

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Wrightington

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119696
Local Authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	358608
Inspection dates	29–30 September 2010
Reporting inspector	Sue Sharkey

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	114
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Peter Philips
Headteacher	Mrs Janice Keating
Date of previous school inspection	7 May 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited nine lessons involving five teachers and a higher level teaching assistant. Meetings were held with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, pupils, representatives of the governing body, staff and the local authority. Inspectors observed pupils' work, and looked at the school's systems for tracking pupils' progress, safeguarding documents and key policies, and assessments. Inspection questionnaire responses from 62 parents and carers, 11 school staff and 61 pupils were also taken into account.

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

- Whether teaching and assessment sufficiently challenges the more-able pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2.
- The sustainability of the strategies being used to raise achievement in writing at Key Stage 1.
- The impact and challenge of monitoring carried out by school leaders.
- Whether curriculum planning in the Early Years Foundation Stage enables the full use of both the indoor and the outdoor environment.

Information about the school

This is a smaller than average size primary school serving a rural area. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion of pupils with special education needs and/or disabilities is below the national average and the large majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils who join the school during the year is above the national average. An independent provider runs a breakfast and after-school club on the school site. This is subject to a separate inspection. The school has pupils who join throughout the year. Among the school's awards are Healthy School status and Eco School bronze.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School provides a satisfactory education. The school's caring approach is securely based on Christian values with the aim of ensuring that pupils feel safe, secure and valued. Care, guidance and support are good. These good provisions contribute well to pupils' good personal, social and emotional development. Parents and carers are positive in their comments about the school's work. A typical comment being, 'St Joseph's has a very caring atmosphere. Staff are friendly and approachable and ensure that children are happy.' Good links with the community and a range of external partners help to meet pupils' needs and bring benefits to their learning and personal development. Pupils have positive attitudes, their attendance is high and punctuality is good. The skills and confidence that pupils develop ensure a satisfactory preparation for later life.

Children enjoy learning from the time they start in the Early Years Foundation Stage where they are nurtured and cared for well in a safe environment. Attainment is broadly average in English and mathematics, reflecting satisfactory progress overall throughout Key Stages 1 and 2. Good progress has been achieved by some pupils but not across all year groups and all groups of pupils. Sometimes activities are not sufficiently challenging enough for the most-able pupils, particularly in Key Stage 2. The school has a wide range of strategies in place to improve pupils' achievement. Inspection evidence shows that these are beginning to impact on school improvement, particularly in Key Stage 1.

The curriculum and teaching and learning are satisfactory. A broad and balanced curriculum gives pupils opportunities to develop their awareness of the wider world giving learning a purpose and context. Teaching makes good use of both group and paired work so that pupils can learn together and develop their speaking and listening skills. The pace of lessons does not always motivate pupils well or ensure that they are all fully engaged in their learning. Writing is a key focus in English but as yet there is not a wide range of writing throughout the curriculum. Marking of pupils' work is regular and positive in tone, but does not always help pupils to know what they have to do to improve their work in mathematics.

The school has satisfactory capacity to improve. The school's self-evaluation is satisfactory, though not rigorous enough in its assessment of the school's overall effectiveness. Since the last inspection, a range of improvement strategies have been put in place. Some have been successful, particularly those related to pupils becoming independent learners and the monitoring of the school's work by subject leaders.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment and improve achievement, by:
- – Ensuring that there is always a rapid pace in lessons to motivate pupils at all times

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- – ensuring that there is a consistent approach to challenging the most-able pupils, particularly in Key Stage 2
- – improving the breadth and range of writing across the curriculum
- – ensuring that the marking of pupils' work in mathematics always helps them to know how to move onto the next steps in their learning.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted Inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Overall, children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that are in line with those expected for their age and make good progress in their Reception Year. Although there is some evidence of good learning, pupils' overall learning and progress through Key Stages 1 and 2 are satisfactory. By the time they leave school in Year 6, pupils' attainment is broadly in line with the national average. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities benefit from additional support, as well as tasks that meet their needs well, ensuring that they make good progress. The school has recently introduced a range of strategies to raise pupils' achievement. The full impact of these is not yet evident but there are indications that some of these are beginning to be successful and improvements are starting to show. For example, the 2010 teacher assessments in reading and writing at the end of Year 2 show an improvement in pupils' achievement. In most lessons, pupils are active participants and are keen to succeed. This was evident in a Year 5 lesson when pupils were looking at different ways of working out multiplication answers. They responded well to the teacher's questions, were keen to answer and motivated to learn. In Years 3 and 4, pupils enjoyed asking questions of one pupil, who was in the role of the main character in a myth. She responded well, which initiated a flood of good, pertinent questions. Results in the national tests have been broadly in line with the national average in recent years, although increasingly challenging targets have been set for the pupils currently in Year 6.

Pupils' behaviour is good. They are polite, get on well with each other and show courtesy around the school and at break times. Older pupils show a strong sense of responsibility and set a good example to the younger ones. The school council plays an important role in school life and has made valuable suggestions to aid the development of the outdoor adventure area, as well as introducing filtered water into school. From an early age, pupils know how to eat healthily and engage enthusiastically in games and sports activities. Pupils' involvement in the school and wider community is good. They take an active part in helping others, including regularly raising funds to support local and international charities and helping communities in Africa to purchase pigs and goats. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils cooperate well with each other and through the school assemblies, learn to worship together as well as with their neighbours in the community and with visitors to school.

