

# St Joseph's Catholic School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	126473
<b>Local Authority</b>	Wiltshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	360093
<b>Inspection dates</b>	12–13 January 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	John Seal HMI

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>	Modern (non-selective)
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	396
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Paul Hooper
<b>Headteacher</b>	Paul Hughes
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	11 June 2008
<b>School address</b>	Church Road Salisbury Wiltshire SP1 1QY
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors. They observed 21 lessons, which involved seeing 17 teachers. Meetings were held with groups of students, staff and members of the governing body. The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at: data on students' progress; a range of policies and planning documents; minutes of meetings; the school's self-evaluation documents; risk assessments; financial information; and the single central record of safeguarding checks on staff. The team analysed questionnaires returned by 109 parents and carers, 97 students and 39 staff.

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

- The levels of student attendance and the efficacy of the school's strategies to encourage low attending students to attend more regularly.
- How effective the school's leaders and managers are in monitoring information about student attainment and progress and taking action to make improvements where necessary.

## Information about the school

St Joseph's is smaller than average and is a humanities specialist college. A very large proportion of students are of White British heritage. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is lower than average. The percentage of students identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities are about the same as the national average. Their needs include specific learning difficulties and behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. The school has achieved the Sportsmark gold, Investors in People and Healthy Schools awards. The school shares the site with two single-sex Church of England secondary modern schools which were inspected separately at the same time.

**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. There are some outstanding features. The warm, friendly and welcoming atmosphere is matched by a strong focus on learning.

Since its last inspection, the school has sustained improvements in students' attainment. Consequently, the proportion of students achieving five A\* to C GCSEs in 2010 was broadly in line with the national average. Their rates of progress were higher than those seen nationally, especially in English and mathematics, often from very low starting points. These achievements have been secured by good teaching, a good, creative and flexible curriculum, provision of good care, guidance and support with some exemplary features, and dedicated and effective leadership and management.

The size of the school contributes to students and staff to developing trusting and positive relationships. As a result, students feel extremely safe and have no problem in seeking help and support if they need it. They behave well both around the school in lessons, sometimes in an exemplary fashion, and know how to live healthy lifestyles very well.

Although the majority of students' attendance is broadly average, despite the schools' very best efforts there is a small but significant minority of students whose attendance is low. The school employs a wide range of strategies to encourage students to attend and recently some small improvements have been seen. Nonetheless, the small group of students who have poor attendance are hindered from achieving better results.

The school's detailed knowledge of each student, allied to very robust and well-embedded systems and procedures for safeguarding, are exemplary. As a result, all staff appointed have been checked before they work with children.

The senior leadership team and most middle managers know the school well. There have been steady and notable improvements since the last inspection. Although there are some inconsistencies in how middle managers monitor and evaluate pupils' progress and in the quality of teaching, overall the systems are strong and effective. ♦ The governing body work closely with leaders and managers and have a clear understanding of what the school is good at and what it needs to develop further. Consequently, the school has good capacity to improve.

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

- Increase the proportions of students who attend the school regularly in order to meet or exceed the school's attendance targets by:
  - setting attendance targets for individual students

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- maintaining and developing strong working relationships with appropriate external agencies
- ensuring all staff are responsible for consistently supporting the school's strategies for good attendance.
- Ensure that all middle leaders perform at the level of the best in the school with particular regards to:
  - analysing students' attainment and progress information to inform priorities for action.
  - monitoring and evaluating students' progress and the quality of teaching and learning

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****2**

Students' attainment has increased year on year since the last inspection. Students' work seen during the inspection and the schools' analysis of data provides strong indications that their good, and in a few cases outstanding, progress is a continuing feature of improving standards. Consequently, a majority of students' attainment is in line with the national average. There are a range of subjects where students do particularly well; these include English and mathematics. The numbers of students achieving the higher levels of GCSE have increased in recent times. The school's specialist status is reflected in the above average results in history and geography.

Students who have been identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those known to be eligible for free school meals, are effectively identified early on in their school life and are well supported. As a result, they make the same progress as their peers throughout their time in the school. Their attainment is generally in line with students with similar needs nationally.

Most students enjoy coming to school and demonstrate active and enthusiastic attitudes towards their learning, which contributes to the continuing improvements in their overall achievements. The students, their parents and carers feel the lunchtime meals have healthy options, and there are good participation rates for physical activities. Nearly all students spoken to or who returned questionnaires indicated very strongly that they felt exceptionally safe in the school.

Students' basic skills in literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology are broadly in line with the national average; these, in conjunction with their positive attitudes to learning, working together and forming good relationships, ensure they are well prepared for the future. Nevertheless, although the majority of students attend regularly, there are a small number of students who have very low rates of attendance. These students are known to the school well. There are strong links with a wide range of agencies and the school's recently appointed pastoral manager is ensuring that the varied strategies are beginning to have some effect, although it is still early days.

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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>	3
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>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</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>2</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?

