

Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Primary School, Witney

Curbridge Road, Witney, OX28 5JZ

Inspection dates 14–15 January 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected as an academy
	This inspection:	Requires improvement 3
Leadership and management	Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils	Requires improvement	3
Early years provision	Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because:

- Senior leaders, managers and governors have not ensured that teaching and achievement have improved enough to be good.
- Pupils' attainment is low and they do not make fast enough progress.
- The quality of teaching is not good because planned learning activities for those who find learning more difficult do not help pupils build on what they already know.
- Teachers and teaching assistants do not check pupils' learning carefully enough during lessons. They also do not ensure that reading books are hard enough for pupils.
- The most able pupils do not make good progress because work is often too easy for them. Too few of these pupils reach the highest standards in national tests at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2.
- Pupils do not make consistently good progress in reading, especially in Key Stage 2. They do not have enough help in choosing books at the right level.
- Pupils do not have good attitudes to learning. They wait too long to tell a teacher when they are not sure what to do or when they do not understand.
- Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage requires improvement because it does not help all children build consistently on their early language and experiences. Their skills are not good enough for Year 1.
- Attendance has improved but it is still not good enough.
- Leaders do not ensure teachers use all available information on pupils' progress to plan for the next steps in learning.

The school has the following strengths:

- Senior leaders have identified key areas for development which have had a positive impact in securing some essential improvements.
- The school has improved the way pupils learn mathematics and writing. This is helping individuals and groups of pupils make faster progress.
- Pupils say they feel very safe and parents and carers are pleased with the way the school cares for their children.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is actively promoted by the supportive nature of the school community and a good variety of interesting activities. Pupils are encouraged to appreciate faiths and beliefs other than their own.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited classrooms 20 times to observe learning. Three of these observations were conducted jointly with the Principal.
- Discussions were held with members of the governing body, teachers and a representative from the multi-academy company.
- Inspectors spoke with groups of pupils, listened to some of them read and looked at samples of their work.
- There were 43 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and inspectors took account of these and the views of the parents and carers they met at the school.
- Inspectors looked at various documents, including the records of pupils' progress, the school's evaluation of its work, development plans, behaviour and attendance records and safeguarding procedures.
- Inspectors took account of 11 questionnaires returned by members of staff.

Inspection team

Juliet Jaggs, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Helen Owen	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Primary School is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The school became a member of the Dominic Barberi Multi Academy Company on 22 April 2013. When its predecessor school of the same name was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to require improvement overall.
- The school collaborates with other primary schools in Witney as well as the neighbouring nursery.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage. The majority of pupils from other backgrounds are Polish. Most of those in the early stages of learning English are in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in the care of the local authority and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, is below average. Very few pupils are eligible in Year 6 and there are none in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Currently, there are no pupils in the care of the local authority at the school.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is average.
- The school does not meet the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it accelerates pupils' progress by making sure that:
 - learning activities planned for those who find learning difficult help them build on what they already know and can do
 - the most able pupils are encouraged to think more deeply about their learning, including the most able children in the Early Years Foundation Stage
 - work engages pupils so they have positive attitudes to learning
 - teachers and teaching assistants check pupils' understanding during lessons so that they can adjust tasks when they see they are too easy or too difficult
 - pupils choose reading books which take them to the next step in developing their reading skills.
- Improve pupils' safety by working with families to improve attendance for pupils where this is low.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by making sure that leaders at all levels ensure teachers use information about pupils' progress effectively to plan their next steps in learning so they make more rapid progress.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management

