

St Joseph and St Teresa Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123842
Local Authority	Somerset
Inspection number	380745
Inspection dates	9–10 November 2011
Reporting inspector	Alwyne Jolly

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	133
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Kirsty Baxter-Smith
Headteacher	Angela Nolan
Date of previous school inspection	13 July 2007
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors observed five teaching staff while visiting eight lessons. Meetings were held with members of the governing body, senior leaders, teaching staff and groups of pupils. The inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation, assessment and tracking information, minutes of governing body meetings, arrangements for safeguarding and pupils' work. Staff and pupil questionnaires were also scrutinised, along with 74 completed by parents and carers.

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

- The progress made by the pupils, particularly the boys, in reading and writing at Key Stage 1.
- The pupils' awareness of other cultures and backgrounds.
- How effectively pupils' progress is assessed to prepare learning tasks which are matched to their ability.
- How far the leadership team has established clear practices and strategies which have resulted in improvement.

Information about the school

St Joseph and St Teresa Catholic Primary School is smaller than most primary schools. Most pupils are from a White British heritage. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below that seen nationally. The percentage of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is average. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in a mixed Reception and Year 1 class. There are five mixed-age classes.

There have been significant changes to the leadership of the school since the last inspection. The new leadership team was established in September, 2010, including the acting headteacher, pending a permanent appointment.

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 which is true to its vision and Catholic ethos with an engaging curriculum and strong sense of spirituality. The pastoral needs of all pupils are well known and fostered so that the care, support and guidance in the school are outstanding and pupils feel exceptionally safe. It is testament to the good leadership provided by senior leaders and the governing body that the school has maintained high staff morale and sustained previous good standards in a time of change.

Children make a good start to their learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage. This is built upon throughout the school so that pupils' attainment by Year 6 is above average in English and mathematics and achievement is good for all groups. There is much lively and stimulating teaching, particularly for those in Years 4, 5 and 6 and the needs of pupils in mixed-age classes are generally well addressed. Occasionally, however, lessons proceed at too slow a pace, particularly with prolonged introductions which reduces pupils' progress as there is too little time for them to work independently. Sometimes work is not matched precisely enough to pupils' different levels of ability to effectively accelerate pupils' progress. The curriculum is well balanced and interesting, with pupils benefiting from a wide range of visits and visitors.

Pupils relish all the opportunities given to them. Their transparent enjoyment of school is reflected in high levels of attendance. They make a strong contribution to school life, with older pupils, in particular, undertaking jobs and supporting their younger counterparts.

Significant improvements have been made in how pupils are assessed and their understanding of other cultures. Leadership of the school is good at all levels and there are effective strategies to improve both the provision for and progress of pupils. There is a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the school. This augurs well for the good capacity to sustain improvement based on its successful track record.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate pupils' progress further by ensuring that teachers:
 - set work which is more precisely matched to pupils' different levels of ability, especially the more able
 - consistently provide lessons which proceed throughout at a suitably fast pace
 - provide more opportunities for pupils to learn independently.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils are fulsome about their enjoyment and involvement in school life. They particularly appreciate the wide range of sporting activities which makes such a strong contribution to their effective adoption of a healthy lifestyle. The oldest pupils apply for positions of responsibility within the school which gives them a good preparation for working life. One Year 6 pupil commented, 'I like it how we all have a job to do.' This early development of key workplace skills is reinforced by high levels of attendance and punctuality. Behaviour both around the school and within lessons is consistently good. This, together with positive relationships and pupils' total confidence that they are safe, combine to provide pupils with a good learning environment.

Children join school with skill levels similar to those typically expected for their age. Pupils' achievement is good. There are no groups who perform less well than could be expected and effective support for the small number of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities ensures they make good progress. By the time they leave the school, pupils' attainment is clearly above average in both English and mathematics. Pupils' written English is particularly impressive and full of imaginative ideas and is developed well through consistently good descriptive writing. Lesson observations confirm that pupils are making good progress throughout the school. Data on outcomes from small cohorts of pupils do not always provide an accurate picture, for instance, the standard of boys' reading and writing is good in Year 2 and indicates they make better progress than the 2011 national assessments might suggest.

Pupils now show a much better understanding of other cultures and life in multicultural Britain than at the time of the last inspection report. It is developed well through topic work and links with contrasting schools both nationally and internationally. There is a strong sense of spirituality pervading school life to which the pupils are unusually sensitive.

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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	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
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
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	1
The extent of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching and learning is predominantly good. Good behaviour and excellent relationships contribute to pupils working hard at the tasks they are set. In the best lessons, teachers use interactive whiteboards well to add impact and clarity to whole-class learning. Teachers’ planning is thorough and ensures work is generally pitched correctly to meet the pupils’ different levels of ability. However, in occasional lessons, tasks are not precisely enough matched to the needs of all pupils, particularly the more able, to accelerate their progress. More rigorous assessment systems have ensured that teachers have the necessary information to set tasks for lower attaining pupils to ensure they progress appropriately, which is an improvement on the findings of the last inspection report. The tracking of pupils’ progress is thorough and effective, leading to good intervention strategies when the progress of individual pupils appears to be flagging. The positive response of older boys to ‘free’ writing opportunities has resulted in this initiative being extended across the school. The pupils are articulate and confident but these strengths are not fully exploited with sufficient opportunities for them to work independently.

