

St Joseph's Stockport Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106122
Local authority	Stockport
Inspection number	377358
Inspection dates	7–8 December 2011
Reporting inspector	Jane Millward HMI

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	135
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Bernie Edwards
Headteacher	Deborah Connell
Date of previous school inspection	19 November 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one additional inspector. Nine lessons were observed, taught by eight teachers. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, a representative of the local authority, the Chair of the Governing Body and members of staff. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation including the school development plan, pupils' work, progress data, minutes of governing body meetings, attendance data and safeguarding policies and records. They analysed 28 inspection questionnaires completed by parents and carers and those submitted by staff and pupils.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Why attainment fell and how the school is halting the decline.
- The extent to which teaching and learning support the raising of achievement.
- The impact of leadership and management on making improvements.
- How well the school identifies pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and how effectively they are supported.

Information about the school

St Joseph's is smaller than the average-sized primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is lower than the national average. Numbers of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds are lower than the national average as are the number of pupils who speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is greater than that seen nationally. The proportion of pupils joining and leaving the school at times other than at the beginning and end of term is higher than the national average. The school holds the EcoMark Silver award and Bronze Science Quality Mark.

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?

4

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

4

Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement.

Pupils do not achieve well enough during their time at school. Attainment is low and achievement inadequate. Systems to monitor progress and the school's effectiveness are not robust and leaders do not have sufficient knowledge of the performance of different groups of pupils. As a result, monitoring and evaluation procedures are not enabling the school to move forward and school leaders are not sufficiently held account for their actions. At the end of Key Stages 1 and 2, pupils' attainment in English and mathematics is low. Many pupils should attain higher levels given their starting points, but their progress is inadequate as seen in their work books and the rate of learning in lessons.

The quality of teaching is inadequate overall; the pace of teaching is too slow and assessment procedures are not used effectively. There is not enough good teaching to accelerate pupils' progress, to make up lost ground or raise attainment. Marking is inconsistent; pupils are not provided with sufficient detail or an accurate idea of how well they are doing. They lack guidance on how to improve their work. Pupils say, however, that they generally enjoy school. Their behaviour overall is satisfactory. Cross-curricular links are not used well to plan an effective, rich curriculum as shown by limited evidence of work in topic books. There are missed opportunities to develop pupils' writing skills across a range of subjects. Support for pupils whose circumstances may have made them vulnerable is a strength of the school because staff are suitably focused on promoting their development and well-being. Attendance is low, although the school is making determined efforts to promote better attendance and monitor absence rates.

The headteacher has begun to implement systems and procedures to bring about much-needed change. However, these are very new and, as such, are not securely established. It is too early to see their impact. Despite some strengths in the support for pupils who are potentially vulnerable, care, guidance and support are inadequate overall because the school is failing to secure pupils' well-being. This is because the governing body does not meet its statutory duties to ensure that all procedures

relating to the safeguarding of pupils are securely in place. Furthermore, it fails to hold senior leaders sufficiently to account for the school's performance. Middle leaders are committed to school improvement, but they are at the early stages of developing their roles and are not fulfilling them effectively. Other leaders and managers are also in the early stages of developing their roles and responsibilities and despite their hard work and commitment the school's capacity for sustained improvement is inadequate.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- With immediate effect, take steps to improve the effectiveness of safeguarding procedures by:
 - setting up systems and procedures, with clear lines of accountability, to ensure the safety and welfare of all pupils
 - establishing clear management responsibilities and record-keeping in relation to all aspects of safeguarding
 - establishing systems to monitor regularly the effectiveness of safeguarding.

- Raise attainment in English and mathematics by:
 - eradicating inadequate teaching and increasing the proportion that is good or better
 - ensuring that teachers have the skills and knowledge to assess pupils' learning accurately
 - ensuring that teachers' marking supports pupils to make progress in line with their starting points and helps them to improve their work
 - providing an appropriate curriculum, with opportunities to develop pupils' writing skills across a range of subjects
 - providing pupils with the opportunity to develop their skills and ensure progression in their learning.

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - developing systems and procedures to assess the effectiveness of actions taken to improve the impact of teaching on pupils' learning
 - involving all stakeholders in more effective action-planning
 - empowering middle leaders to take responsibility for improving outcomes
 - improving the analysis and monitoring of achievement for all groups of pupils.

