

# St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	120219
<b>Local Authority</b>	Leicestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	358721
<b>Inspection dates</b>	10–11 March 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Kenneth Thomas

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>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	159
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mike McGowan
<b>Headteacher</b>	Karen McVea
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	30 April 2008
<b>School address</b>	Coventry Road Market Harborough, Leicestershire LE16 9BZ
<b>Telephone number</b>	01858 465359
<b>Fax number</b>	01858 469925
<b>Email address</b>	office@stjosephs.leics.sch.uk

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors observed eight teachers and saw 19 lessons, two intervention groups, two assemblies and the after-school club. Discussions were held with staff, the Vice-Chair of the Governing Body and pupils. The inspectors looked at pupils' books and viewed a wide range of documentation including, school policies, curriculum planning, self-evaluation information, improvement planning, safeguarding (the system of protecting and keeping pupils safe) and welfare arrangements, and records of pupils' progress. Questionnaires returned by 60 parents and carers, 86 pupils and 11 members of staff were analysed.

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

- What factors have contributed to the rise in standards since the last inspection and whether the rise is being maintained?
- How well do teachers use assessment information to plan learning tasks that challenge and extend pupils of all abilities?
- How effectively does the curriculum provide for application and development of pupils' key literacy and numeracy skills in all subjects?
- Are staff with leadership responsibilities monitoring all aspects of the school effectively?

## Information about the school

This is a smaller than average-sized primary school with equal numbers of boys and girls on roll. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average. Most pupils are from White British or other White backgrounds, with a few being Travellers of Irish background. A small number of pupils speak English as an additional language, of these the main language is Polish. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below the national average. The school provides an after-school club that is managed by the governing body. The school has gained national recognition for its work in several areas including the Basic Skills Quality Mark and Healthy Schools status. The headteacher took up her post in September 2010.

**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 Catholic Primary School provides a good standard of education. Pupils enjoy coming to school where they benefit from an attractive, welcoming and supportive learning environment. Because the vast majority of pupils are willing to take responsibility, behave well and show respect to their peers, adults and visitors, they do much to make this such an inclusive and harmonious community. It is a school in which pupils feel safe and valued because staff know the pupils really well and provide good levels of care. This is recognised by parents and carers. Virtually all of those who replied to the inspection questionnaire expressed considerable level satisfaction with the school and their children's experience. One, capturing the views of many, said, 'The school has a very supportive environment and teaches the children respect for each other and the staff.' Pupils take pride in the range of jobs that they carry out, such as being members of the school council, and they take their responsibilities seriously.

The school's clear focus on raising attainment has proved to be successful. Provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage has been maintained and is good. As a result, children make good progress from the time they start school. This good progress continues as pupils move through the school and attainment at the end of Year 6 has risen to be above average. This represents good achievement by pupils of all ethnic backgrounds. Because staff have been particularly successful in focusing on the development of reading and writing skills, pupils make particularly good progress in English. Progress in mathematics is slightly slower because pupils do not have enough opportunities to apply their numerical skills in problem solving.

Because much has been done to improve the quality of teaching and learning, most teaching is good. However, this quality is not yet found consistently throughout the school. Not all pupils are provided with activities that consistently challenge them, particularly those capable of reaching higher levels. In some lessons, not enough use is made of pupils' capacity for independent learning because introductory and other teacher-led activities are too long and lack pace. The school's links with the local community are underpinned by a clear understanding of the context in which the school operates. As a result, community cohesion is promoted well on a local level. However, the curriculum is less effective in promoting pupils' knowledge and understanding of different cultures within national and international contexts.

The headteacher, with good support from the governing body, leads the school well and there is a strong emphasis on positive achievement for all. Challenging targets are set and the effective use of assessment information to check pupils' progress enables targeted support to be provided where needed. This is having a good impact on standards and is proving particularly beneficial to pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those who speak English as an additional language. Because the strategies put into

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place to tackle weaknesses are proving successful, the school's overall effectiveness has risen from satisfactory at the time of the last inspection, to good. Self-evaluation procedures and the school's view of itself are accurate and its record of raising achievement shows it is well placed to build on its strengths and has a good capacity to improve further.

