

St Joseph's Catholic and CofE (VA) Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	134773
Local Authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	360637
Inspection dates	9–10 November 2010
Reporting inspector	Joanne Harvey 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	110
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sheila Godley
Headteacher	Jane Burke
Date of previous school inspection	4 December 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one additional inspector. Ten lessons were observed taught by five teachers. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, the governing body, staff, school leaders at all levels and a representative of the local authority. Inspectors observed the school's work, looked at its documentation, assessment information, school and local authority monitoring information, lesson plans, school policies and 54 questionnaires from parents and carers.

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

- Is attainment in writing securely in line with expectations across school?
- Is progress at least satisfactory in each key stage, key subject and for different groups?
- Are there inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and learning which are resulting in slower progress for pupils in some classes and some subjects?
- Are leadership systems rigorous and accurate in their analysis of the school's strengths and areas for development, and are all leaders effective in ensuring weaknesses are tackled and improvements driven swiftly enough, particularly in the quality of teaching and learning?

Information about the school

The school is smaller than average of its type. The very large majority of pupils are White British and there are no pupils for whom English is an additional language. An average number of pupils are known to be eligible to claim free school meals. The percentage with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of special educational needs, is lower than in most schools. The school has achieved a National Healthy Schools 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: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

This is a satisfactory school. It provides a satisfactory quality of education and a positive and welcoming environment. A key strength is the good care, guidance and support offered to pupils underpinned by a Christian ethos, with every child supported to access all that the school has to offer. Pupils enjoy school and demonstrate this through their above-average attendance. Staff value each pupil and form strong and trusting relationships with them. Pupils say that the teachers are kind and interested in their thoughts and feelings. They feel safe, develop positive attitudes to learning and behave well. Work for the National Healthy Schools Award, opportunities to be physically active and to explore their feelings and emotions result in pupils developing a good understanding of how to keep themselves healthy.

By the time they leave Year 6, pupils attain broadly average standards in English, mathematics and science. This represents satisfactory progress from their starting points. On occasion, standards in mathematics and science have been above average. In reading, in which pupils progress well, standards have been consistently above average in recent years. In writing, progress is relatively slower across the school and, despite a trend for standards in writing to rise slowly by the end of Year 2, they remain lower than in other subjects at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2. This weakness in writing is because pupils are not given enough opportunities to develop their basic written skills, to practise them in other subjects, or to write at length. Not enough pupils achieve the higher grade in writing at the end of Key Stage 1 or in writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2 because teachers do not consistently challenge the more-able of them to achieve their best. However, teaching has much improved and is satisfactory, with some good practice seen during the inspection. Previous inadequate teaching which led to a tailback of underachievement and pupils needing to catch up in the older year groups is no longer evident. Inconsistencies remain in how well teachers plan to meet the needs of different pupils, tackle misconceptions and the pace at which learning proceeds. Consequently there is not yet enough good teaching to ensure that pupils make good progress.

Senior leaders have successfully united staff behind the drive for school improvement. Their evaluation of the school's strengths and areas for development is largely accurate. Systems for monitoring and evaluating the school's work and resulting action plans for improvement are detailed but lack sufficient focus on pupils' learning and outcomes. Participation in strategic planning and self-evaluation has yet to be fully devolved to allow leaders and managers at all levels to play their full part in driving school improvement. Nevertheless, improvements in provision and pupils' outcomes since the last inspection demonstrate that the school provides satisfactory value for money and a satisfactory capacity to continue to improve.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Quicken pupils' progress and raise attainment in writing by:
 - ensuring there are no gaps in pupils' basic skills
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to practise their writing skills in a range of contexts and to write at length
 - celebrating examples of excellence in writing throughout school.
- Bring consistency to the quality of teaching and learning and the rate at which pupils make progress, particularly to ensure more pupils attain the highest grades in writing and mathematics, by:
 - matching work to pupils' needs so all are suitably challenged
 - ensuring teachers do not talk for too long, giving pupils more time to apply their learning in a range of contexts
 - ensuring that teachers check pupils' understanding during lessons and modify tasks if they are too easy or too hard
 - asking questions and setting problem-solving challenges which promote the development of higher-order skills.
- Strengthen the impact of leadership and management systems by:
 - ensuring systems for tracking pupils' progress are clear, concise and easily accessible to leaders at all levels
 - ensuring that improvement planning identifies clear measurable outcomes for pupils and interim benchmarks for monitoring success
 - ensuring monitoring and resulting feedback to teachers is sharply focused on pupils' learning
 - further devolving leadership and management so that everyone can play their full part in driving forward school improvement.
- Up to 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

