

St Joseph's RC Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111693
Local authority	Hartlepool
Inspection number	378337
Inspection dates	15–16 May 2012
Lead inspector	Christine Cottam

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	159
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Julie Mallinson
Headteacher	Margaret Hodgson
Date of previous school inspection	9 March 2009
School address	Tower Street Hartlepool TS24 7HT
Telephone number	01429 272747
Fax number	01429 272747
Email address	admin.stjosephs@school.hartlepool.gov.uk



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk



Introduction

Inspection team

Christine Cottam

Clive Petts

Additional inspector

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors visited 14 lessons or parts of lessons taught by eight different teachers, and looked at pupils' work. They listened to pupils read and talked to them about their reading and their experience of school life. Discussions took place with governors and staff. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at documents, including those related to safeguarding, the improvement plan and evaluation records, as well as its own assessment data. Inspectors analysed questionnaires from pupils and staff as well as those from 81 parents and carers.

Information about the school

St Joseph's is a smaller-than-average-sized school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals has increased since the last inspection and is higher than the national average. Whilst most pupils are of White British heritage, the proportion who come from minority ethnic groups or who speak English as an additional language has more than doubled in the last three years so that it is now higher than the national average. The proportion of pupils supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is similar to other schools nationally. More pupils than usual join or leave the school part way through their primary years and the proportion is increasing. Pupils in Key Stage 2 are mainly taught in mixed-age classes. The school has recently gained the International School Award and the Hartlepool Inclusion Standard. The school meets the current floor standard which sets the minimum expectations for attainment and progress expected by the government.

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	3
Achievement of pupils	3
Quality of teaching	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	3

Key Findings

- This is a satisfactory school. It is not yet good because the quality of teaching varies and the progress of pupils is uneven. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is good. It is a warm, cohesive and tolerant community where cultural diversity is celebrated and pupils behave well. Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged to be satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next Section 5 inspection.
- Achievement is satisfactory. Children join the school in Nursery with knowledge and skills that are well below those typically expected for their age. Progress is uneven as pupils move through the school and their attainment by the end of Year 2 is below average. Pupils make rapid progress in Year 6 so that their attainment is broadly average in reading and mathematics. Standards in writing are improving but remain below average.
- The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Whilst there is some good teaching, there is not enough across the school. Where teaching is satisfactory it is because work is not always matched well enough to different abilities, expectations are not high enough and pupils do not have enough opportunities to practise their skills.
- Most pupils display good attitudes to their learning and produce work that they are proud of. Parents, carers, staff and pupils have few concerns about behaviour and safety and inspectors agree that it is good. Any incidents of bullying and racism are dealt with effectively.
- Leadership and management are satisfactory. The school has accurately identified what it needs to do to improve and recent actions, for example to improve writing, have had a positive impact. Monitoring and evaluation of teaching and performance are satisfactory but not yet regular or rigorous enough in order to improve the consistency of pupils' progress and teaching and learning.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching by April 2013 so that it is consistently good or better in order to accelerate progress and especially raise attainment in writing by:
 - ensuring work accurately matches pupils' different abilities including children in the Early Years Foundation Stage
 - improving the quality of pupils' writing, particularly boys, so that more reach average or better standards
 - planning interesting activities that enable pupils to develop and apply their writing and communication skills in English and other subjects
 - raising expectations of pupils, especially boys, so that all have challenging targets and work hard to achieve them.

- Strengthen leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - the monitoring of the quality of teaching is more rigorous and action is taken to resolve any shortcomings
 - the information gained from the tracking of pupils' progress is used more effectively to check that pupils always make enough progress.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Achievement is satisfactory but is uneven across the school because the quality of teaching varies. Where teaching is good pupils make accelerated progress in lessons because work is matched accurately to their different abilities. This is very evident in Year 6, where pupils have clear targets and know how to reach them. Pupils in Key Stage 1 and lower Key Stage 2 are less aware of their targets and the work in their books shows variable progress over time. The quality of learning in lessons is satisfactory because the work set is sometimes too easy and pupils do not always have enough time to practise their skills. Pupils confidently apply their skills in reading, mathematics and information and communication technology in other subjects. However, there are not always enough opportunities to apply their writing skills, although it is better in Year 6. The use of workbooks and worksheets in Key Stage 1 fails to promote pupils' writing and numeracy skills in order to reach higher standards.

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make satisfactory progress, including in their communication, language and literacy skills, from low starting points. They make good progress in their personal and social development so that their behaviour is good. Progress in Key Stages 1 and 2 is satisfactory, being stronger in Year 6. Attainment overall is broadly average when pupils leave school. At the end of Year 2 attainment is below average in reading, writing and mathematics. It is starting to rise in reading because adults are systematically teaching pupils their letters and sounds. The more-able pupils in Key Stage 1 do not make enough progress because teaching does not fully meet their needs. Progress accelerates as pupils move through the school and by the time pupils leave they have developed reading and mathematical

skills that are broadly average. Standards in writing are below average throughout the school, although they are improving rapidly in Year 6. The more-able pupils make faster progress in Year 6 in response to more challenging teaching. There is a gap between the achievement of girls and boys with too few boys reaching average or better standards. This is because teachers do not always have high enough expectations of boys. However, this gap narrows in Year 6 where the small number of boys have made good progress to reach average standards.

The progress of pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs is satisfactory overall. It is good in reading because there is good provision to enable pupils to practise their reading skills. There is a similar pattern of progress for pupils who speak English as an additional language. The school welcomes newcomers who settle quickly and soon make the same progress as their peers.

Parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire feel their child makes good progress. Inspectors identify emerging strengths especially in reading but judge overall progress to be satisfactory.

Quality of teaching

Although overall teaching is satisfactory it is inconsistent and this is reflected in varying rates of learning across the school, including in the Early Years Foundation Stage. There are pockets of good teaching, but too much is satisfactory. Teaching is good at the end of Key Stage 2, particularly when Year 5 and Year 6 are taught in separate classes. This is because work is matched closely to pupils' needs and teachers give pupils enough opportunities to practise and extend their skills. In these lessons teachers provide interesting activities and pupils participate fully throughout. For example, in a Year 5 English lesson pupils started work the minute they entered the room. They quickly learned how to change the tense of two short sentences in order to combine them and make them more interesting. The task was clear so that pupils knew what to do and made good progress. These pupils know their targets, what level they are working at and what they need to do to improve. This good practice is not seen in all lessons. Where teaching is satisfactory expectations are not high enough and work does not interest or challenge pupils. Teachers talk for too long in these lessons so that pupils do not have enough time to practise their skills or develop their understanding.

The teaching of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is satisfactory overall but varies when work does not match their needs. They benefit from good support for reading.

Pupils' work is marked regularly and, in the best examples, helps pupils to make good progress. For example, in Year 6, higher ability pupils worked independently and checked their own work and collaborated with others to deepen their knowledge and understanding. Where marking is less effective pupils do not have the next steps to improve or they are given too many ways to improve and not enough opportunities to do so. Whilst children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are assessed regularly with evidence in their personal folders, this information is not always organised efficiently to track progress and plan to meet their learning needs.

Parents and carers feel that their children are taught well. Although inspectors identify strengths in some classes the overall quality of teaching is satisfactory.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils behave well in an atmosphere of harmony and respect. They have a secure sense of right and wrong and well developed social skills. Behaviour in and around the school is civilised so that learning proceeds with rare disruption. This is because there are clear boundaries and adults manage behaviour well. Pupils take pride in their work, which is reflected in the good standard of presentation. Older pupils, particularly girls in Year 6, have very mature attitudes to their work. They enjoy the opportunities to take responsibility and, as a result, work independently. Sometimes, boys lose interest in their work and this is not always managed effectively.

Pupils have a good understanding of their own culture through close involvement in both the church and the local community. Pupils have produced an excellent booklet, 'Discover Hartlepool' in conjunction with local businesses. It includes excellent contributions by pupils who have researched local history and geography. Equally, pupils have a good understanding of other cultures because the school embraces the diversity of pupils' backgrounds and uses this to increase their experiences and understanding of other cultures.

The vast majority of parents, carers and pupils say that behaviour is good and inspectors agree. Pupils feel safe in school and are confident that help is at hand if needed. There are occasional instances of bullying or racist name calling, but these are dealt with swiftly. Pupils have a good knowledge of keeping safe, for example older pupils know how to use the internet safely. Attendance is above average.

Leadership and management

The headteacher and governing body are fully committed to raising standards. Actions are more closely linked to improving attainment and are beginning to have an impact. This is evident in the closing gap between boys and girls in Year 6 and a steady improvement in writing. The school now has more information about its performance and pupils' progress. However, this information is not fully exploited by all staff to ensure that pupils in their class make enough progress. Teaching is regularly monitored but the response to this does not fully resolve shortcomings. Although training in teaching letters and sounds has raised attainment in reading and writing, professional development is not yet consistently tailored to the needs of individuals. Nevertheless, the school is moving forward and attainment is rising. Although monitoring and evaluation are not yet fully effective they are improving and the school is aware of its strengths and areas to improve. Therefore, the school has satisfactory capacity to improve.

The governing body is supportive and make a satisfactory contribution to pupils' achievement. They ensure safeguarding arrangements meet statutory requirements. The promotion of equality of opportunity and tackling of discrimination is satisfactory.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Staff create a caring, Christian atmosphere. The curriculum is satisfactory and pupils value the variety of enrichment opportunities. Opportunities for pupils to apply their writing skills across other areas of learning are not fully promoted. The school works well with parents and carers with the vast majority saying that they would recommend the school to others.

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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data 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.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



17 May 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Joseph's RC Primary School, Hartlepool, TS24 7HT

My colleague and I would like to thank you for the warm and friendly welcome when we came to inspect your school recently, with special thanks to those of you who met with us, read to us and talked to us. We really enjoyed our short time with you.

We were particularly impressed by the way you all get on together, regardless of the country, culture or religion you come from. The very many new pupils who come to your school are welcomed as warmly as we were. Those of you we spoke to and who returned questionnaires told us that behaviour in your school is mainly good and that you feel safe. We agree with you. You enjoy coming to school and are happy and willing to take on extra responsibility. We particularly noticed that pupils in Year 6 are becoming very mature and responsible and work hard to achieve the best that they can.

You go to a satisfactory school and we have asked the headteacher, governors and staff to work on some areas to make it better and these are:

- ensuring teaching is always good and lessons are exciting and challenging
- making sure that all of you, particularly boys, improve your writing skills
- checking that work is set at just the right level including for the children in the Nursery and Reception classes
- ensuring that the leaders of your school check its work more frequently to make sure you are all making good progress.

We think you can help your school by continuing to behave well, and making sure that you always work hard in lessons and practise your writing skills as often as possible.

I wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Christine Cottam
Lead inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone **0300 123 4234**, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.