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

- Accelerate progress in mathematics by establishing more opportunities for pupils to apply their skills to solve problems.
- Make all teaching good or outstanding by:
  - planning learning tasks that are appropriately challenging for pupils of all ability levels
  - ensuring that introductory and other teacher-led activities are not too long and enabling pupils who are able to get on with more challenging work at an earlier point in the lesson.
- Improve the promotion of community cohesion by providing more opportunities for pupils to gain an understanding of cultural diversity in national and international contexts.

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

Children's skills on entry to Reception are generally in line with expectations for their age. Good progress by all groups of pupils leads to above average standards overall by the end of Year 6. The improvement in the Year 6 test results over recent years reflects the effectiveness of successful action taken to tackle weaknesses identified in the last inspection. Classroom observations and the work seen in pupils' books show that most of the current Year 6 are already working at or beyond the levels expected of 11-year-olds. Pupils enjoy their lessons, and their good behaviour makes a good contribution to the purposeful learning atmosphere. They respond well to interesting and challenging activities and demonstrate the ability to work effectively both independently and collaboratively. This was exemplified in a Year 5 English lesson where pupils explored the features of a legend. Their discussions generated plenty of ideas and all made good progress because they were actively engaged from the outset of the lesson. Pupils with special educational needs who require additional support to help them learn make good progress. This is because they receive effective support from teachers and from skilled teaching assistants. Pupils of Traveller backgrounds achieve well because close attention is paid to ensuring that support is focused on their identified needs.

Pupils are proud of their school and are enthusiastic about many aspects of its work. There are strengths in pupils' spiritual, moral and social development. Pupils regularly reflect on their lives and on spiritual matters, and create prayers which express their sensitivity to the needs of others. They demonstrate a good awareness of how to avoid risks, whether on the internet or during journeys to and from school. They have a good understanding of the importance of exercise and a balanced diet to aid their healthy development. Pupils assert that the incidents of bullying are extremely rare and they feel safe in school. They say that there is always someone who will listen to them. The school council provides a useful forum for pupils' voices and pupils contribute well to the school

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and wider community in other ways; for example, by acting as playground leaders or raising money for worthwhile causes. Attendance is average but it is adversely affected by families taking holidays during term-time.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</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?

All lessons are characterised by excellent relationships between teachers and pupils. In the very best lessons, pupils make good progress because assessment information is used well to guide the planning of learning tasks. Pupils are expected to work independently, stretching themselves and others as they talk things through. Perceptive questioning is used to extend pupils' thinking and encourage the use of more varied vocabulary in their answers. This was seen in a Year 4 English lesson; for example, where pupils made good progress in understanding the ways in which writers use language in characterisation. However, in some lessons, pupils are given work that is too easy and this slows the progress they make. Progress is also slowed in lessons where teachers take too much time introducing learning, which gives pupils too little time to apply their learning and skills independently. Pupils are provided with clear guidance on how to improve through the marking of their work. Particularly effective use is made of assessment information to track pupils' progress towards their targets, identify underperformance and provide additional support where necessary.

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The curriculum provides pupils with a good range of learning experiences. Pupils' good progress in English is underpinned by many opportunities to apply and develop their literacy skills across the curriculum. Opportunities for pupils to similarly develop their mathematical problem solving skills have yet to be fully embedded as an integral part of curricular provision. The school's provision for creative subjects, such as art and music, is good. The curriculum is enhanced well through local partnerships: for example, links with other schools broaden pupils' experiences. Pupils benefit from an increasing range of extra-curricular activities. These contribute much to pupils' enjoyment, as do trips out of school, including residential visits. The vast majority of parents and carers say that the school is very caring. This is borne out by the inspection findings. Close attention is given to supporting children whose circumstances make them vulnerable to promote their well-being. Pupils are well cared for in the after-school club and pupils say, 'We have lots to do and enjoy coming here.'

*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 is successfully building on the improvements in provision and outcomes seen at the time of the last inspection. She is providing a clear sense of direction and ambition for further improvement. The school is firmly set on an upward path. Through the good monitoring of teaching and learning and careful tracking of pupils' progress, the school has recognised its strengths. It ensures that weaknesses are identified and tackled effectively. The school is proud of its inclusive nature and has close links with a number of agencies that support the individual needs of pupils from a range of backgrounds. This is one aspect of the school's commitment to promoting equal opportunities and tackling discrimination. The progress of different groups of pupils is also carefully tracked to ensure there are no differences in attainment and all are progressing equally well.