Observations by inspectors and evidence presented by the school show that attainment is average in English, mathematics and science when pupils leave Year 6. Pupils were seen to be making satisfactory progress in the majority of lessons. For example, in an English lesson, pupils made satisfactory progress in their ability to respond to a text. The task they were given to complete built on their prior learning. Some pupils were supported to make good progress by an additional adult, but most pupils carried out the same task and only make satisfactory gains in their learning. The teacher talked for too long so pupils did not get enough time to practise their writing skills and opportunities were missed to tailor challenging questions to those who found the task too easy. In contrast, in a good lesson, learning about the characteristics of diary writing moved on at a good pace because pupils had been prepared well through a role-play activity. They set their own success criteria

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and were challenged by careful individual questioning to check their understanding and challenge their thinking. The additional intervention programmes for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities ensure that they also learn appropriately and make satisfactory and, sometimes, good progress. Where gaps have been identified in the performance of groups, these are narrowing.

Pupils' enjoyment of learning is seen in the way they respond to teachers' directions and maintain interest in activities. They take on responsibilities, such as membership of the school council or as prefects. They are thoughtful of others - for example, in raising money to buy playground equipment for the youngest pupils or donating harvest parcels to those in need. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory, but their experience of and ability to reflect and comment on their place in a multicultural and multi-faith society is less well developed. They talk convincingly about road safety and how to keep safe on the internet.

Pupils' ability to apply their satisfactory basic and personal skills ensures they are prepared suitably for the next stage of their education and lives.

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	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	3
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
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	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

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?

Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve have risen. Lesson planning is conscientious and ensures additional adults are deployed suitably so that no pupil falls

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behind and gaps in learning are being addressed. Lesson planning is usually linked to accurate assessments and work is usually adapted to meet the needs of different abilities, although this is not always the case. For example, the more-able are too often expected to complete the same tasks as others before going on to complete additional tasks which may not extend their learning. In the better lessons, teachers confidently employ a range of delivery styles to ensure greater interest and engagement. For example, in a Key Stage 1 lesson, the teacher visited the classroom in character dressed as a chef. The children worked excitedly throughout the lesson, followed the recipe, and wrote their own instructions. They did not realise how hard they were working, but they progressed well with their learning about how to read and write clear instructions and in their understanding of good health and hygiene. In some lessons, teachers talk for too long and pupils lack the opportunity to practise their skills. Not all teachers check pupils' understanding during lessons so that they can clear up any misunderstandings or challenge pupils further through well-formulated questions and problem-solving activities.

Much work has been done to improve curriculum planning. This now ensures the progression of skills in all subjects and allows creativity in devising cross-curricular topics which pupils enjoy. The approach is relatively new and not fully embedded and there has not been time for its impact to be fully evaluated. There are not enough opportunities to practise writing skills and higher-order skills in mathematics in different contexts. Collaboration with partners ensures enrichment through the arts, sports and additional resources for gifted and talented pupils. For example, the 'Next Steps' project with Chesterfield College helps to raise expectations and aspirations for the future. A range of extra-curricular clubs appeal to most interests.

Pupils, parents and carers are particularly happy that care and welfare are well promoted. There is vigilance to ensure the needs of the vulnerable are a priority. Particular success is enjoyed in reducing social and emotional barriers to learning through effective collaboration with other agencies and the school's own learning mentor. As a consequence the very few pupils who have difficulty independently maintaining the school's high expectations of their behaviour are supported highly effectively to improve. Consequently, the very few incidents of poor behaviour do not interfere with the experience of others. Pupils are well prepared for transition into and through school and to the next stage of their education.

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

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How effective are leadership and management?

After a period of challenge and staff changes, the leaders and managers of the school have ensured that all staff are committed to school improvement. Expectations have risen and because there is more rigour to the collection and analysis of information about how well pupils are doing leaders have a much clearer picture of where teaching is less effective, where to focus additional interventions and set more challenging targets for pupils' attainment. Leaders have ensured that the quality of teaching has improved but do not focus enough on the quality of learning taking place.

Because systems of self-evaluation have strengthened, leaders, including the governing body, have a more accurate picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses. This has allowed the governing body to be more meaningfully involved in setting the strategic direction of the school and ensuring statutory responsibilities, including safeguarding, are met suitably.