- Increase the effectiveness of the governing body by:
 - ensuring that statutory responsibilities are met for safeguarding
 - improving procedures for monitoring and evaluating the impact of the school's actions, in order to secure improvement and hold leaders fully to account for the school's performance.

- Reduce the level of pupils' absence by continuing to promote vigorously the benefits of regular attendance to pupils and their parents and carers.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

4

National Key Stage 2 test results for 2011 show that less than half the pupils in Year 6 reached the nationally expected level of attainment in English and mathematics. This is below the government's expected minimum target for primary schools. Furthermore, too many pupils failed to make progress in line with their capabilities. Evidence from this inspection and the school's own records show that the attainment of the current Year 6 cohort is also low. This represents inadequate achievement, given pupils' broadly average starting points.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is also low, and has declined over time. Most pupils could attain higher standards, given their starting points on entry to Year 1. In 2011, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities also underperformed. The tracking of their progress is in its early stages but leaders are now beginning to implement more interventions to help these pupils catch up. However, the impact of this work is not being demonstrated.

Pupils' enjoyment of learning varies considerably as a direct result of differences in the quality of teaching. In some lessons, pupils persevered with activities and made satisfactory progress. However, where teaching is not well matched to pupils' interests and abilities, they are less motivated and easily lose concentration. Generally, pupils' behaviour was satisfactory in lessons and around school during the inspection. They were polite and well mannered. The school's records show that incidents of poor behaviour are logged, although strategies to improve behaviour are limited.

Pupils have a good awareness of how to lead a healthy lifestyle and respond positively to activities which help them to remain healthy. However, too many pupils, through the inspection questionnaire, reported feeling unsafe and this was supported by the comments from a few parents and carers in a meeting with the lead inspector. When investigated further, these pupils' reported that their concerns reflected the behaviour of a very small number of other pupils. They acknowledge that the school is taking appropriate steps to address matters but inspection evidence shows that there has been insufficient time for these strategies to have had a noticeable impact. When pupils raise concerns, teachers usually respond appropriately by offering reassurance. Pupils are keen to contribute to the school and the wider community. For example, they enjoy raising money for charitable causes such as, the Well Spring Kitchens and CAFOD and they are visible in the local community, through activities such as the choir singing in the local market place. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	4
Taking into account:	4
Pupils' attainment ¹	4

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

The quality of pupils' learning and their progress The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	4
The extent to which pupils feel safe	4
Pupils' behaviour	3
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	4
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	4
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

How effective is the provision?

Teaching is not strong enough to eradicate underperformance. Too many lessons are focused on the completion of tasks and fail to engage pupils in lively and interesting opportunities that develop their thinking. In too many lessons, teachers do not use their knowledge and understanding of pupils' abilities and prior attainment to inform their lesson planning so that pupils' learning can be supported effectively. Missed learning opportunities and a lack of focus on precise learning objectives result in pupils not achieving as well as they should. Teaching assistants are not always effectively deployed leaving some pupils struggling because they are not provided with the support they need. Pupils have too few opportunities to develop their skills and understanding because the curriculum does not offer a range of learning activities. There are few opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy skills in other subjects because cross-curricular work is underdeveloped and the quality and quantity of work produced by pupils is inadequate.

Teachers do not use assessment information effectively in lessons to support pupils' needs learning. Marking is inconsistent across the school and rarely informs pupils of the next steps in their learning. Work in many subjects is unmarked and, therefore, teachers are unable to monitor the development of pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding and are unaware of the next steps pupils need to take in their learning.

Overall care, guidance and support are inadequate; safeguarding information is not recorded systematically and some aspects necessary to secure pupils' welfare have been neglected. However, the quality of care and guidance for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is effective because their pastoral development and well-being are carefully planned. This is a strength of the school. Attention is given to pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable, through well-targeted support for their personal development and well-being, including sound partnership work with external agencies.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	4
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	4
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	4
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	4

How effective are leadership and management?

Leaders at all levels, including the governing body, have failed to provide a strategic vision and establish appropriate systems and procedures in order to lead and manage change effectively. The headteacher recognises the urgent need for help and is working closely with the local authority to implement plans to support school improvement. However, plans for improvement do not accurately reflect what needs to be achieved to help move the school forward. In addition, monitoring and evaluation procedures lack rigour. Middle leaders are enthusiastic and willing to develop their roles but are not having enough impact on their areas of responsibility.