require improvement

- Leaders have not sustained the level of urgency needed to make sure that achievement is good overall.
- New systems for monitoring pupils' achievement have been introduced. Teachers are not being held fully accountable for using this information to ensure that teaching is of a consistently good quality.
- Middle leaders check the impact of teaching on pupils' progress in some subjects. Priorities in other areas, such as reading, are being overlooked. For example, some pupils do not have an up-to-date reading log because they are not being heard to read often enough. On occasions this means that pupils' books are too easy for them.
- Leaders and managers at all levels are determined to improve the school. Development plans identify most key factors that need to be addressed. There have been improvements in the achievement of some individuals and groups of pupils. This is because senior leaders organise extra classes before school and at lunchtime so that these pupils have an equal opportunity to catch up.
- The school introduced a new curriculum at the beginning of this academic year. As teachers adjust to this new approach, some do not include the level of detail necessary to deepen the knowledge of the most able pupils. Nevertheless, other teachers use it to create memorable learning experiences. For example, pupils were helped to learn the method for subtraction because of the way their teacher asked them to organise an adventure through a castle.
- The pupil premium is being used to provide specific help for eligible pupils. Senior leaders and members of the governing body reject all discrimination and work together to make sure this is having a positive impact in raising these pupils' attainment.
- The school helps pupils prepare for life in modern Britain by encouraging them to be thoughtful and respectful of others. For example, senior leaders invite visitors of other faiths to talk to pupils and encourage support for charities helping those living in difficult circumstances so that pupils understand about diversity.
- The primary school sports premium is being used to provide specialist teaching as well as extra events and clubs. Exercise clubs have been introduced for pupils who were reluctant to become involved before and pupils are successful in competitions organised through a local sports partnership. For example, the swimming team were placed fourth in the most recent local gala. The number of pupils taking part in sport at the school overall is improving as a result.
- Senior leaders make sure that staff work together as well as with teachers from other schools in the Witney partnership to agree assessments. Teachers have a more accurate view of pupils' achievement as a result.
- The school works with representatives from the local authority to ensure that it fully meets all statutory requirements for safeguarding pupils. Recruitment systems are rigorous and there are clear expectations about safe conduct in school.
- The school has been provided with resources through the academy company. Senior leaders and teachers meet with colleagues from other schools in the company to share good practice.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Members of the governing body have developed their skills to become more familiar with different systems showing information about pupils' progress. They ask senior leaders to explain any gaps in attainment between individuals and groups of pupils. Governors on the curriculum committee have become more involved in supporting the school as it improves pupils' literacy skills. Governors have sought external advice through the multi-academy company to make sure that their evaluations of the school are accurate.
 - All governors know about the quality of teaching and they work with the Principal to tackle underperformance effectively. They know that there is a clear focus on raising pupils' achievement through performance management processes. Finances are well managed and there are effective systems to ensure the governing body fulfils its statutory duties.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

require improvement

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement because pupils' attitudes to learning are not always strong. Pupils wait to tell their teacher when they do not understand what they are learning about or when they are not sure how to follow an instruction. This means pupils do not do as much work as they could, which

hinders their progress.

- Pupils cooperate well with one another, but this is often as they try to work out what they have been asked to do rather than to discuss new knowledge or ideas.
- The behaviour policy has been improved to give pupils a chance to think about the consequences of their actions. The school's records show that there has been a reduction in the number of incidents as a result. Parents said that they were pleased with the improvement in pupils' behaviour.
- The school's systems, which include time for meditation, mean that pupils are learning to be calm and thoughtful. They are alternately willing to volunteer to help or to wait patiently so that school and classroom routines run smoothly.
- Pupils are proud of the school. They welcome visitors and skilfully engage in lively conversation about their interests and successes.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure requires improvement.
- Attendance is below average because the school has not reduced the number of pupils that do not attend school regularly.
- Pupils are aware of the risks they face, especially those associated with using the internet. They have learned how to manage these risks to keep themselves safe.
- School events help pupils understand about the various types of bullying. Pupils say that incidents are extremely rare. Pupils know who to turn to if they are worried and they say that they feel very safe at school.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Pupils are not making consistently good progress in lessons, including in reading, writing and mathematics, because teachers do not make effective use of all the information available to them about pupils' achievement. Planned learning activities are often too simple for the most able and they repeat exercises unnecessarily.
- Sometimes disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs find learning difficult in lessons. Teachers do not always ensure that their learning builds on what they already know and can do. In these cases, teaching assistants often tell pupils how to complete the task rather than helping them to understand how to do it themselves. This means that sometimes these pupils do not understand the work.
- Resources are not always well thought out. Written documents do not support learning well enough when they contain too much complex information for some pupils, and at other times pupils do not have to think deeply to complete them. Sometimes pupils are confused by the teachers' choice of practical mathematics equipment because it is not clear how it is relevant to the concept they are learning about.
- Too few teachers check pupils' levels of understanding while they are learning. This means they are slow to develop activities when there are signs that pupils find them either too easy or too difficult.
- Middle leaders have introduced new guidelines for teaching mathematics. Teachers usually ask pupils to explain how they worked out their calculation and this is helping pupils develop their reasoning skills.
- Classrooms are calm and there are good levels of mutual respect between teachers and pupils because the school fosters good relationships.
- In some cases, teachers' detailed knowledge of their subject means they explain new learning clearly and this engages pupils. For example, pupils in Year 3 wrote convincing descriptions about meerkats hunting their prey because of the way the teacher helped them understand the style they should use. However, not all teachers engage pupils in learning in this way.
- The marking policy has been updated and most teachers use it consistently well. Pupils routinely respond to teachers' comments to improve their work. Pupils in upper Key Stage 2 are also taking increasing responsibility for checking their progress against the skills targets which their teachers set for them.
- Homework and regular testing are used effectively to make sure pupils learn their times tables and to improve their spelling. At other times, homework encourages pupils to research new information and this has a positive impact, motivating their interest in other areas such as cooking. Teachers make the most of these situations to provide pupils with chances to practise their literacy and numeracy skills.