There is still work to be done. For example, action planning for improvement does not make clear enough the intended outcomes for pupils in a way which can be measured and monitored easily. Data analysis is not organised sufficiently well to make best use of the considerable information collected to track progress closely. For example, although school leaders demonstrate a satisfactory commitment to promoting equality and tackling discrimination, data presented do not make clear enough how well pupils from different groups represented in school are performing relative to their peers.

Many leadership systems are new and still to embed and some middle leaders are new in post. Leadership has yet to be devolved sufficiently so that leaders and managers at all levels can play their full part in driving forward school improvement. Partnerships to promote well-being, particularly for the vulnerable through the local family of schools, are well established. Partnerships to promote learning are less well developed. The school is a harmonious community and promotes links within its immediate locality. Leaders recognise that there is more to be done to promote community cohesion at national and global levels.

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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	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
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

Children are well cared for in the happy and safe indoor environment. They enter the setting with levels of attainment that are similar to those expected for their age in most areas of learning. They make satisfactory and, recently, sometimes better progress. Consequently, they at least attain in line with expectations in most areas of learning and are currently on target to exceed expectations in their early literacy skills by the time they enter Year 1. Progress is at its best when children are working at tasks closely planned and directed by adults who intervene appropriately and encourage them to think and solve problems for themselves. It slows when they initiate their own activities as these are not always planned or structured carefully enough to support learning. Children behave well, cooperate and take care of resources. Opportunities are sometimes lost to encourage further independence and healthy lifestyles, for example through snack-and-drink time, hand-washing and hygiene.

Detailed information is conscientiously collected about how well children are achieving. Planning for learning based on this information is detailed. Opportunities are missed for children to be more involved in planning their own learning at the outset of sessions and to review their own success at the end. Occasionally, opportunities are missed to link activities more closely through themes to allow children more opportunities to revisit prior learning and try out new learning in different ways. Adults work hard to make the best use of the outdoor learning environment, which is limited by lack of space and variation.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Safeguarding requirements are met. Additional training and support, for example from the local authority, are embraced and have a positive impact. Regular monitoring has resulted in the identification of gaps in learning and the measures required to close them. More challenging targets are being set as a result of improved data analysis, although best use is not being made of the

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information collected to drive improvements more quickly. Similarly, action planning for improvement lacks a clear focus on measurable outcomes for children.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

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

Views of parents and carers

Considerably more parents and carers than is usual nationally responded to the questionnaire. The very large majority are happy with their children's experience of school and judged the overall management of the school to be effective. They are confident that the school meets their children's needs and that they are kept informed of the progress made. They think that their children are making enough progress and that teaching is good. The vast majority report that their children enjoy school, are kept safe and helped to have a healthy lifestyle. A small minority felt that the school does not deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour. Inspectors examined this concern closely and found the school's management of poor behaviour was effective and other pupils were not affected.

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 and CoFE (VA) 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 54 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 110 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	31	57	21	39	2	4	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	36	67	16	30	2	4	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	29	54	22	41	3	6	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	34	63	17	31	3	6	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	35	65	17	31	2	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	26	48	25	46	2	4	1	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	30	56	23	43	1	2	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)	24	44	27	50	2	4	1	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	28	52	24	44	0	0	2	4
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	24	44	16	30	9	17	2	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	28	52	19	35	3	6	3	6
The school is led and managed effectively	32	59	15	28	5	9	1	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	32	59	20	37	2	4	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.



11 November 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Joseph's Catholic and CofE (VA) Primary School, Chesterfield, S43 3LY

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us when we came to inspect your school recently. I also wish to thank those of you who took time to talk with us and tell us about your school.

These are some of the things we have said about your school:

You make satisfactory progress and reach average standards.

Your school gives you good care, guidance and support.

There are many things planned for you to do which make your learning more interesting and that you say are fun.

You behave well in school, say you feel safe and know how to stay healthy.

The teaching you receive and the way your school is led and managed are both satisfactory.

We have asked your headteacher, staff and governors to make lessons even better by:

- ensuring that there are no gaps in your skills
- giving you even more opportunities to write at length and in different ways
- displaying and celebrating lots of examples of excellent writing
- ensuring that you work at a fast enough pace
- giving you more chances to work on your own and solve problems for yourselves
- making sure that the work is not too hard or too easy for you
- making sure that teachers notice and correct your mistakes and misunderstandings
- making sure that all the work the leaders of the school do is focused on your attainment and progress
- making sure that all of the adults who lead your school play their part in helping it to improve.

You can help your school by continuing to behave well and working with your teachers to achieve the very best you can.

Yours sincerely

Joanne Harvey

Her Majesty's Inspector

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