

# St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	114542
<b>Local Authority</b>	Brighton and Hove
<b>Inspection number</b>	357569
<b>Inspection dates</b>	8–9 March 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Linda Kelsey

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>	150
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Fr Paul Turner
<b>Headteacher</b>	Margaret McDermott
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	10 October 2007
<b>School address</b>	Davey Drive Hollingdean Brighton BN1 7BF
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. Seven lessons taught by seven teachers were observed during the course of the inspection. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, members of the governing body and senior staff. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at school documentation, lesson planning and records of pupils' work and assessments. The views of staff and pupils were sought and 54 questionnaires from parents and carers were analysed.

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

- Whether achievement is good enough, especially in writing and mathematics.
- Whether teaching and learning are good enough to sufficiently challenge all pupils and particularly with regard to their gender and background.
- Whether leadership and management of the school have focused on the correct priorities since the last inspection.
- Whether the Early Years Foundation Stage maintained its good quality since the last inspection.

## Information about the school

The smaller-than-average school serves families from a wide and diverse community. Just over half the pupils are of White British heritage, with the other half being from many different ethnic backgrounds. The number of pupils who have English as an additional language is high. There is an above average proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Their difficulties are wide ranging and include behavioural, emotional and learning needs. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. There continues to be a high number of pupils, about 1 in 5, who join or leave the school other than at main entry. Recently the school has experienced some staff absenteeism. ♦ Among others, the school has gained Healthy School status, Eco Silver award and the Active mark.

**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**

**2**

## Main findings

This is a satisfactory school. While there are a number of strengths, including some outstanding features, work remains to ensure attainment continues to climb. The outstanding care, guidance and support offered, along with the highly effective curriculum, have resulted in many pupils saying they feel very safe when in school. Pupils have above average and improving attendance and outstanding behaviour. This rapidly improving school and safe haven means that pupils are progressing well in their learning.

Over time, attainment has been low but much of the teaching is now of such a high calibre, particularly in Years 4, 5 and 6, that pupils, many from challenging backgrounds, are making good progress. Many pupils are making up lost ground particularly in the learning of basic skills even though there remain examples of weaker written work in their books. As a result of stronger teaching, attainment is rising rapidly, and while still low for the current Year 6, it is improving strongly for older pupils generally in the school. This has not always been the case because teaching has not always been this consistent and it has led, in the past, to some pupils not doing as well as they should. In addition, the school also has a small but significant minority of pupils that have joined the school in the last two years. Due to these factors, there are now only a few pupils who do not share the good progress made by the majority.

The outstanding creative curriculum is having a strong impact. It offers high levels of challenge, interest and motivation to the pupils, who have a very good attitude to learning and have exemplary attitudes towards their schooling. Pupils are polite, considerate to each other and readily respond well to tasks set for them, working very hard in most classes.

There is a strong team ethos among leaders who are working effectively at monitoring and rigorously evaluating the performance of the school. They have identified the right priorities in that much of the school's work is successfully focused on improving teaching and learning so that attainment rises. The assessment and tracking of pupils' progress is of high quality and accurately reflects the good progress pupils are making across the school. A good example of the success of this is that attainment is now rising.

Pupils make a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage and the ethos here and in the rest of the school is welcoming to pupils. The school has successfully ensured that all classrooms and the outside learning environments make a strong contribution to providing a stimulating environment so that pupils are happy and want to come to school. Pupils take pride in their silver Eco award. Many pupils who have joined the school other than at the usual times said how much happier they were at this school than their previous schools. With the high quality care, strong management, the rigorous monitoring and evaluation, the much improved quality of teaching and the outstanding curriculum provision, the school has good capacity for sustained improvement.

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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.

