

# St Joseph's Catholic Primary School and Nursery

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	116876
<b>Local Authority</b>	Worcestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	338912
<b>Inspection dates</b>	21–22 October 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Peter Clifton

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	222
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Timothy McConnell
<b>Headteacher</b>	Miranda Gibbs
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	30 January 2007
<b>School address</b>	St Joseph's Close Droitwich WR9 0RY
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 15 lessons and observed nine teachers. Meetings were held with members of the governing body, staff and pupils. Inspectors talked to pupils in lessons and at break times. They observed the school's work and looked at school documentation, including development planning, monitoring information, evidence of safeguarding procedures and pupils' books. They analysed 92 responses to the parents' questionnaire and took account of the views expressed by parents and carers during informal meetings and conversations.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- What is the current picture of provision and progress made in mathematics across the school, particularly the progress made by boys?
- How effective are the school's strategies to improve attendance?
- How well do pupils assess their own work and set personal goals for improvement?
- Are there areas of the school's work which are outstanding?

## Information about the school

This is an average sized primary school. Most pupils are of White British origin, with the largest other group being of Asian or Asian British heritage. A small number of pupils are learning to speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is average. The school runs childcare provision in the afternoon. There is extended provision through a breakfast and after-school club. The school has recently gained the Leading Parent Partnership Award. The headteacher joined the school in April 2009.

**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?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

St Joseph's is a good school where pupils achieve well and attain above average standards. Children in the Nursery feel very secure and rapidly grow in confidence. Pupils build on this good start, and learning and progress of different groups of pupils throughout the school are at least good. In lessons, the pupils listen well and work together confidently to support their learning. Their attendance is average. It is not higher mainly because too much time is lost through term-time holidays.

Pupils' express their views with a great deal of assurance, displaying a strong set of personal values which they act upon. They are very proud of their school. The many pupils spoken to during the inspection indicated that they feel safe at all times and that they have great confidence in the adults who look after them. They also say that the encouragement for them to adopt healthy lifestyles is 'fantastic', including eating brown bread sandwiches. There are strong links with local schools and organisations, as well as wider links with contrasting schools, which enable the pupils to have a very good insight into the similarities and differences between their own and others' cultures. Adults know the pupils exceptionally well and ensure, for example, that those with significant special educational needs and/or disabilities receive sensitive and highly effective support. Leaders have tackled persistent absence very firmly and this is now low. Relationships in lessons are very positive and pupils are expected to produce their best work. Boys and girls are very keen to answer questions and share their ideas. They often answer questions at length, explaining their thinking. Pupils have targets to help them to understand what they need to do to improve and assess their own work. In some lessons, these are used well to help pupils understand how well they are doing and set personal goals. However, this practice is inconsistent across the school.

The headteacher has the strong support of staff and the governing body and has made a number of important changes in the school which have strengthened pupils' progress. In mathematics, the number of boys and girls working at the higher levels across the school is improving rapidly and attainment is rising. The great majority of lessons are at least good and, sometimes, outstanding. The quality of learning observed by inspectors, matches closely the school's view. Teachers plan well for pupils of different abilities in English and mathematics and provide a wide range of different activities to maintain pupils' interest and curiosity. In science, planning for the needs of pupils is not as strong and leaders have accurately identified a weakness in developing the pupils' practical investigative skills. The school's success in maintaining above average standards in English and outstanding elements of pupils' personal development since the previous inspection and a continuous drive for improvement demonstrate the school's good capacity for sustained development.

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## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in science by:
  - ensuring that planning in lessons closely matches pupils' different capabilities
  - giving pupils more opportunities to develop their practical investigative skills.
- Improve the consistency of use of targets in lessons to make learning more individual and provide more opportunities for pupils to assess their own work.
- Further discourage parents from taking their children out of school for holidays in term time.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Children start school with skills, knowledge and understanding that are in line with those expected for their ages. Pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is above average. A good proportion of pupils are on track to reach the higher levels in Years 5 and 6. Attainment in science is average, and learning is limited because work is not always sufficiently challenging. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those of minority ethnic heritage make good progress. Those who are at a fairly early stage of English language acquisition are included well in learning activities. Pupils have good skills in information and communication technology (ICT) and use these well to help with their learning.