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils' attainment is low, particularly in writing and mathematics. In the most recent national tests,

attainment at Key Stage 1 and 2 was below average and pupils' progress was not fast enough at Key Stage 2.

- The proportions of the most able pupils achieving the highest standards at Key Stages 1 and 2 are too low. These pupils do not make good progress because they are not given work that stretches them.
- Children beginning school in the Early Years Foundation Stage join Reception with skills and experiences that are below the levels usually expected of children of a similar age, especially in language and communication. They enjoy learning through play but they are not always encouraged to think critically about their discoveries.
- The proportion of children reaching a good level of development by the end of the Reception Year is broadly average. Fewer children reach the expected level of development in reading, writing and number so they are all not ready to make a strong start to Year 1.
- Pupils in Year 1 do well in the phonics screening check but this early development is not well sustained, particularly through Key Stage 2. Pupils do not receive enough guidance about choosing reading books and some select books with language that is too complex for them. These pupils skip sections and do not make good progress developing their comprehension skills.
- Pupils who find it difficult to use their phonics knowledge to read unfamiliar words have difficulty reading written documents in class and this slows their progress in other subjects.
- Most groups of pupils currently at the school are making faster progress because of the systems in place to make sure that they are not falling behind.
- It is not possible to comment on the attainment and progress of disadvantaged pupils in the national tests as individuals may be recognised. Pupils for whom the school receives pupil premium funding throughout the school receive help according to their needs. They make progress similar to that of their peers and gaps in attainment at Key Stage 2 are closing. A few pupils have developed more positive attitudes to school because of the support they have received.
- Pupils are now making better progress in writing because they have developed good habits for talking about their ideas before they write them down. This has had a positive impact on the structure of sentences and the logical flow of paragraphs. Some pupils include interesting vocabulary as well. There is now a focus on improving the accuracy of pupils' spelling, grammar and punctuation.
- Most pupils' speaking and listening skills are good but they are not being challenged to discuss their ideas, so they are not learning to think critically or to question ideas for greater understanding.
- Pupils learning English as an additional language often achieve better standards than their peers. They make good progress in mathematics because teachers are now using more visual ways to help them understand mathematical concepts.
- The progress of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is similar to that of their peers. They receive good quality support, learning individually or in small groups during extra classes.

The early years provision

requires improvement

- Leaders have introduced new systems for recording the progress in children's development, storing photographs and observations electronically. This information is not being used effectively to plan for children's next steps in learning because assessment is not frequent enough.
- The proportion of children who reach a good level of development is broadly average. The most able children are not making fast progress because there are not enough activities where they have to think deeply about learning.
- Parents and carers are welcome in the morning so children settle quickly for the day. Although parents and carers know that they can bring in evidence of children's development at home, they rarely do so because there are no clear procedures for including this information in children's records.
- Leaders evaluate the rate of children's development overall and make appropriate changes to the activities available. For example, children are being encouraged to write stories when they visit the forest school since children's skills are weaker in this area.
- Each child is well known by all the adults in the setting. They are valued for their personal interests and teaching encourages them to join in.
- The setting makes a strong contribution to children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Children are encouraged to mix in groups and to share toys so their behaviour is generally good. Those who speak different languages at home play well together.
- Group activities encourage children to understand the world around them. For example, during a song

about rainbows, one child suggested to the teacher that an umbrella was the same shape as a rainbow.

- The setting keeps children safe. Children are learning how to look after themselves and wrap up warmly as the weather changes.
- Leaders have established a useful working partnership with the local nursery so that children adjust to more formal routines and they begin school confidently.

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	139527
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	453549

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	199
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Robert Dick
Principal	Jennifer Walker
Date of previous school inspection	15–16 January 2013
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