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

- Raise attainment further across the school by:
  - improving the teaching and learning in all subjects to the highest level seen in Years 4, 5 and 6
  - ensuring that there is greater consistency of high level practice at all times
  - developing the basic skills within literacy and numeracy, particularly spelling and punctuation

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**3**

Attainment on entry to the school is well below what is typical at this age. Almost half the pupils in the Reception class are on the special educational needs register. One parent of a Reception child commented that the school was good at 'picking up on my son's learning problem straight away'. Pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 was low in 2010. This has improved in the present Year 6, although work books show that many are still working below the expected levels. However, they also show how much ground pupils have made up since the start of the year, particularly in the acquisition of basic skills, such as was seen in a numeracy lesson. Nevertheless, there are still some examples of poor spelling and incorrect use of punctuation. In the rest of the school, the majority of pupils are making at least good progress. For instance, in one class pupils were able to act out their roles as interviewers and interviewees, there was an excellent question and answer session and they were able to judge each other's work with some skill. Similarly good progress is made by pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those who speak English as an additional language. This is because they have excellent support in class which, through rigorous assessment, focuses closely on their individual needs.

Pupils say they feel very safe and the majority eat healthily at lunch time and choose to buy additional fruit as a snack at break time. The school has been recognised through its Healthy School national award. Many take part in after-school clubs and sport, a fact acknowledged in the school's Activemark. Many pupils are involved in raising funds for local and worldwide charities and work within their community through their links with the local church. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils genuinely care for each other around the school and demonstrate high moral and social skills. Their good understanding of different religions and cultures of the world was shown in pupils' celebration of the Chinese New Year. Attendance is above average, which is an improvement this year, but because literacy and numeracy skills remain low, development of workplace skills is satisfactory overall.

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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>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	4
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>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>	2
<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?

Attainment on entry to the school is well below what is typical at this age. Almost half the pupils in the Reception class are on the special educational needs register. One parent of a Reception child commented that the school was good at 'picking up on my son's learning problem straight away'. Pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 was low in 2010. This has improved in the present Year 6, although work books show that many are still working below the expected levels. However, they also show how much ground pupils have made up since the start of the year, particularly in the acquisition of basic skills, such as was seen in a numeracy lesson. Nevertheless, there are still some examples of poor spelling and incorrect use of punctuation. In the rest of the school, the majority of pupils are making at least good progress. For instance, in one class pupils were able to act out their roles as interviewers and interviewees, there was an excellent question and answer session and they were able to judge each other's work with some skill. Similarly good progress is made by pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those who speak English as an additional language. This is because they have excellent support in class which, through rigorous assessment, focuses closely on their individual needs.

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*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	1
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

The senior leadership team are very focused on driving up attainment and ensuring all pupils get the chances they deserve. This is all helping to ensure that pupils have good equality of opportunity through the high level of support around the school. This vision is shared by all staff so that targets for school improvement have been realistic but challenging. Outcomes for pupils, while satisfactory, are rapidly improving such as in the raised attendance and the promotion of good behaviour and independence. Through good modelling of best practice and through coaching programmes, teachers are more effective in their classrooms and consequently there is a noticeable rise in the attainment and progress of pupils since the last inspection.

The governing body is effective and very supportive. Its members are involved in monitoring the work of the school through their committee structures and visits to the school. They have given a high level of support in monitoring and challenging the quality of teaching with a marked impact on the quality of learning and pupils' progress. Members of the governing body have a satisfactory knowledge of assessment data and have made a good contribution to school improvement. The school has good partnerships with outside agencies and the local community and makes a strong contribution to community cohesion through its links with the local church and cluster schools and by being actively engaged in the local community and further afield. It has done a thorough audit and evaluation of its provision and now rightly plans to extend this work even more. There are good communication systems between the home and school which the majority of parents and carers value and there have been no incidents of discrimination reported. Procedures for safeguarding pupils are good, with careful attention paid to ensuring that pupils, including the high proportion of pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable are fully protected.

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

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children settle quickly and play well together, demonstrating good skills in sharing resources and chatting to each other. The class environment is well equipped and inviting and has a good link to a welcoming outside area which has regions for gardening and role play. The school has a close partnership with a play centre from where the majority of the children transfer. This inviting classroom and outside area is why children settle so quickly and happily at school.