In nearly all lessons observed, learning was good and sometimes outstanding. In Year 2, pupils were asked to write instructions for a science activity and this provided high levels of motivation for different groups of pupils. Those with special educational needs and/or difficulties were given additional support which enabled them to learn as well as other pupils. Year 5 pupils made good progress in mathematics when finding multipliers for numbers because expectations of different groups of abilities were set and the pupils helped each other to learn. In Year 4, pupils wrote about aliens and thought carefully about the way descriptive words could be used for best effect.

Around the school, the pupils are very well mannered and polite. They readily engage in conversation to say what they think about their school. Pupils think that behaviour is good. They recognise that, on a few occasions, it could be better, and say they are treated firmly yet with fairness. On a few occasions, pupils' level of concentration dips in lessons. Almost all pupils agree that they like school, feel very safe and that they learn how to keep themselves healthy. Pupils have researched into healthy eating and produced leaflets for parents about which foods to include in lunchboxes. Many pupils take part in a wide range of additional sporting activities. The pupils are acutely aware of the possible dangers of using the internet and are entirely confident that any issues raised for example, through the class 'feeling box' will be promptly addressed. They enjoy going to the breakfast and after-school club. The pupils make a very significant contribution to school life for example, through working as playground buddies, tour guides, and representing the pupil voice as senators. A special event for World War II veterans planned and run by pupils was a memorable occasion for all concerned. Pupils' tolerance and understanding of those who are different is exceptional. Pupils recognise the value of finding out about different faith and cultures. They know for example, that the children from the link Hindu school in India are very proud to be part of their Catholic community.

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*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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

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

## How effective is the provision?

In English, mathematics and ICT, teachers demonstrate good or better subject knowledge to engage and challenge the pupils. Speaking and listening is used especially well to clarify thinking and in developing ideas for writing. The pupils work confidently together to solve problems in mathematics. In some classes, pupils show a keen awareness of what they need to do to improve and, for example, can identify what makes an effective piece of writing. However, this aspect of the school's work remains inconsistent. In many lessons, teachers intervene at just the right moment to move learning on. On a few occasions, the pace of learning dips for example when the plenary is not effectively linked to learning; rather it becomes a showcase of children's work.

There is outstanding provision to promote aspects of pupil's personal development and good provision to develop basic skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT. In mathematics, pupils are given tasks which require them to apply their skills. However, there is too little attention paid to the practical application of science. Learning is made relevant by making links between subjects. For example, using research skills in ICT to help write a diary about life in Sparta. Memorable experiences include dressing up in Tudor outfits and devising role plays for parents. The curriculum is brought to life by accessing local Roman facilities, nearby woods and the local canal. The youngest children who are cared for in the afternoons are confident and happy. The setting provides a good range of stimulating

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activities, both inside and outdoors. There is a good range of activities provided in the after-school club.

Highly effective arrangements are in place to ensure that children from the Early Years Foundation Stage are provided with skills to prepare them for work in Year 1. There are extensive links with the high school which ensures that the oldest pupils are well prepared to make the transfer both socially and academically. High quality support is provided for children with different medical needs or who have suffered from bereavement. Special arrangements are in place to ensure that those pupils who are experiencing particular difficulties are listened to and supported. For some pupils, this support has enabled them to attend school much more regularly.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

Members of the governing body who met with inspectors expressed the view that the school's leaders and managers have secured beneficial change and this concurs with the inspection findings. The drive for improvement has been supported through strong teamwork where all staff share the same high quality ambitions for the pupils. Rigorous and accurate self-evaluation has led to the marked improvement in mathematics. A successful focus on the quality of teaching in lessons has resulted in an increase in the number of lessons where pupils of all abilities are helped to make good progress. Leaders track the progress of individual and groups of pupils closely and take swift action to prevent anyone from falling behind. Provision to secure equal opportunities and tackle discrimination for all pupils is good.