The marking of pupils’ work is regular and thorough. It is at its best in literacy, where there are frequent suggestions on how to improve. Pupils have a good understanding of the targets which have been set to improve their attainment.

The school vision ‘to provide a rich and engaging experience’ is reflected in an interesting and relevant curriculum, which focuses well on basic skills and provides

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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good opportunities for writing across the curriculum. There is a wide range of extra-curricular activities provided, particularly of a sporting and musical nature, and regular visits to museums and other centres of interest.

Pupils’ pastoral guidance is outstanding. The personal needs of each pupil, including potentially vulnerable pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, are well known and understood by the school. As a result, appropriate additional help and guidance is given. Pupils also support each other sensitively in the playground as ‘buddies’ or helping those in need at the ‘friendship stop’.

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	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The continuing improvement since the previous inspection is the result of strong and determined leadership from the acting headteacher, senior staff and the governing body in a period of uncertainty. There is a strong drive for improvement, which is soundly based on a very accurate understanding of the school’s strengths and weaknesses. The senior leadership team is now well established and their actions and strategies have produced a measurable impact. For example, the acting headteacher introduced initiatives to address the apparent underperformance of able pupils in mathematics in the Key Stage 2 national tests. This resulted in a much improved performance for those pupils in 2011, which compared very favourably with pupils of similar ability nationally. A rigorous analysis and well considered whole-school strategies have been produced for literacy and have resulted in consistently impressive standards. There has been a range of effective systems introduced to monitor the quality of teaching and learning thoroughly, leading to the necessary improvements.

The governing body has given strong, informed support to the school and is committed to being ‘a debating and challenging’ group to promote the best interests of the school. Governors have effective systems to monitor the school’s standards and provision. Safeguarding procedures are rigorous and met all requirements at the time of the inspection. The school has good links with the local secondary school which supports pupils’ progress in science as a specialist school. It also gains artistic benefits from the link to the main Catholic school, some miles away, to which some of its pupils transfer.

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The determination to tackle discrimination and promote equal opportunities has led to a harmonious school community. Good links with a contrasting school in Bristol and a developing connection with a school in Sierra Leone have improved the provision for community cohesion. Parents and carers appreciate the improved communication from the acting headteacher and relationships are good.

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

Parents and carers are rightly happy with the start their children make in the Reception Year and feel children settle quickly. They make particularly good progress in reading, counting and calculation because there is a very clear focus on these key skills from adults. This gives them an important foundation for their learning in numeracy and literacy so that the levels attained at the end of Reception are above average. Attainment in all other areas of their learning is broadly average.

There is a vibrant atmosphere in the Reception class which stimulates the children’s enjoyment of a well chosen and varied range of activities. This gives them a well balanced, early education. Staff assess the children effectively and make good use of learning journals. The setting’s leader has provided good leadership to a recently formed team and has brought new insights. She has an excellent understanding of the needs of individual children. She evaluates the provision well, to focus on identified areas of development and to track their progress. The outdoor area is used well throughout the day to promote the children’s learning and well-being. There is a very caring ethos where all children feel safe and nurtured. The teaching is consistently good and thorough and systematic observation ensures that adults are able to plan effectively for the needs of individuals. They recognise now the need to extend opportunities for children to exercise their choice and pursue their own

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interests.

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

Almost all of the parents and carers who returned questionnaires were positive about the school’s work and the efforts of the staff. They were particularly complimentary about the impact of the leadership of the acting headteacher. Inspection judgements support the positive views of parents and carers.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Joseph and St Teresa 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 74 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 133 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	49	66	24	32	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	55	74	19	26	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	29	39	38	51	4	5	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	35	47	36	49	2	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	41	55	30	41	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	29	39	40	54	3	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	37	50	34	46	3	4	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)	38	51	30	41	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	28	38	40	54	4	5	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	29	39	41	55	2	3	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	25	34	40	54	3	4	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	34	46	36	49	1	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	39	55	34	46	1	1	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.



11 November 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of St Joseph and St Teresa Catholic Primary School, Wells
BA5 2QL**

Thank you for the friendly welcome you gave us when we inspected your school. We think it is a good school and we enjoyed meeting you and seeing the many interesting things you do.

This is what we found out about your school.

- You are well taught and you make good progress so that by the end of Year 6, your attainment is above average in English and mathematics.
- Your school is well led and managed.
- The curriculum is enriched by a variety of extra-curricular activities and educational visits.
- You enjoy school, which is shown by your high attendance, and you learn a lot in lessons, as indicated in your questionnaires.
- You contribute well to school life by behaving well and by taking on a variety of responsibilities.
- Your school makes sure you feel safe and exceptionally well cared for.

The acting headteacher, staff and the governing body are working hard to help you do better. This is what we have asked your school to do now.

- Make sure you are always given suitable work at the right level for each of you so you can make rapid progress, especially those of you who find learning easier.
- Give all of you opportunities to learn on your own and to find out things for yourselves.

You can all help by telling your teachers if you find work a little easy and by trying hard to work things out for yourself.

Best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Alwyne Jolly
Lead inspector

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