Most lessons are good and a few are outstanding. The school has focused on developing consistency across and within departments and this has paid off. The key elements of the good and better lessons include well-structured lesson plans with clear learning objectives, learning activities which match the different needs of students and good use of students' prior learning to ensure new learning builds on this and supports good progress. Good informative marking and setting of targets help students understand their next steps. Well paced, practical sessions provide students with different types of activities throughout the lesson. These include opportunities for students to talk to each other about their learning and ask questions. Teachers' good subject knowledge enables them to ask probing questions and challenge students' mistakes and misconceptions

There are still a few satisfactory lessons. Senior leaders and some middle managers are aware of these and are taking appropriate actions to improve the quality of teaching even further. The main barriers to students' learning in these lesson are limited use of assessment information to inform planning, which leads to students receiving the same information and activities regardless of their abilities. ♦ In addition, teachers talk for too long. This hinders students' progress because they are not actively involved in learning. On a few occasions, this leads to students becoming restless and disengaged from learning.

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The broad, balanced and relevant curriculum carefully matches all students' needs. It is flexible in order to adapt to different groups of students' learning requirements each year. In Key Stage 4, vocational work is varied and the school has compensated for its small size in a creative and effective manner through the strong and productive partnerships both with the other schools on the campus and other local providers. The impact of the school's specialist status is in its early stages but is beginning to be seen through events such as the 'super learning days'. During the autumn term, students had good opportunities to learn about the First World War. ♦ The school is aware that there is more work to be done in terms of widening the opportunities for students to learn modern foreign languages and, in a few subjects, the development of literacy skills is not consistently good. Enrichment activities outside school are well attended, and field trips and visits are regularly organised for different groups and subjects.

Care, guidance and support are a real strength of the school. The school knows each student well, they settle in very quickly due to the excellent transition work with primary schools and students feel well prepared for the world of work or further education. This aspect of the school's work is well led and managed by the pastoral deputy and manager. Students tell inspectors that they feel they can talk to any adult if they have a problem. Relationships across the school are exemplary, and those pupils with complex needs or who are in need of additional emotional or social care are very well supported. The school has excellent links with outside agencies to ensure that vulnerable students and their families are provided with appropriate well-targeted support. Care, guidance and support are good rather than outstanding, because the recent strategies to raise attendance are not showing any signs of sustained improvement.

*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>2</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The headteacher, ably assisted by the academic deputy headteacher and assistant headteacher, has ensured that the focus on raising standards and improving the quality of teaching and learning has been relentless and continuous. Plans for improvement clearly identify the priorities required. These priorities are clearly understood by most middle leaders, who are increasingly involved in monitoring and evaluating students' progress and teaching. There are still some inconsistencies in the rigour of middle leaders' approaches to monitoring and evaluation, but the headteacher and his senior team are aware of this and appropriate improvements are already in place.

The role of the academic deputy has ensured that systems and procedures for analysing information about students' progress and attainment are exemplary. There are strong and

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well-established systems which ensure every individual student's academic information is available for all staff. A majority of teachers use this information well, but the senior team is aware that there are still some minor inconsistencies in its use by a few teachers.

The gaps between students' attainment are either narrow or non-existent and where they do exist, they are tackled effectively. Examples of discrimination are very rare.

The governing body holds the school to account effectively and carries out its duties in an efficient manner. It has a good grip on what the school does well and where it needs to improve. A particular strength is the effective collaborative approach to working with the other governing bodies and the local authority in order to compensate for the small size of the school.

The school has developed appropriate activities for ensuring students are kept safe and for promoting community cohesion which match the needs of most groups of students. The school can demonstrate some suitable examples of how the school engages with different groups locally, nationally and internationally. Appropriate plans for further development are in place.

*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>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Views of parents and carers

The vast majority of parents and carers who returned the questionnaires were highly positive and supportive of the school. All responses were above the current national benchmarks for agreeing with the statements. Inspectors could not find any evidence to support the small number of concerns regarding information 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 Josephs 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 109 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 396 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	40	37	62	57	6	6	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	54	50	54	50	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	33	30	64	59	10	9	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	37	34	65	60	5	5	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	44	40	58	53	2	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	33	30	66	61	9	8	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	40	37	61	56	6	6	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)	42	39	59	54	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	43	39	56	51	4	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	43	39	55	50	8	7	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	32	29	67	61	3	3	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	55	50	50	46	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	63	58	42	39	1	1	1	1

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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 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.

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"><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.**



14 January 2011



Dear Students



### **Inspection of St Joseph's Catholic School, Salisbury SP1 1QY**



Earlier this term, we inspected your school. On behalf of the inspection team I would like to thank you for your warm welcome. We were really impressed with your good behaviour and friendliness to each other and the adults who work with you.

Quite a few of you told us that you think St Joseph's is a good school, and we agree. The school has continued to improve since the last time it was inspected. We found many things the school does well.

- It looks after you extremely well.
- It is enabling more of you to achieve better GCSE results.
- It provides most of you with good lessons.
- It offers you a good curriculum.
- The school is well led and managed.



However, there are some of you whose attendance is below average. Although the school works hard to encourage you to come to school more often, this small group's continuing non-attendance affects the overall average for the school. The school has also noticed that those of you who miss too many lessons do less well in your exams.

We discussed what we found with your headteacher, staff and governors. They are going to be working on the following areas.

- To help even more of you get good exam results.
- To make sure even more of you come to school more often.



We wish you all the very best in your school and future lives.



Yours sincerely



John Seal

Her Majesty's Inspector

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