of a new approach to the teaching of science.
- Robust and accurate self-evaluation results in leaders prioritising areas for improvement which will make a difference to pupils' outcomes. They make good use of firmly established external partners to support pupils' development, for example, the school works closely with the link learning network and the Everton Early Childhood Centre.
- The curriculum is based on pupils' interests and is used to improve rates of learning. The inclusive approach encourages all pupils to participate in a range of sporting and artistic enrichment activities, which leads to good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- All statutory requirements relating to safeguarding are met.

The governance of the school:

- the governing body is effectively involved in all aspects of school life. It brings a wide range of skills and expertise and is involved in the strategic direction of the school
- a commitment of working in partnership with the school is clear and results in a good professional dialogue of challenge and support.

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	104638
Local authority	Merseyside
Inspection number	395340

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	277
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Bishop T A Williams
Headteacher	Mrs Catherine Sergeant
Date of previous school inspection	11 December 2008
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