

# St Joseph's Roman Catholic Primary School, Pickering

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	121654
<b>Local Authority</b>	North Yorkshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	359057
<b>Inspection dates</b>	8–9 February 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Ronald Cohen

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>	110
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Fr Bill East
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Kevin Macklam
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	5 March 2008
<b>School address</b>	Swainsea Lane Pickering North Yorkshire YO18 8AR
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. Inspectors visited nine lessons, involving four teachers, and held meetings with representatives of the governing body, staff, parents and carers, and groups of pupils. Inspectors also looked at a range of documents, including the school's policies, minutes of governing body meetings, the most recent local authority evaluations and an extensive sample of pupils' work. They examined the 53 responses to questionnaires which had been completed by parents and carers, together with those which had been completed by staff and pupils.

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

- How well pupils are learning and progressing in mathematics and English, particularly writing.
- Whether teaching is consistently effective across the school.
- How effective have leaders and managers been in taking measures to improve the school?

## Information about the school

The school is much smaller than average. The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is lower than average. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or learning disabilities, including those with a statement of special educational needs, is also lower than average. The school has achieved several awards, including the Activemark, Inclusion Quality Mark and Healthy School status.

**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

This is a good school, in which pupils make good progress. The school provides an outstandingly caring and supportive environment. Pupils feel happy and safe in the school because of the excellent relationships and good safeguarding arrangements, and they enjoy school. As one said: 'It's lovely coming to school, because you have great fun while you are learning.' They know well how to keep healthy and fit, and they are remarkably well behaved and courteous.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. The faith ethos of the school underpins a strong tradition of respect, tolerance and care, both in and beyond the school. Attendance is average. This is lower than in previous years. This is due to a severe flu bug which laid low large numbers of pupils, and to the fact that many pupils, living in rural areas, were unable to get to school, even when the school was open, during the recent snowy weather.

Pupils' achievement is good. A large minority of children start school with skills that are below those expected for their age. By the end of Year 6, pupils make good progress and attain increasingly higher standards. In 2010, standards were average. This was particularly pleasing to the school since this cohort of pupils entered the school with particularly low skills. The improvement in attainment in writing, however, is not as strong as in other subjects. A particular weakness, here, is the lack of use of creative and extensive vocabulary.

The curriculum is good. Pupil's learning is enriched by many out-of-school clubs and a range of visits and visitors. Teaching and learning are good overall. Some lessons are outstanding and help pupils to make rapid progress. A small minority of lessons, are, however, no better than satisfactory. Here, the challenge and the opportunities for independent learning are less pronounced than in the better lessons. Moreover, in these lessons, teachers' assessment of learning is less well utilised to accurately assess all pupils' progress in order to set work that will move them forward in their learning. This limits the rate of progress these pupils make.

Effective leadership has been a decisive factor in pupils' good achievement. The decisions and actions, taken by the headteacher, have allowed the school to deal successfully with any existing issues and those identified in the previous inspection report. They have brought about significant improvements in teaching and learning, the curriculum and pupils' progress, all of which are now good. Attainment is broadly average and improving rapidly and strongly. The headteacher and governing body have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The school, therefore, demonstrates good capacity for sustained improvement and gives good value for money.

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

- Raise standards in writing, by improving pupils' speaking and listening skills even more in order to improve their vocabulary for writing.
- Ensure that the quality of teaching and learning is consistently good in all lessons by:
  - always planning and implementing strategies which give pupils opportunities to become fully involved in active independent learning
  - ensuring that all lessons move forward smartly from one challenging learning task to another
  - when marking pupils' work, making it crystal clear how they can improve
  - capitalising on opportunities in all lessons to assess pupils as they learn, and adapt teaching to meet all pupils' needs.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

The outcomes for all groups of learners are good. This is due to improvements in the quality of teaching and learning, including a well-planned programme of intervention work, which has resulted in pupils making accelerated progress and improving their attainment.

The strong one-to-one withdrawal programme, together with strong in-class support, is particularly effective in assuring that all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those known to be eligible for free school meals, make similarly, good progress. No groups of pupils underachieve. Pupils take on a range of responsibilities both in and beyond school. For example, older pupils are reading partners for younger ones, and they are involved in local environmental issues.

Pupils say how much they enjoy school. This is not surprising since an outstanding strength of the school is the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils. The manifestation of the school's faith ethos goes far beyond the religious element. It underpins the outstanding behaviour and relationships between pupils and adults which make the pupils act with kindness to others, and to have a clear respect for cultures other than their own. Their positive attitudes and outstanding behaviour contribute strongly to their good progress and rising attainment. Pupils respond enthusiastically to the challenges set by their teachers, use their initiative and are keen to succeed.

Pupils have good understanding of how to lead a healthy lifestyle. They say they are safe and secure in the school and they are aware of when and where dangers might occur. Pupils' horizons are widened through the strong personal, social and health education programme. These lead to pupils securely gaining the personal skills they will need as they get older, but their academic skills, particularly in writing, are not quite as well developed. As a result, pupils are satisfactorily, rather than well prepared for the next stage of their education.

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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>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>1</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>3</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?

Most of the teaching is good, with some examples of outstanding practice. Teachers use different resources to present lessons in an interesting way and keep pupils motivated. The key aims of each lesson are shared with pupils so they know clearly what is expected of them. In the best lessons, teachers plan challenging work that successfully meets the needs of all learners. In a very successful lesson in Key Stage 1, the teacher engaged pupils exceptionally well in exploring their ideas of what 'monsters from space' meant to them. The teacher set very high expectations, used excellent texts from literature to extend the learning and maintained an effective pace throughout. He was rewarded with a very lively discussion and pupils made excellent progress. They all worked exceptionally well together, concentrated hard on difficult work and used their thinking skills productively to develop their own ideas.