While staff are keen to promote equal opportunities, current practice is inadequate because the school does not analyse the performance of groups of pupils to ensure that all do as well as they should. The governing body is supportive but does not sufficiently challenge leaders about the school's performance. It does not receive accurate information about the school's performance which would enable it to hold the leaders to account. Furthermore, the governing body does not fulfil its statutory duties, in particular, the arrangements for safeguarding are not robust and systems to maintain and update them, or to take action in order to reduce risk, are inadequate.

The school has a clear understanding of its context and as such, community cohesion is satisfactory. The headteacher acknowledges that more needs to be done to evaluate this work and the impact of the school's actions. Parents and carers, in the main, are supportive of the school and leaders seek their views. However, there is little evidence to suggest the school takes action when given feedback. Regular newsletters and the school's website inform parents and carers of its work. Whilst there are some effective partnerships in place to support those pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable these do not contribute sufficiently to the learning and well-being of pupils across the whole-school community. The school provides inadequate value for money.

These are the grades for the leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	4
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	4
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	4
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	4
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	4
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	4
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	4

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that are broadly in line with those expected for their age. They settle into school life and enjoy taking part in various activities. Children develop well and increasingly use a range of independent learning activities in a caring and friendly setting. Adults know the children well, and this supports their personal development and achievements. Overall, children make satisfactory progress as a result of satisfactory teaching. They are encouraged to be active learners and a variety of resources is available, although there are plans to develop further the outdoor learning environment. Activities generally include a mix of teacher-directed and child-initiated learning and this work is developing under the direction of the new Early Years Foundation Stage teacher. The recording of children’s progress in ‘learning journals’ has very recently begun and is at the early stage of development. The Early Years Foundation Stage teacher has developed an action plan with well targeted areas to improve, including working more closely with parents and carers and developing the use of assessment and observations.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation stage	3
Taking into account:	3
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	
The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

There was a low response to the parents’ and carers’ questionnaire. Almost all parents and carers who responded are very happy with the school; they consider that the teaching is good and their children enjoy school. One written comment summarised the view of many parents and carers, ‘The teaching staff and everyone involved in the school are hardworking and dedicated to both the children and the Catholic ethos.’ However, the inspection evidence does not fully support this positive view. The evidence indicates that although the staff are caring, the quality of teaching fails to promote learning that is at least adequate. A few parents voiced concerns with regard to behaviour in school. This was fully investigated by the inspectors and overall behaviour was deemed to be satisfactory.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Joseph's Stockport 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 inspector received 28 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 135 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	19	68	9	32	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	21	75	7	25	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	15	54	12	43	1	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	14	50	13	46	1	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	18	64	10	36	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	14	50	14	50	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	18	64	10	36	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)	16	57	11	39	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	14	50	13	46	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	13	46	12	43	1	4	1	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	11	39	15	54	0	0	1	4
The school is led and managed effectively	15	54	13	46	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	15	54	11	39	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 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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 are for the period 1 September 2010 to 08 April 2011 and 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.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add up exactly to 100. Sixth-form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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 pupils' 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



9 December 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Joseph's Stockport Catholic Primary School, Stockport, SK1 1EF

On behalf of the inspection team, I would like to thank you for the friendly welcome you gave us when we inspected your school recently. As you know, we came to see how well you were doing, and what you said helped us with our findings.

We judged that your school needs special measures. This means that there are important things that need to be improved quickly so that you can all learn better. Other inspectors will visit regularly to check how well things are improving.

We noted how much you like to help the school and community and we were impressed with the amount of money you raise for worthwhile causes. You know about healthy lifestyles and have a good understanding of the benefits of physical exercise. We judged behaviour to be satisfactory and we were particularly impressed with your politeness and good manners. When we looked at how well the school's leaders and governors keep you safe, we found there were things they could improve. We have asked your school's leaders to:

- check that you are always safe and that adults know what they need to do to make sure you are always cared for properly
- make sure that you all make better progress in English and mathematics
- improve the quality of teaching so that you achieve better
- set up systems to check how well the school is working so that staff know what needs to improve
- make sure the governing body knows what it has to do to help the school improve by asking more questions of the headteacher and staff and making regular checks on the safety of the school site
- encourage you all to attend school regularly.

There are things you can do to help, including behaving well in every lesson, attending school regularly, working hard and always doing your best.

Yours sincerely

Jane Millward
Her Majesty's Inspector

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