

St Jude's Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	103463
Local Authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	376911
Inspection dates	13–14 September 2011
Reporting inspector	Usha Devi HMI

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	170
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Michael Pope-Joy
Headteacher	Bernadette Johnston
Date of previous school inspection	18 October 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors. The inspectors observed 16 lessons and nine different teachers. In addition to observing teaching and learning during lesson observations, inspectors looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors met with pupils, a small group of parents, the Chair of the Governing Body, and staff. They observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documentation, including the school improvement plan, data on pupils' attainment, progress and attendance, minutes from the governing body meetings and monitoring records. Questionnaires were analysed from staff, 87 pupils in Key Stage 2, and 30 from parents and carers.

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

- What are the current levels of attainment and rates of progress for different groups of pupils, especially for the more-able pupils?
- How well do children in the Early Years Foundation Stage learn?
- How well do leaders and managers at all levels, including members of the governing body, tackle weaknesses and ensure all groups of pupils make rapid progress?

Information about the school

St Jude's is a smaller than average primary school. Just over half of the pupils are of White British backgrounds, and the remainder are from a range of other heritage groups, including Black or Black British Caribbean and Black or Black British African. The proportion of pupils identified with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above the national average. The number of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs is above average. The percentage of pupils who speak English as an additional language is low. More children leave or join the school at times other than the usual. Early Years Foundation Stage provision is provided for children in one Reception Class. The school has achieved Healthy Schools status. Since the last inspection there have been a number of staff changes. Four out of the seven class teachers are new in post.

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 Jude's is a good school where, a dedicated team of teachers and support staff work together to provide a good quality of education and a good level of care, guidance and support. In the words of one parent, 'I feel the team effort at St Jude's is second to none.' Pupils are considerate and have positive attitudes to learning. In lessons, they are attentive and approach their activities with enthusiasm.

The headteacher and deputy headteacher work well with staff to keep a close check on pupils' progress. Regular analysis of progress data leads to additional targeted support for pupils who are at risk of underachieving or have specific learning needs. As a consequence, pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make good progress. An effective example of targeted support was seen during a writing session. A group of Year 4 pupils touched and described objects with different textures and smelt a range of herbs. This multi-sensory approach successfully enabled the pupils to use a range of adjectives in their writing. Sessions such as this are contributing to raising standards in writing, which are not yet as high as reading and mathematics in some year groups.

The quality of teaching is good. It is satisfactory in a minority of lessons. Teachers make effective use of assessment information to plan activities that meet the needs of pupils of different abilities. Pupils respond particularly positively when learning is active and activities are interesting. 'I like hard work, it makes me learn a lot,' remarked one pupil while working out a mathematical problem. Where teaching is satisfactory, the rate of progress slows, particularly for more-able pupils who are not sufficiently challenged. On occasions, pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable because they spend too long consolidating learning instead of moving more quickly onto new learning.

The importance of attending school is given a high priority. Pupils' attendance has improved and it is now average because of the effective range of strategies the school has put in place. Despite the school's best efforts, a few pupils are absent on a regular basis.

Senior leaders and middle leaders use an appropriate range of strategies to monitor and evaluate the work of the school. As a result, they have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The school improvement plan has appropriate priorities for improvement, although the criteria in the plan do not always make clear the intended impact on pupils' progress in each year group.

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The school has a good capacity to improve further. Despite the high turnover of staff since the last inspection, the headteacher and deputy headteacher have successfully maintained a strong focus on ensuring pupils feel safe and progress well at St Jude's.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve the quality of teaching so that all lessons are good or better by ensuring:
 - teachers provide pupils with suitably challenging activities, especially for the more-able pupils
 - pupils are moved more quickly onto new learning during lessons
 - teachers' marking gives pupils the clear guidance they need to improve their work, and pupils are given the opportunity to respond to teachers' comments.

- Continue to work in partnership with parents and carers, to improve the attendance of those pupils who are regularly absent from school.

