

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	109247
Local authority	Bristol, City of
Inspection number	377894
Inspection dates	22–23 May 2012
Lead inspector	David Shears

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	236
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Shelagh Williams
Headteacher	Matthew Condon
Date of previous school inspection	15–16 October 2008
School address	Chatsworth Road Fishponds Bristol BS16 3QR
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

David Shears

Additional inspector

Christine Huard

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors visited 17 lessons taught by nine different teachers, and held meetings with representative members of the governing body, staff and groups of pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at policies, planning documents, assessment data and pupils' work. They analysed the questionnaires returned by 88 parents and carers.

Information about the school

St Joseph's Catholic Primary is an average-sized primary school. The majority of pupils are from White British or other White backgrounds, with the remainder from other cultures, the largest being of Asian origin. The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is lower than the national average, as is the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs. The percentage of pupils who speak English as an additional language is significantly higher than the national average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is lower than the national average. The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress. It has gained the Sing Up Platinum award and the Bike It bronze award.

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

Key findings

- This is a good school. It is not yet outstanding because, although pupils' achievement has markedly improved since the last inspection, pupils' progress in mathematics is not as strong as in English.
- Pupils' attainment on entry is broadly in line with age-related expectations. Attainment has risen steadily so that in 2011 standards reached by pupils in Year 6 were significantly above the national average in English and above the national average in mathematics.
- Teaching is good overall, although stronger in English than in mathematics. In English there is a clear emphasis on reading and writing. These skills are developed further across the curriculum enabling pupils to make good progress in literacy. However, in mathematics more-able pupils are not always sufficiently challenged and those with gaps in their learning are not consistently identified and supported early enough. There are fewer planned opportunities for pupils to practise their mathematical skills in other subjects.
- Behaviour and safety are good. Pupils have good attitudes towards their learning and concentrate well in lessons. They behave well in the playground and feel safe and secure. Attendance has risen since the last inspection and is now above the national average.
- Leadership and management are good. Senior leaders and managers have an accurate picture of the school's strengths and areas for development. The quality of improvement planning is excellent. The management of teaching, including the management of performance, is good overall. However, while monitoring by both senior and middle managers is developmental, there is not enough focus on learning for different groups of pupils. There are good relationships with parents and carers, most of whom speak highly of the school. However, opportunities are sometimes missed to engage them in helping their children to learn.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve achievement in mathematics by:
 - increasing the proportion of good and outstanding teaching
 - ensuring that more-able pupils are fully challenged in lessons
 - ensuring that pupils who struggle with aspects of mathematics are identified earlier and effective strategies are put in place to support them
 - providing more opportunities for practising mathematical skills across the curriculum.

- Improve the effectiveness of leaders and managers by ensuring that:
 - monitoring consistently focuses on the quality of learning for all groups of pupils
 - there are more opportunities for parents and carers to engage in their children's learning.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Children begin school with skills and knowledge that are similar to those expected for their age, although their communication, language and literacy development is consistently below expectations. They make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage so that by the time they enter Year 1, their literacy skills are broadly average because there is a particularly good focus on language development. For example, in one lesson children were engaged in developing positional language when giving directions to each other to negotiate an obstacle course. Since the last inspection pupils have been making increasingly good progress in Years 1 to 6, especially in English, resulting in attainment being significantly above average in 2011. One reason for this success in raising pupils' achievement is the daily focus on literacy skills throughout the school. For example, during the inspection, small groups of pupils with similar ability in Key Stage 1 were effectively practising their skills in building up words and using this knowledge well to improve their reading. Consequently, attainment in reading is above the national average at the end of Year 2 and rose to significantly above average at the end of Year 6 in 2011. Although attainment in mathematics is not as strong, the progress of pupils is improving, albeit at a slower pace.

Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are identified early and supported well so that they make good progress. Similarly, pupils with English as an additional language and most pupils from minority ethnic groups, including Asian pupils, make good progress. The school has identified that the attainment of girls is lower than that of boys and has put in measures to address this. As a result, the progress of girls has been stronger than boys' this year so that the gap in attainment is closing. This is also true for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school

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meals and White British pupils.

The overwhelming majority of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire felt that their children were making good progress. Inspectors found that while pupils are making good progress overall it is stronger in English than in mathematics.

Quality of teaching

The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection and is now good in all key stages, including the Early Years Foundation Stage. A positive ethos ensures good relationships in lessons. Teachers have good subject knowledge which they use well to give clear explanations and enable pupils to make good progress. Interactive whiteboards are used effectively to enhance teaching and careful questioning challenges pupils successfully to extend their thinking skills. Teaching assistants are deployed very effectively in English to support and help pupils with their reading skills, although this support is not as well developed in mathematics. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are supported well and their needs identified accurately, enabling them to make progress in line with their peers. Teachers use accurate assessment information to plan activities that meet the learning needs of pupils, although this is more consistent in literacy. In some numeracy lessons work is not consistently matching pupils' needs. For example, in one lesson in Key Stage 2, all pupils were given the same level of work and while it met the needs of average ability pupils and less-able pupils were given support, there was not enough challenge for more-able pupils, limiting the progress they made. Pupils have a good understanding of targets and older pupils assess when they have successfully reached these. Good use of self-assessment in lessons is more widely used by pupils to let the teacher know whether they need further support. Marking is supportive and tells pupils what they need to do to improve, although the opportunity for them to respond is inconsistent.