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Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
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	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ 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?

Notable strengths in teaching include the good relationships in all classes, thorough planning and the use of assessment to inform pupils' future learning. Where teaching is at its best, good questioning extends pupils' knowledge, the teachers' expectations are high and discussions are lively. However, in some lessons pace is not always rapid enough so that pupils are constantly motivated, nor is there always sufficient challenge for the most-able pupils, particularly in Key Stage 2, to help them make the best of their abilities. Marking of pupils' work is well established in English, but does not yet extend to helping pupils move their learning on in mathematics.

The curriculum is well resourced and meets the needs of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, but does not always reach out to the most-able pupils. Good use is made of visits and visitors to enrich learning and there is a good attendance at school clubs. Curricular planning takes account of individual needs but there are missed opportunities to develop writing in different subjects. Since autumn 2009, Year 6 pupils have had the opportunity to take part in annual residential activities. These help to raise pupils' awareness of different peoples' needs and life experiences and to ensure that they are soundly equipped for their future life.

Pupils feel happy and secure in school because they are cared for well. They say that adults care for them and will always help them. Good links are made with families when

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children start school and this continues through the school, with Year 6 pupils saying that teachers are helping them well to prepare for secondary school.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher, supported well by her deputy headteacher, has a clear vision for improvement and has been working with the local authority to implement strategies in order to raise attainment. Strategies have been introduced to improve provision and ensure that the school's system for tracking pupils' progress is rigorous. Subject leaders have clear action plans for development and are confident that pupils' achievement in English and mathematics will improve. There have been some improvements over the last year but recent unvalidated national test data indicate that these are not yet sufficient in order to raise attainment at the end of Year 6. Provision to secure equal opportunities for pupils is satisfactory and the school has effective systems in place for tackling any form of discrimination. The governing body challenges school leaders appropriately and is aware that pupils' attainment and achievement are a high priority. They ensure that child protection and safeguarding procedures are good in all aspects of the school's practice. Community cohesion is satisfactory, the school is aware that opportunities for pupils to explore the diverse cultures that characterise contemporary Britain need to be built into the curriculum. The school values the strong partnership it has with parents and carers.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Early Years Foundation Stage provision is good. Children quickly settle, responding well to the warm and welcoming environment and the high quality care and support they receive. Early assessment shows that they enter the Reception class with skills and understanding that are broadly in line with what is expected for their age. Children find learning fun and benefit from easy access to the well resourced outdoor area. For example, children were observed using recycled material to make large monsters and showing how well they could make high and low sounds on a recorder. At the same time, children indoors selected different materials to illustrate a meal reflecting a focus on the letter 'm'. They behaved and shared well together as they enjoyed making their sparkly marshmallow pictures. All adults take every opportunity to initiate conversations with children, and teaching assistants play a major part in this. Children's development is tracked systematically, with good use being made of regular observations and photographs to record their achievements. Children's individual needs are identified early and staff modify activities accordingly. As a result, children make good progress so that by the time they reach Year 1 most have exceeded the expected levels for their age, particularly in number and calculations. Leadership and management are good ensuring that planning reflects an understanding of how young children learn.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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

There was a high return of inspection questionnaires. The overwhelming majority of parents and carers who returned the questionnaire are positive about the way the school cares for and educates their children. They feel that their children enjoy school, are kept safe and they are pleased with their children's progress. Some took time to add comments to the questionnaires they returned, many to reinforce the strength of their positive views, which inspection findings support. A small minority of parents and carers raised some concern about their children's progress. The inspectors investigated these during the course of the inspection and judged that progress was satisfactory and that the school has systems in place for communicating with parents and carers and informing them about their children's progress.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Wroughtington 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 62 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 114 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	43	69	19	31	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	52	84	10	16	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	28	45	28	45	6	10	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	28	45	30	48	4	6	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	30	48	28	45	2	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	34	55	23	37	2	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	42	68	20	32	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)	25	40	34	55	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	32	52	27	44	3	5	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	30	48	30	48	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	30	48	27	44	1	2	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	45	73	16	26	0	0	1	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	43	69	17	27	2	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). 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">■ 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.



1 October 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Wrightington, Wigan, WN6 9RE

Thank you for making the inspection team so welcome when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed talking with you and watching you learn in lessons. We were pleased with how well you understand the importance of keeping healthy. We thought your behaviour was also good and congratulate you for raising money for charity and helping your community. I am sure that the animals you helped to buy for African communities have helped lots of families to have good food. Overall, we found that your school provides you with a satisfactory education and that there are many changes in school that your teachers expect will help you all learn even more.

There are some things that we have asked the school to do to help to make it better.

Firstly, for teachers to challenge you more in lessons so that some of you can achieve to the best of your ability in English and mathematics. Secondly, I have asked teachers to make lessons quicker paced so that you are busy nearly all the time. Thirdly, that they plan for you to do different kinds of writing in other subjects and lastly that when teachers mark your mathematics books they add comments, as they do in English, that will help you to know what you need to learn next.

You said that you enjoy coming to school and this is shown by your outstanding attendance and always being on time for your lessons, well done.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Sue Sharkey

Lead inspector

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