Leadership is good. Staff in the Early Years Foundation Stage work very well together, relationships are strong and they plan together for both child-initiated and teacher-led activities. Topics are based on themes that engage children in learning and help them to express themselves clearly and get on successfully together. This term they are sharing a topic about castles with Year 1 and because there are more boys in both, these classes have focused the work on the role of the fighting knight. However, there are role play areas set up as a castle for all children to practise the art of being a princess waiting to be rescued, while toy dolls were being dressed up in tin foil armour. Outside, model soldiers had to get through the watery moat to reach the castle in the water play area while a classroom assistant helped other learners build a brick wall which could not be knocked down. ♦ Children were very excited by these activities and their behaviour and attitudes were good. They have good relationships with the adults who care for them, although on just a few occasions, teachers lead the learning too much. When children are more focused on teacher-led activities, they work hard at their letter sounds and word recognition. They also use computers adeptly and independently.

The care and welfare of the children are good. Good ongoing records are kept and children's progress is assessed thoroughly across the year. There are good partnerships with outside agencies and the adjacent nursery provision. Data shows that children are



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making good progress in all six areas of learning. There are good links with parents and carers who bring their children into the class each morning. The school encourages them to get involved in their children's learning and they can speak to the teachers each day if they have any worries or concerns. With good planning, careful monitoring and good organisation, all children are well challenged. They behave well and make good progress from often very low starting points so that by the time they leave the Reception Year, they are ready for more formal work in Year 1.

*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

There was an average reply rate from parents and carers. They were most positive about how much their children enjoy school, and that their children are safe when in school. They think the school is well led and managed and that teaching is good. They are happy with the experience their children receive at school. Evidence from the inspection is similar to parents' and carers' views. The most frequently expressed concerns were about how the school deals with unacceptable behaviour, how well children are supported and whether the school takes enough account of suggestions and concerns. Inspectors found no evidence to support these views in this inspection and, to the contrary, found pupils' behaviour outstanding. The school meets the need of individual pupils well through its support programme for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The school has a range of ways in which members of staff listen to parents' and carers' views and arranges for everyone to know what is happening in the school on a daily basis.

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

The inspection team received 54 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 150 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	31	57	22	41	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	35	65	17	31	0	0	1	2
My school informs me about my child's progress	24	44	26	48	3	6	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	29	54	23	43	1	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	33	61	20	37	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	31	57	18	33	4	7	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	23	43	27	50	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)	21	39	28	52	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	25	46	26	48	1	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	21	39	22	41	6	11	2	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	22	41	24	44	5	9	1	2
The school is led and managed effectively	28	52	21	39	0	0	2	4
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	29	54	23	43	1	2	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.**



9 March 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Brighton BN1 7BF**

Thank you for making us so welcome at your school. We enjoyed talking to many of you while at the school when we met you at lunch time, in the playground and when talking to you in classes or the library.

Your school is a satisfactory school, but it has some outstanding and good features which you helped us to find out about. You all told us through your questionnaires, and when we asked, how happy you are to be at school, how safe you feel, and about the interesting topics you study. We can see by your improved attendance at school and excellent behaviour how much you enjoy being there.

You are a credit to your parents and carers and the teachers who look after you. We could see how much you care about each other and how hard you are working in your lessons. Your teachers and helpers are working very hard to give you an interesting and exciting time at school.

Your headteacher and her staff have worked very hard to ensure that your school is safe, that teaching is good and that you have many resources to work with. We have asked the school to make sure that more of you experience some of the outstanding teaching in the school to help you make even better progress. You can help here by continuing to behave so well and making sure you come to school every day you can, and on time, and that you keep your abundant energy, smiling faces and enthusiasm to learn new things.

I wish you all the best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Linda Kelsey

Lead inspector

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