

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108265
Local authority	Wakefield
Inspection number	377724
Inspection dates	7–8 March 2012
Lead inspector	Andrew Clark

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	240
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mark Wheatley
Headteacher	Darren Redfern
Date of previous school inspection	10 May 2007
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Introduction

Inspection team

Andrew Clark
Janet Keefe

Additional inspector
Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. They observed seven teachers teaching 13 lessons, including a joint observation with a member of the school's senior leadership team. The inspectors also observed several intervention sessions led by teaching assistants. Meetings were held with a group of pupils, the Chair and other representatives of the Governing Body, and school staff, including senior and middle leaders. The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school development plan, safeguarding and behaviour policies, and minutes of the governing body meetings. Parental and carers' questionnaires were analysed from 119 responses, together with others completed by pupils and staff.

Information about the school

St Josephs is an average-sized primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. The percentage of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is average, as is the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is broadly average. The school meets the current floor standard. The school has achieved several awards, including Healthy Schools status, Investors in People, and Eco School award.

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	1
Achievement of pupils	1
Quality of teaching	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils	1
Leadership and management	1

Key Findings

- This is an outstanding school. Achievement is outstanding. Pupils make an excellent start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They make outstanding progress throughout the school and attainment is above average in English and mathematics by the time they leave Year 6. All groups of pupils are eager to learn and work very hard to achieve challenging targets. The school is seeking to make better use of assessment to deepen learning further. The views of parents and carers are wholly positive about their children's enjoyment of learning and progress.
- The quality of teaching is outstanding. Lessons are highly imaginative and work is matched very closely to all pupils' needs. Teachers' questions challenge pupils to think for themselves constantly and apply the skills they are learning accurately. The very effective deployment of highly skilled teaching assistants and excellent use of assessment ensure disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs achieve extremely well.
- The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding. Staff are very thorough in promoting positive behaviour and attendance. Pupils are extremely considerate and thoughtful towards each other and to adults. Pupils have an excellent knowledge of how to avoid unsafe situations, such as cyber-bullying. They contribute extremely well to the safety and well-being of others through their involvement in making and maintaining the school's highly positive and caring ethos.
- The headteacher, staff and governing body provide outstanding leadership and management of teaching. The school's self evaluation is very accurate because it is based on highly focused procedures for managing and raising the performance of all staff. It is driven with total dedication by the headteacher and fully reflected in the considerable commitment and effectiveness of the senior leadership team. The multi-layered, broad and balanced curriculum promotes pupils' outstanding spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development extremely well.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Deepen pupils' learning further by building on the good practice in involving pupils in assessing and improving their own work in all subjects.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Children make excellent progress from their starting points in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The extremely strong focus on the promotion of children's early language experiences and Very imaginative activities to develop their personal and social skills prepare children very well for their future learning by time they start Year 1. In particular, early reading and writing skills are well-established for all abilities.

Pupils of all abilities make outstanding progress through the rest of the school and are eager to learn. They listen very attentively to their teachers and their peers and speak pertinently in response to carefully framed questions. They take considerable pride in their work. They write meaningfully at length and make excellent use of their time in lessons by planning and organising their ideas systematically. Spelling and punctuation are very accurate and used to excellent effect. The pupils collaborate very well in group activities and enjoy many opportunities for discussion in pairs. They make highly effective use of literacy and numeracy skills in many subjects including art and design, history, religious education, and science. They make excellent and skilful use of dictionaries, thesauruses, and the internet to enrich their knowledge and bring their work to life.

More-able pupils make outstanding progress. They deploy very secure knowledge of number facts and calculation skills to solve multi-step mathematical problems quickly and accurately. They rise to many opportunities to use their skills independently and creatively. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make excellent progress. They develop a wide range of learning skills which are built on securely and systematically and applied regularly. Pupils who speak English as an additional language acquire the English skills they need quickly to access and benefit from the school's excellent curriculum. The pupils' progress and attainment are reflected fully in significantly above-average outcomes in National Curriculum tests and assessments.

Pupils' progress in reading is outstanding. Pupils of all abilities read very well by Year 2 and Year 6 and their attainment in reading is above average. They make particularly good use of their well-established skills to recognise letters and their sounds and use them effectively to identify new words. Pupils' comprehension skills and their ability to make inferences from the text they are reading are very well-developed. Throughout the school, pupils enjoy reading from a wide range of appropriately challenging books and regular use of high-quality fiction in English lessons. Parents and carers share in their children's progress in reading through the home–school books. Parents and carers are wholly of the view that their children's achievement is excellent, which inspection findings confirm.

Quality of teaching

Teachers have extremely high expectations, reflected by the pupils' exceedingly purposeful and positive attitudes in every lesson. Every second is made to count and work is presented meticulously because pupils are very clear about what to do. Teachers' excellent questioning skills deepen pupils' understanding. In Key Stage 1, the teacher enabled the pupils to make excellent use of mathematical vocabulary on capacity in designing containers for a fruit smoothie. Teachers and teaching assistant ask probing questions, gently, but persistently, to ensure disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs have a clear understanding of the tasks they undertake. Teachers make excellent use of opportunities such as talking in pairs, for pupils to discuss, clarify understanding and to explain their ideas to others. This leads to deeply meaningful written work on a wide range of topics and contributes to pupils' outstanding spiritual, moral, social, and cultural skills. Year 2 pupils' role play on the life of Florence Nightingale not only revealed their excellent grasp of historical and biographical facts, but also a deep understanding of the value of care and compassion in improving the lives of others.

