

Our Lady and St Joseph Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	116378
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	379246
Inspection dates	2–3 July 2012
Lead inspector	Diane Wilkinson

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	101
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Thornicroft
Headteacher	Kirstie Richards
Date of previous school inspection	18–19 November 2008
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

Diane Wilkinson

Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspector visited eight lessons, observed four teachers and held meetings with members of the governing body, staff and pupils. The inspector observed the school's work, heard a sample of pupils read and looked at analyses of pupils' progress, development planning and monitoring, local authority reports, a range of policies and procedures, curriculum planning documents and a sample of pupils' work. The Ofsted questionnaires returned by 55 parents and carers were also scrutinised.

Information about the school

Our Lady and St Joseph Catholic Primary is much smaller than the average-sized primary school. There has been a change of headteacher and the large majority of staff since its last inspection. The majority of the four classes have mixed-age pupils. Most pupils are of White British heritage, although the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language has risen over the past year and is slightly below average. The proportion of pupils supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well below average, as is the proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals. The school meets the government's current floor standards in English and mathematics, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress. The school runs its own before- and after-school clubs, Earlybirds and Nightingales. These formed part of this inspection.

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

- Our Lady and St Joseph Catholic Primary is a satisfactory school. Past weaknesses in teaching and the systems for checking pupils' progress resulted in too many underachieving. The headteacher's strong leadership and the hard work and commitment of staff have brought about rapid improvement this year. This is evident in the good achievement in the Reception class, and in reading throughout the school. The school is not yet good because some inconsistencies in teaching and weaknesses in writing remain. Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.
- Achievement is satisfactory. Progress in reading is good and improving quickly in writing and mathematics, although there has been insufficient time to make up some gaps in learning in Years 1 to 6, particularly in writing where the presentation of work is weak.
- Teaching has improved considerably this year, especially in the level of challenge, with the very large majority of lessons observed during the inspection being good or better. However, evidence taken from the scrutiny of pupils' work and records of their progress show that the impact of teaching is satisfactory rather than good over time.
- Improved lesson activities that are relevant, interesting and challenging engage and motivate pupils. Behaviour is good and pupils get on very well together. The arrangements for keeping them safe are very effective.
- Leadership and management are satisfactory. Current monitoring systems result in accurate self-evaluation and improved development planning that allow weaknesses to be monitored and tackled effectively in teaching and performance. The headteacher's exceptionally strong leadership has ensured both staff and members of the governing body, while still developing their skills, are working more effectively to support school improvement.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise achievement, especially in writing, by ensuring that in all their work, pupils write neatly and spell accurately and that the more-able pupils use more sophisticated punctuation features such as colons or dashes to promote effect.
- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or outstanding by December 2012 through ensuring that:
 - the pace of learning is rigorous throughout all lessons
 - staff take more opportunities during lessons to draw together groups of pupils who may be experiencing difficulties or are ready to move on to a new challenge in order to promote their progress
 - the marking of pupils' work regularly gives advice on how to improve
 - the new assessment and target-setting systems introduced for writing are extended to other subjects.
- Increase the contribution made to school improvement by staff with leadership and management responsibilities and members of the governing body, by extending their monitoring and evaluation skills.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Attainment on entry to Reception is at the expected level for children of this age group, although it was previously lower than this. Reception children make good progress, especially in reading and writing, a considerable improvement on previous years. In other year groups, rapid progress this year is helping pupils to catch up quickly. This has ensured that achievement is satisfactory. Disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and pupils who speak English as an additional language make the same progress as their peers as the result of special programmes of work which are quickly put in place. Parents and carers are delighted with the progress their children are now making, many commenting on the improvements this year.

Currently, pupils' learning of the sounds letters make (phonics), including for pupils in Years 3 to 6 who needed extra support, is good. This, together with improved resources and more opportunities for reading to adults, has raised attainment in reading. Most Year 2 pupils, many of whom were below average in Reception, achieve average levels of attainment. By Year 6, virtually all pupils read confidently and fluently, comprehending well and developing a good understanding of different genres and authors. Attainment in reading is above average.

Attainment is average in writing and mathematics. A concern in past years,

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attainment in writing is now improving because assessment systems are more accurate and staff have higher expectations of what pupils can achieve. This is especially notable in Reception where almost all children now write in sentences, the more able producing stories or descriptions at a level normally seen in much older pupils. In other year groups, some weaknesses have been successfully addressed. For example, Year 2 pupils' work is better organised, with an effective beginning, middle and end to writing. They use much more adventurous vocabulary and Year 6 pupils skilfully use features such as metaphors, similes or personification to enliven their work. For example, their very effective 'Secret Poems' described the 'booming thunder shouting' and 'shells scuttering across the sand'. Pupils use appropriate language such as 'On the other hand...' and 'In conclusion...' when setting out an argument. However, too often work is spoiled by handwriting which is difficult to read and careless spelling, even of common words. There is correct use of sentence punctuation and speech marks, but too few pupils use sophisticated punctuation. These weaknesses limit their achievement.

As their learning in mathematics has improved, pupils have a secure understanding of place value, calculate accurately and use these skills in solving problems. This has resulted in most reaching the levels of attainment expected for their age by the end of Years 2 and 6. In the past, there has been less opportunity for pupils to plan and carry out mathematical investigations independently, although this is now developing well.

Quality of teaching

Previous weaknesses in assessment led to activities being insufficiently challenging in the past, especially for the older and more-able groups in mixed-age classes. Improvements in teaching mean this is no longer the case and no pupils are under-achieving. Nevertheless, the legacy of slow progress remains, which is why teaching is satisfactory overall.