Members of the governing body have worked well with staff to ensure that safeguarding procedures are of good quality and all staff are well trained in these matters. As a result, the school has the confidence of parents and carers. The governing body takes its statutory responsibilities seriously and provides the school with considerable support. Its members are well informed about the school through regular reports from the headteacher, and they have a keen interest in the school's performance. Parents and carers are provided with a good range of information. This is enhanced through an excellent school website. The contribution the school makes to community cohesion is satisfactory. A plan and clear actions promote pupils' understanding from a local perspective well. Links with other schools and agencies are harnessed very effectively. The school recognises, rightly, the lack of links to provide national and global perspectives, and

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open pupils' minds to the range and diversity of culture in the United Kingdom and beyond. The school provides good value for money.

*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

Children settle quickly on entering Reception because of the well-organised induction arrangements and good adult care and support. As a result, children feel safe and enjoy their learning. A strong emphasis on children's personal and social skills ensures that they soon begin to share, to learn and to play together. They are well behaved and polite to each other and to adults, and their personal development is good. The teaching of letters and sounds receives good attention and children are making good progress in acquiring early writing skills. However, opportunities that arise to further extend children's linguistic skills across all areas of their learning are not always taken.

All adults are vigilant in meeting the needs of children, and welfare requirements are fully met. Teaching is good because staff have a good understanding of how children learn and they work well as an enthusiastic team. They provide a broad range of adult-led and free-choice activities indoors and outside that promote good outcomes in all areas of learning. As a result, most children exceed the expected levels by the start of Year 1. The new Early Years Foundation Stage team have a clear vision of what can be done further to enhance children's learning experiences and, in particular, to provide children with more opportunities to explore, to be creative and to work independently.



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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

The overwhelming majority of parents and carers who returned questionnaires are happy with the school. They consider that the school has a dedicated team of staff and that the headteacher leads and manages the school well. They agree that the school has a supportive and friendly atmosphere and that their children make good progress. A few respondents think that the school could do more to help them support their children's learning. Inspectors found that the school provides parents and carers with a considerable amount of information on the work their children are doing and how they can be helped at home. A very small number of criticisms were offered and these were discussed in full with the headteacher and governors. There were no particular trends in the very few negative comments received by inspectors.

## 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 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 60 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 159 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	40	67	18	30	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	38	63	22	37	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	27	45	32	53	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	28	47	30	50	2	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	36	60	23	38	1	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	30	50	23	38	7	12	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	32	53	26	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	40	27	45	1	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	22	37	33	55	2	3	1	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	24	40	31	52	2	3	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	23	38	31	52	2	3	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	32	53	26	43	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	36	60	22	37	0	0	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.**



14 March 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Market Harborough, LE16 9BZ**

Thank you for the help you gave us with the recent inspection of your school and for the friendly way you received us. We spoke to many of you and you were really helpful and friendly.

Yours is a good school. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are given a good start to their school lives and make good progress. Most of you enjoy school, listen carefully to what your teachers have to say and are willing to work hard in your lessons. Your good behaviour is a considerable help to your teachers because it enables them to concentrate on making your work interesting and helping you to learn. This is one of the reasons why you are doing well. You make more progress in some lessons than others and we have asked your teachers to make sure that in all of your lessons you are really stretched so that you make the best possible progress. We have also asked that you are given more opportunities to develop your mathematical problem-solving skills. Your teachers spend a lot of time marking your work. They correct any mistakes and make clear what you have to do to improve. You can help yourselves to make even more progress by making sure that you try hard to follow the advice you are given.

You understand the importance of being healthy, you eat sensibly and take part in physical activities regularly. You learn to work and play well together and to help each other. We were impressed with how you all do so much to help the school, especially those who help at playtimes and in the classrooms and those of you involved in making decisions through the school council. Adults at school look after you well, so that you are safe and happy. Your headteacher, all the other staff and the governing body are determined to make things even better. As part of this, we have asked the school to provide you with more opportunities to learn about the customs and beliefs of a wider range of people.

We think that everyone can work together to do these things and that you will want to play your part by working hard and attending regularly.

Yours sincerely

Dr Kenneth Thomas

Lead inspector

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