Lessons are planned extremely well to provide very good opportunities for pupils to use their reading, writing, and mathematical skills throughout the curriculum. Reading, writing, and numeracy skills are taught systematically so leading to pupils' rapid and secure progress. Teachers make excellent use of information and communication technology, both as a teaching and a learning tool. Pupils' work assessed is accurately and extremely thoroughly. Marking and feedback in English and mathematics guide pupils very effectively to high achievement and increasingly engage them in improving their own learning. The school has identified further avenues for pupils to deepen their learning by increasing their skills in assessing and improving their own work in all subjects. Parents and carers are wholly positive about the quality of teaching and pupils confirm that they enjoy their learning, reflecting the findings of the inspection.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils' behaviour is outstanding throughout school. They attend well, are punctual, and very eager to learn. The excellent relationships between adults and pupils have an extremely positive impact on pupils' outstanding spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development. Pupils are fully involved in creating and monitoring school rules. The high expectations and strong ethos are reinforced consistently through excellent acts of collective worship and daily routines. Pupils have high levels of responsibility for their own conduct and display considerable kindness and consideration towards others. The school council takes an active role in initiatives to maintain the very good behaviour and raise pupils' self-esteem. Parents and carers have extremely positive views about pupils' behaviour and feel they are well looked after. Pupils strongly agree that behaviour is of a very high standard around school and in lessons. Inspection evidence confirms these very positive views.

Pupils feel extremely safe. The senior leadership team and governing body, driven by the headteacher, are proactive in promoting pupils' awareness of how to stay safe. The school maintains detailed records of the rare behavioural incidents and takes strong and appropriate action to address them. Pupils are extremely well informed about different types of bullying and how to manage and avoid it. There is very little indication of bullying of any kind and pupils and their parents and carers are very confident that, if it should arise, it would be managed swiftly and appropriately. The pupils gain an excellent knowledge of the

dangers of the risks that may face them in the future and a finely tuned awareness of their personal responsibility for their own conduct. Regular visits from the police and fire services, cycling and road safety activities contribute to pupils' readiness for greater independence.

Leadership and management

The energy and relentless drive of the headteacher is matched extremely well by the commitment and capacity of leaders at all levels. The high expectations, modelled by all staff, keep the school improving consistently. All teachers take full advantage of many well-planned opportunities for professional development through in-house and wider training. It is a very open and inclusive school, built up on strongly defined principles and procedures. As a result, even those new to leadership roles impact very rapidly on their areas of responsibility. The governing body is highly ambitious and very well managed and makes an excellent contribution to development planning. The accurate self-evaluation, involving all leaders, ensures the quality of teaching is consistently developing and enriching pupils' experiences. The governing body and school leaders ensure outstanding promotion of equality and tackle potential issues of discrimination strongly. This extremely harmonious school has successfully narrowed the gap between the achievements of different groups of pupils. Assessment outcomes are analysed rigorously to identify and eliminate any emerging differences in pupil's progress so that all groups of learners achieve outstandingly well. The school has very thorough and closely monitored procedures to promote safeguarding, address any concerns and ensure all staff are suitable to work with children. As a result of exceedingly effective and highly consistent practice, the school is very well placed to continue its improvement.

The curriculum is outstanding in its breadth and balance. The school's commitment to enrich the lives of all pupils through highly memorable learning experiences is a key reason for its continued success. Frequent visits and visitors and the wide range of extra-curricular activities contribute to pupils' enjoyment of learning and desire to succeed. The partnerships with many professional support services and the links with other schools contribute to the wealth of pupils' experiences. Leaders and managers ensure the curriculum plays a crucial role in promoting pupils' excellent spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development by reinforcing appropriate messages consistently about rights and responsibilities and by celebrating the cultural diversity in the school's population.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all 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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



9 March 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Pontefract, WF8 4AA

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school. We thoroughly enjoyed meeting you in your lessons and joining you at break times. You go to an outstanding school and I would like to tell you some of the things we found out.

- You make excellent progress in all subjects and reach high standards.
- You read and write extremely well for many different reasons. You speak very clearly to others and we were especially impressed by the quality of the prayers you composed and read in assembly.
- All your teachers work hard to make learning very exciting and challenging. They make excellent use of information and communication technology to inform and involve you in your work.
- Your behaviour is excellent. You are very kind to each other and have an excellent understanding of the needs of those in different circumstances from yourselves.
- Your headteacher, staff and governing body provide outstanding leadership and are always looking for ways to make the school even better.
- We have asked them to find even more ways to involve you in assessing and improving your own work in all subjects.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Clark
Lead inspector (on behalf of the inspection team)

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