

Inspection of a good school: Our Lady of Lourdes RC School

The Green, Rottingdean, Brighton, East Sussex BN2 7HA

Inspection dates:

6 and 7 March 2024

Outcome

Our Lady of Lourdes RC School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils behave exceptionally well at this warm and caring school. They learn the importance of respect for all and reflect this in their excellent conduct. Pupils encourage each other to behave well and are supportive of others who might need encouragement to manage their own emotions.

Pupils enjoy attending. They feel safe and know that teachers will deal with any concerns they may have. Pupils work hard to meet teachers' high expectations. For example, in mathematics pupils solve challenging 'real-world' problems or they improve their technique to beat personal bests in athletic events. The school has a high level of ambition for all. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), achieve well.

Pupils enjoy an exciting range of opportunities to learn new skills and represent the school. They participate excitedly in events where they plan their own businesses and sell their products and services to parents, carers and staff. All pupils also have opportunities to participate in a range of sporting events. They are keen to represent the school and have won competitions in netball and cricket. Pupils are proud of their success and enjoy the assemblies where they celebrate success.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

The school has considered the important knowledge and skills that pupils should learn thoughtfully. Leaders have designed a broad and ambitious curriculum. This design is most precise in reading, mathematics and physical education (PE). In these subjects, pupils develop a deep understanding of what they learn through well-sequenced learning. However, in some subjects the curriculum design is less well considered and consequently, pupils do not learn as well.

Teachers identify the needs of pupils carefully. The school uses this information to plan high-quality adaptations for pupils with SEND. For example, pupils pre-learn key

vocabulary when learning skills in mathematics or work with additional adults to plan their writing in English. Teachers use their strong subject knowledge to design interesting and engaging activities that help pupils develop increasingly sophisticated skills and knowledge over time. For instance, in PE pupils learn how to dribble a hockey ball with one side of the stick before learning how to use both sides in subsequent lessons. Teachers check pupils' knowledge accurately. They address any misconceptions well and ensure that pupils know how to improve their work effectively.

Pupils learn the important facts and skills that they need for their next steps well. They learn to read fluently and use a range of mathematical skills effectively. In Reception Year, children learn the knowledge and communication skills that they need to be ready for key stage 1. From Year 1, pupils remember what they have learned and build on this with new knowledge. For example, Year 2 pupils use their well-practised number bonds to understand simple fractions.

The school has prioritised reading. Staff teach phonics well, and the school identifies any pupils that require additional support in learning sounds and letters quickly. Teachers plan appropriate activities to help these pupils catch up. Older pupils enjoy a rich array of good-quality texts that teachers match to the learning in other subjects. Pupils enjoy reading and discuss the books that they have studied excitedly.

Pupils have excellent attitudes to learning. They listen attentively to teachers and show high levels of concentration when completing their work. For instance, during PE lessons Reception-age children watch the teacher demonstrate gymnastic techniques intently before planning their own routines. The school is calm and orderly throughout. Pupils respond to routines and expectations appropriately. The school has robust systems to analyse pupils' attendance and punctuality. Leaders use these to plan a range of strategies to help pupils attend more frequently. These strategies are not currently effective for all pupils.

Pupils learn about a range of religions and world cultures through the curriculum and celebrate these in assemblies. They discuss topics such as equality and diversity with great sensitivity and understand the importance of fairness and choice when discussing democracy. Pupils take up a range of responsibilities happily. They organise sporting activities at breaktimes or plan fundraising events for a range of charities. The school has prioritised pupils' mental health. They have recently introduced the 'nest provision', which offers a range of support including yoga sessions that help pupils to manage their emotions.

Staff feel valued by leaders. They benefit from regular high-quality training and a range of support helps them to manage their workload effectively. Governors are knowledgeable. They ensure that they understand the views of parents, pupils and staff clearly. Governors use this information to hold leaders to account well.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, the curriculum is not planned with the same precision as the best practice in the school. As a result, in these subjects pupils do not develop the skills and knowledge they need and do not learn as well as they should. Leaders must ensure that curriculum design in these subjects is improved to ensure that pupils learn the curriculum in a carefully sequenced way and consequently learn as well as they should.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in March 2010.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	114544
Local authority	Brighton and Hove
Inspection number	10321800
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	207
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Bryan Rossi-Anderson (Co-chair) and Mel Fane (Co-chair)
Headteacher	Anita Philbrook (Interim Headteacher)
Website	www.ourladyoflourdesprimaryschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	22 November 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.
- The school provides a breakfast club for pupils.
- The school's last section 48 inspection under the Education Act for schools with a religious character took place in November 2021.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in his evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the interim headteacher as well as with other leaders and staff. The inspector also held telephone conversations with representatives from the local authority and diocese.

- The inspector carried out deep dives in the following subjects: reading, mathematics and physical education. He also sampled pupils work from history, geography and art. For each deep dive, the inspector held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.

Inspection team

Gavin Thomas, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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