Most lessons observed were good and a small minority outstanding. All parents and carers are extremely pleased with the improvements made, one typically commenting, 'The teachers are caring and helpful to both pupils and parents.' There is a strong determination to meet the needs of individual pupils, and a much more concerted approach to achieve this, with staff working well together, willingly sharing expertise. Their success has been considerably underpinned by the more accurate assessment and regular checking of pupils' progress. As a result, lesson activities are effectively matched to the ages and abilities in each class. The teaching of disabled pupils or those with special educational needs enables them to make satisfactory progress because it consistently meets their needs. Teaching assistants support group activities well. Challenging improvement targets for English and mathematics are beginning to promote progress, although this feature is relatively new and only fully developed for writing. Marking ensures that pupils are clear about how well they are progressing, but does not always indicate how to improve their work.

Many opportunities for reflection, discussion and paired work promote pupils' spiritual

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and social development. As a result, pupils are better at assessing their own work and become independent learners. Teachers are skilled at intervening throughout lessons to refocus the class and accelerate progress, but they miss opportunities to do this with small groups who might need extra support or challenge. Pupils enjoy activities and work hard. However, not all staff capitalise well enough on this by maintaining a rigorous pace throughout activities.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

The school has successfully fostered a strong commitment to learning which has been enhanced by the improved curriculum and teaching. Parents and carers praise this aspect, one typically commenting, 'There is a great feeling of community amongst pupils and staff.' As a result, pupils enjoy school, get on well with staff and work hard. They know they have done well this year and are keen to do even better. Their enthusiasm is evident in the above average attendance levels.

Strong moral and social development helps ensure that pupils behave well and that relationships with adults and between pupils are good. This was clearly evident in the way that the oldest pupils played games with the youngest in the well-run Earlybirds and Nightingale clubs. Pupils are polite, friendly and helpful, features fostered well by school rules on 'How to be respectful'. These strengths have ensured the growing number of pupils of different nationality or culture joining the school are welcomed and supported. Pupils are convinced that bullying in any form is not an issue and that staff deal well with any incidents of poor behaviour. They feel very safe in school and are well informed on how to keep safe, including on the internet, especially in keeping important personal information safe. Parents and carers agree that their children behave well and are kept safe at school.

Leadership and management

The school benefits from the considerable strengths of its headteacher and the systems she has introduced to provide thorough and accurate self-evaluation, and improvement planning that is effectively targeted at weaknesses. Alongside this, she has been especially successful in building strong teamwork amongst the whole-school community so that all are working determinedly to move the school forward. As a result, teachers are successfully improving their practice and members of the governing body, parents and carers are supportive of the school in its drive for improvement. This gives confidence that the school is securely placed to improve further. Parents and carers are full of praise for the work undertaken this year, especially citing the strengths of the headteacher and improvements in teaching.

The management of performance, through a wealth of strategies, including staff training and coaching, and regular monitoring of lessons, curriculum planning and pupils' work, has successfully improved the quality of teaching and raised achievement. Improved tracking and assessment systems have enhanced the school's ability to hold staff to account and provided members of the governing body with better information to help support and challenge the school. Partly due to staff

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changes, subject leadership is not fully established in some areas and the governing body's role in monitoring improvement priorities is still developing.

During the year, the curriculum has been adjusted to meet pupils' needs and interests more closely. A topic-based approach motivates pupils and engages both boys and girls. Assessment information is used well to adjust planning according to pupils' progress and to intervene to help any pupils at risk of underachievement catch up. Visits and visitors help to make learning relevant and enhance learning, with the parents and carers, and parishioners, who listen to pupils read helping to improve achievement. The strong promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development ensures pupils are reflective and considerate of others, including those from different cultures, faiths or backgrounds. This helps ensure that the school's strong commitment to prevent discrimination in any form and to provide equality of opportunity is met. Safeguarding is given high priority and the school fully meets government requirements, for example with regard to the vetting of staff, child protection and anti-bullying procedures.

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.

4 July 2012

Dear Pupils



**Inspection of Our Lady and St Joseph Catholic Primary School, Lymington
SO41 8GY**

Thank you for welcoming me to your school. I very much enjoyed my time talking to you and seeing all the things you do. Thank you for telling me about your school. I particularly want to thank the pupils who gave up their time to talk or read to me. I have judged your school to be satisfactory and improving, something that you and your parents and carers also recognise.

Here are some of the things I found that were good about the school.

- Reception children get off to a good start and you all make good progress in reading, so that attainment is above average by Year 6. You have made better progress in writing and mathematics this year so in these subjects achievement is satisfactory and attainment is average.
- The teaching and curriculum have been improved, consequently, you enjoy lessons and work hard. Accurate assessment ensures activities help you to progress.
- You are friendly, polite and helpful. Behaviour is good and you get on well together. Attendance is above average.
- Your headteacher has been really successful in helping your school to improve and staff are supporting her well.

Here are some of the things I have asked the school to improve.

- Your handwriting, spelling and use of punctuation are not as good as other aspects of your writing. So I am asking staff and you to work really hard at improving these.
- I am also asking staff to increase the pace of your learning by using targets and marking your work to show you how to improve, so that your progress is consistently good in all lessons and subjects.
- Subject leaders and members of the governing body are very committed to helping the school to improve, and I have asked them to extend their skills in doing this.

Yours sincerely

Diane Wilkinson
Lead inspector

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