Assessment of and for learning is, however, not always used to good effect. In the most effective lessons, the use of directed questioning successfully develops pupils' thinking. Where marking is good and in the best practice, pupils are using their targets and responding positively to their teachers' helpful marking to review and improve their work. However, these practices are not consistently or sufficiently applied across the school.

Pupils' interests and well-being in the mixed-age classes are taken fully into account when planning the imaginative curriculum. The curriculum is enriched and broadened through a good range of extra-curricular activities, as well as a wealth of visits and visitors. Music

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and sports are well served by visiting teachers, and recent visitors to the school, such as the visit of the writer of the Doctor Who TV scripts, not only gave the pupils the opportunity to dress up as their favourite science fiction characters, but also supported a good themed day on the incorporation of writing skills. This had a palpably positive impact on encouraging both girls and boys to write more imaginatively.

Pupils are supported and nurtured extremely well throughout their time in school. Excellent systems are used to identify underachievement and provide early intervention and good support for the very large group of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. There are good procedures which aid transition into, and from the school.

This is a remarkably caring school. Several parents commented on this aspect of school. One parent's comment typifies the parents' and carers' responses to the school's ethos, when she wrote: 'In a very supportive school environment, where all staff are approachable, I feel that my child's best interests are always the first priority.'

*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	3
<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?**

Under the clear direction of the headteacher, the school has focused successfully on improving the quality of teaching and learning in order to accelerate pupils' progress and to raise their attainment. The headteacher, and the supportive but knowledgeable, and increasingly challenging governing body, communicate high expectations, have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, and monitor the work of the school well. However, there is no sense of complacency. Leaders know that while teaching and learning have improved considerably, work still remains to be done in order to ensure that the quality of teaching and learning is consistently good in all lessons.

The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination is good. There are particularly good links with outside agencies which have been effective in supporting some of the school's vulnerable pupils and their families. For example, particularly good use of the occupational therapy services has successfully promoted pupils' learning and well-being.

Arrangements for safeguarding are in good order and well documented. For example, the school integrates issues of safety into the curriculum, such as 'stranger-danger'. The school has no written plan to promote community cohesion. This does not mean that a clear sense of community does not exist within the school, and charitable work is eagerly undertaken to support causes both locally and further afield, such as the Haiti disaster.

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However, they are sometimes reactive rather than being based on a thorough, planned strategy.

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

## Early Years Foundation Stage

The effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. It meets the needs of all children, who are currently achieving well. Improvements to the curriculum and in the quality of resources have resulted in a greater focus on improving children's basic skills, such as the recognition of letter sounds to support their early reading and writing. A strong emphasis on children's personal and social skills ensures that they soon learn to share, work and play harmoniously together. A good range of challenging and exciting activities help to stimulate children's imaginations and help them develop curiosity. Their creative and linguistic development is less strong in comparison with the other areas of learning.

There is an improving balance between activities chosen by children and those led by adults. Regular, externally validated assessments enable staff to identify gaps in children's learning accurately and to plan accordingly. Adults pay careful attention to children's welfare. Effective partnerships with parents and carers ensure good induction arrangements. Parents and carers confirm that their children settle quickly. Leadership and management are effective and recent investments in upgrading the quality of outdoor accommodation and resources are paying dividends in terms of children's progress and well-being.

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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

Parents and carers have very positive views about the school. Almost all agreed that their children enjoy school and are safe there. Inspectors agree with these views. A small minority of parents and carers expressed concerns about the progress their children make, and how well their children are prepared for the future. Inspectors looked specifically at these issues, and found that pupils in the school make good progress overall and are satisfactorily prepared for their future. The inspectors understand, however, that the good progress and rising attainment now much in evidence has yet to be reflected in national test results.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Joseph's Roman Catholic Primary School, Pickering 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 53 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	36	68	15	28	2	4	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	43	81	10	19	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	32	60	19	36	2	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	32	60	15	28	4	8	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	32	60	18	34	2	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	29	55	20	38	3	6	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	27	51	26	49	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)	27	51	20	38	2	4	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	26	49	23	43	3	6	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	27	51	25	47	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	25	47	28	53	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	35	66	18	34	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	36	68	15	28	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	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.**



10 February 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of St Joseph's Roman Catholic Primary School, Pickering, YO18 8AR**

Thank you very much for making us so welcome when we inspected your school recently. We were very impressed with your very good manners, how polite you are with each other and with your teachers and with your outstanding behaviour. Many of you told us how much you enjoy being in school and we found that you have a good understanding of how to stay healthy by taking regular exercise and enthusiastically eating all the healthy food at lunchtime.

We found that St. Joseph's School provides you with a good education. All the adults look after you well and make sure that you are safe within your harmonious school community. Your headteacher, the staff and governors have made lots of improvements recently.

To make St. Joseph's an even better school we have identified some other things which need to happen. We have asked the school to ensure that:

- your speaking and listening skills improve so that you will learn more vocabulary which will then help you to do better in your writing
- all lessons move along more rapidly and challenge you, just as most do, and give you more opportunity to learn things by doing them yourselves
- marking always helps you to know exactly what you have to do to improve your work, or to reach the next level.

I know that you will continue to work hard and enjoy lessons as you have done this year. Best wishes for your future.

Yours sincerely

Ronald Cohen  
Lead inspector

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