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

Pupils' academic achievement is good and they are well prepared for moving on to secondary school. Children's skills and knowledge on entry to Reception are well below those expected for their age. They make good progress in the six areas of learning and begin Year 1 with skills that are below age related expectations. They continue to make good progress and reach broadly average standards by the end of Year 6. Lesson observations, pupils' work and the school's assessment information show that different groups of pupils within the school make good progress overall. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve well because of the effective support they receive in lessons and during focused group work. Teachers and teaching assistants ensure these pupils are fully included in lessons by matching work carefully to their individual needs. Pupils who join the school partway during the school year make similar progress to their peers.

Strategies to raise attainment in reading and mathematics have been a focus since the last inspection. Teaching of both these aspects has been reviewed and a range of intervention programmes put in place. As a consequence, reading and mathematics standards are rising and an increasing number of pupils in each year group are working above the levels expected for their age than previously. A review of pupils work shows that while standards in writing are relatively lower than in reading and mathematics, a greater emphasis on grammar, punctuation and spelling is having a beneficial impact.

Pupils work conscientiously and with confidence on their own or with others. For example, in Year 5 pupils created their own quiz questions, but willingly sought constructive comments from others in order to further improve their work. In Year 1,

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pupils explored number patterns using number lines. They worked with determination as the teacher increased the complexity of the questions. One pupil pointed out, 'This is really making my brain work!' The school acknowledges that in a few lessons, the work for the more-able pupils does not provide enough challenge.

Behaviour around school and in lessons is good. Pupils are polite and thoughtful. Members of the school council take their role seriously. They enjoy meeting with the governing body and discussing their ideas for further improving the school. Older pupils take responsibility for organising and using play equipment with younger pupils during break time. Pupils say that they feel very safe and they know what to do if a problem arises, a view supported by parents and carers. They understand the importance of keeping fit and eating healthily. Many enjoy taking part in after-school sporting clubs, such as netball and cricket. Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good and strongly underpinned by the school's caring ethos.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	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
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teaching is good. In all lessons:

- relationships between adults and pupils are positive and lead to a good climate for learning
- teachers make effective use of electronic whiteboards to present new information and introduce activities
- teachers explain clearly what pupils are expected to learn by the end of the lesson.

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

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In the best lessons, teachers ask questions, which challenge pupils’ thinking and encourage pupils to review critically their own work. Pupils are also set practical tasks, which encourage them to solve problems, carry out research, and work independently or as a member of a team. Where teaching is satisfactory, work is not always precisely matched to the needs of pupils of different abilities. Very occasionally, pupils are not allowed to take responsibility for their own learning, and this slows down the pace of their learning. Teachers’ marking is inconsistent. There are some good examples, where teachers provide pupils with the clear guidance they need to improve their work. Pupils have limited opportunities to respond to teachers’ comments.

There are strong links between subjects. These encourage pupils to practise their writing and mathematical skills in a range of interesting contexts. For example, pupils in Year 2, labelled maps, created posters and wrote instructions for making chocolate while learning about ‘Mexico’. In a few classes, pupils are prevented from giving extended responses and writing at length because of the overuse of worksheets that only require them to give a brief answer. Enrichment opportunities are carefully planned to give pupils in all year groups memorable experiences. Pupils enjoy visit to places such as Blakesley Hall, a Tudor house. They also benefit from a range of visitors who help to bring learning to life, for instance, a visiting science group that helps pupils to learn scientific concepts through practical experiments.

The staff provide a ‘supportive and caring environment,’ commented one parent. The school is particularly effective with supporting pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable. The school’s learning mentor, in liaison with school staff and a wide range of external agencies ensures that pupils and their families gain access to the support they need. There are pertinent examples of how the school’s individualised approach has helped pupils to improve their behaviour, gain confidence and make good gains in their learning.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils’ needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and deputy headteacher work as an effective team. Their vision for the school is shared by teachers, support staff and governors. Staff ensure that equal opportunities are promoted and discrimination tackled. Senior leaders and teachers regularly check the progress of individual pupils. If there are any pupils who are

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underachieving, immediate and effective action is taken.