The curriculum is enriched by many activities, including a good range of extra-curricular activities. For example, during the inspection the choir performed in Bristol as the Olympic torch was being carried through. Good attention is given to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through exploring different cultures, including their religious beliefs and customs. There are good opportunities for pupils to practise their basic skills in writing and information and communication technology, although there are not enough planned opportunities to practise and extend pupils' mathematical skills in other subjects.

The overwhelming majority of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire feel that their children are taught well and most pupils agree.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils behave well and show positive attitudes towards their learning, making a good contribution to successful lessons. They work well together in a positive

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environment, supporting each other in their learning. Similarly, in the playground pupils enjoy spending time together. They have a good understanding of different kinds of bullying, including cyber-bullying. While they say that behaviour is typically good they acknowledge that there are occasional problems in the playground. They are confident that adults intervene and resolve any issues and consequently they feel very safe. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe and have a good understanding of issues such as internet safety. The school's positive ethos is a key strength in encouraging pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This ensures that pupils have a good understanding of right and wrong and successfully learn how to relate well to others, regardless of their background.

The very large majority of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire feel that pupils are safe and behave well.

The attendance of pupils has improved from being broadly average at the last inspection to above the national average. The school has effective systems to monitor attendance and follow up any concerns. In particular, decisive action has been taken to reduce the proportion of pupils with persistent absence which has now fallen to below the national average.

Leadership and management

Senior leaders have a good understanding of the strengths of the school and what needs to be done to make further improvements. Areas of development are articulated well in a highly effective plan which gives clear details of how targets are to be achieved. The plan is regularly annotated to demonstrate how successfully the school is addressing these. Senior and middle leaders monitor the quality of teaching and learning in a variety of ways, for example observing lessons and looking at pupils' work. They clearly identify areas of strength and any issues, contributing well to performance management. However, monitoring is sometimes focused too much on teaching and not enough on the quality of learning, and as a result areas for development are often focused on what teachers do rather than the progress pupils are making.

Regular meetings enable leaders and staff to discuss how well pupils are achieving in each class both as groups and individuals. Any pupils who are identified as at risk of underachieving, regardless of their ability, are given further support to enable them to make accelerated progress. Assessment data are of high quality and an accurate analysis is made of different groups to check whether they are all making good progress. Where any are not, swift action is taken to remedy this. As a result of these actions most pupils now make good progress in their learning. This demonstrates the school's continuing capacity to improve and its effective promotion of equality and tackling of discrimination. However, pupils with gaps in their mathematical understanding are not always identified early enough, hampering the progress that they make.

The curriculum is monitored well for its effectiveness and gives good opportunities

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for pupils to extend their learning in a variety of ways. Middle leaders in particular are effective in the development of their subjects and have good opportunities for professional development. They are clear about what has been achieved and have correctly identified areas to improve. Senior leaders promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. For example in an excellent act of worship, pupils reflected on helping each other to move on after a disappointment.

The school has good relationships with parents and carers who speak highly of the school. However, there are missed opportunities for parents and carers to engage more fully with their child's learning.

The governing body is very supportive and has a good knowledge of the school. Governors are increasingly becoming more effective in calling the school to account for the progress of pupils. Good attention is paid to the health and safety of pupils and staff and the school's safeguarding policies and procedures meet current government requirements.

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.



24 May 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Bristol BS16 3QR

Thank you for the welcome that we received when we visited your school recently. It was lovely to meet you all and find out about your good school.

You told us, both in person and through your questionnaires, how much you enjoy school because the teachers are kind and you have lots of friends. We are pleased to see that you attend very regularly to make the most of your learning. You also told us that you feel safe and secure in school and your parents and carers agree. It is good to know that the adults in school look after you so well.

We were very impressed with your good behaviour around the school, both in lessons and in the playground. We enjoyed watching you learning and playing together so well. We know that your school is very proud of you all.

We are particularly pleased with the progress you are all making in your reading and writing. We have asked your school leaders and teachers to make sure that you all make just as much progress in mathematics, whether you find it easy or difficult. You can help by politely telling your teacher if you need any help or want an extra challenge. We have also asked that you have more opportunities to practise your mathematical skills in other subjects so that you can see how useful they are.

We have asked your school leaders to check more carefully that you are all learning well in every lesson. Your parents and carers told us that they are very pleased with the school. We have asked the school leaders to encourage them to find out more about your learning so that they can help you too.

Thank you again for looking after us so well. We wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

David Shears
Lead inspector

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