The governing body provides a good level of challenge and support to drive through improvement. It is knowledgeable about the school's strengths and what needs to be improved. The school has well developed partnerships with other organisations and schools. These provide many experiences in the arts, sports and the community. The school's Leading Parent Partnership Award reflects the work of the school to include parents in many school activities. International, national and local links to promote pupils' cultural and ethnic awareness are all well established. The link with a school in India has, for example, provided the pupils with a strong insight into a Hindu community. Links with a contrasting school successfully promotes the message of being 'inclusive in everything we do'. The school follows good practice across all aspects of safeguarding. Staff are well trained in all aspects of child protection. The school is vigilant about internet safety and risks are fully assessed before trips take place.

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*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make good progress from starting points which are in line with expectations. By the time they join Year 1, most reach or exceed levels expected across the areas of learning, although their creative development is not as strong as other areas of learning. In the Nursery, the children are very happy and settled. They play with each other happily and are learning to take turns. In the outdoor learning area, they enjoy riding on trikes and digging for treasure in the sandpit. Adults promote counting activities well and expect the children to try new things for themselves before helping. Additional support and encouragement are given to those children with particular needs or who are in the early stages of learning to speak English. In one lesson, the children greatly enjoyed physical exercise and responded superbly to a song about different animals. In the Reception class, there are strong relationships and the children work and play together confidently. The children take pride in working out the sounds of simple words, although the pace of the learning dips when the children are not all actively involved in the task. A group of boys and girls took great care in putting nappies on dolls, helping each other confidently and sharing their feelings.

The children's development is carefully tracked through the 'learning journals' and in records. The quality of provision is regularly evaluated by leaders and changes implemented to improve learning. Leaders have plans to develop the outside area, particularly to improve creative aspects of provision.



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*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

## Views of parents and carers

Questionnaires from parents and carers, and those spoken to during the inspection indicate a strong level of overall satisfaction with what the school provides. Parents and carers think their children are kept very safe and inspectors agree. The majority of comments made in the questionnaires are very complimentary about the school, including how kind and caring the staff are. Others indicate that communication with the school is not good enough and these relate to newsletters as well as personal contact. Inspectors looked at a number of newsletters which were informative, regular and reflected the views of the governing body. A few parents and carers expressed concerns about behaviour. Inspectors were impressed by the good behaviour and positive attitudes of the pupils.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Droitwich, St Joseph's 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 inspection team received 92 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 222 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	53	58	38	41	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	57	62	33	36	1	1	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	37	40	44	48	9	10	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	44	48	33	36	9	10	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	44	48	42	46	2	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	36	39	49	53	4	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	40	43	41	45	11	12	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)	41	45	43	47	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	41	45	40	43	10	11	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	34	37	36	39	14	15	3	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	33	36	32	35	15	16	7	8
The school is led and managed effectively	38	41	35	38	7	8	8	9
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	44	48	41	45	3	3	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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 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 exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## 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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.**



25 October 2010

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Droitwich, St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Droitwich WR9 0RY**

Thank you for welcoming us to your school and for talking to us so confidently about your work. You were very polite and friendly. We agree with you that your school is good. This means that there are many things that it does well, but also there are a few things that could be better. Here are some of the things we liked about your school.

Children in the Nursery class settle very quickly.

Many of your lessons help you to make at least good progress.

You are cared for exceptionally well in school and those of you with more needs are given a lot of extra support.

You have an excellent understanding of how to stay safe, make a superb contribution to the school and the wider community and you say you always feel safe.

You have a great deal of knowledge and understanding about the importance of being active and eating healthily.

Teachers use questioning and speaking and listening well to help you to learn.

Many of the activities you are given are interesting and memorable.

You know a great deal about others from different faiths and cultures and rightly say that this area of the schools work is superb.

To help you make faster progress, we are asking your teachers to help you improve your work in science by making sure that activities are at just the right level and give you more opportunities to investigate and do practical work. We have also asked them to help you to use your targets more to assess your own work. Lastly, we have asked adults in your school to work even more closely with you and your families so that you always come to school unless you are unwell.

You can help your teachers by always doing your best work.

Yours sincerely

Peter Clifton

Lead inspector

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