Subject leaders in the school are effectively supported to take increasing responsibility for leading developments within their remits and producing action plans. They carry out a range of monitoring activities and use this information well to identify the actions that need to be taken to further accelerate progress. Regular monitoring, feedback and support for teachers have resulted in good teaching overall. School leaders recognise that there is more to do to ensure teaching in lessons is consistently good or better.

The governing body provides a good level of support and challenge. They know the school well and frequently attend events and monitor the work of the school. They have recently introduced their own newsletter. This promotes their work and includes a 'comment slip' so that the opinions of parents and carers can be sought. Some parents and carers volunteer in the school. They offer additional support in classrooms, regularly listen to pupils read and assist on school trips.

Community cohesion is promoted well. The school is a harmonious community, where pupils from diverse backgrounds get along very well. Pupils' knowledge of the world beyond their own community is strong. Child protection arrangements and procedures for keeping pupils safe are good. Effective steps are taken to ensure safety and staying safe are promoted well through the curriculum.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children settle quickly due to the strong partnership between home and school and effective induction arrangements. There is a warm and encouraging atmosphere in

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Reception. Children are well looked after and develop positive relationships with adults and each other.

Children make a good start to their education in the Reception Class for a number of reasons.

- The provision is well led and managed.
- Assessment information is used to identify the next steps in learning and to closely match activities to the needs of pupils of different abilities.
- There is a good balance between activities children can select and those that are led by adults.

Children behave well and participate in activities with enthusiasm. For example, the children told inspectors while they were 'working' in St Jude's 'police station' and that they were busy helping people and looking for escaped prisoners. The children used and shared the available resources, and described what they were doing with confidence. During group activities, staff occasionally miss opportunities to develop children's language skills.

The indoor and outdoor areas offer a range of interesting activities which successfully support learning across all six areas of learning. Resources are carefully organised so that pupils can easily select what they need. The school is in the process of creating an outdoor sheltered area so that pupils can learn outside in different weather conditions.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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

A below average number of parents and carers returned the inspection questionnaire. The very large majority of these show very strong support for the school. Some added positive comments such as, 'I feel that all my children have improved at this school,' and 'My son is very happy and seems to be coming along very well. I am pleased with his progress.' A few parents and carers believe the school does not deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour. Inspectors found that behaviour in lessons and during break times is good and staff use a range of effective strategies to promote positive behaviour. A small minority of parents and carers state that the school does not take account of their suggestions and concerns. Inspectors investigated this concern and found that the school is continually seeking ways of gathering the views of parents and carers. The Parents' Forum and more

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recently, the 'comment slip' on the governing body newsletter are just some of the methods used by the school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Jude'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 30 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 170 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	22	73	8	27	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	21	70	9	30	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	21	70	9	30	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	19	63	11	37	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	22	73	8	27	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	21	70	9	30	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	15	50	14	47	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)	14	47	15	50	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	17	57	13	43	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	16	53	11	37	2	7	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	16	53	12	40	2	7	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	18	60	12	40	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	21	70	9	30	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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 2010 to 08 April 2011 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 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"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



15 September 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Jude's Catholic Primary School, Birmingham, B14 5PD

Thank you so much for welcoming us to your school when we visited recently. We enjoyed meeting with you, spending time in your lessons and looking at your work. We would like to give a special thanks to the pupils who came to talk to inspectors and those who completed the inspection questionnaire.

You told us that you enjoy coming to school and that the teachers help you to learn well. We agree with you that St Jude's is a good school. Here are some of the things we found.

- Your school provides you with a good education.
- The children in Reception, Key Stage and Key stage 2 make good progress.
- You behave well and have good attitudes to learning.
- In lessons, you listen carefully and enjoy learning through practical activities.
- The headteacher, teachers, and the adults that work with you help you to feel safe and take good care of you.

To help your school to become even better, we have asked your headteacher and teachers to make sure that even more of your lessons are good or better. When teachers mark your work, we have asked them to make sure they tell you what you need to do to improve. You can help by continuing to work hard. We also want those of you who do not come to school regularly to attend everyday. This will help you to learn as much as possible.

Thank you for being so kind and polite when we came to your school. It was a delight to meet you. We enjoyed the time we spent with you all and wish you the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Usha Devi
Her Majesty's Inspector

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