

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Rough Hay Road, Wednesbury, Walsall, WS10 8HN

Inspection dates 13–14 September 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The headteacher's clear focus on consistently raising pupils' achievement and aspirations is shared by staff, senior leaders and members of the governing body. The effective management of teachers' performance is leading to good and improving teaching over time. This has sustained standards of attainment at the end of Year 6, which have been significantly above average for the past three years.
- The warm, welcoming atmosphere of the Early Years Foundation Stage and its strong focus on children's learning and development ensures that children make good progress from starting points which are typically below those expected for their age.
- Throughout the school, all groups of pupils make good progress, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs and those who are learning English as an additional language. Reading is a particular strength.
- Teaching is good. Teachers use their good subject knowledge effectively to plan lessons which interest and engage the pupils. However, more-able pupils are not always consistently challenged to maximise their achievement
- Behaviour and safety are good. The school is a cohesive community where pupils feel safe. It is caring and inclusive, and this contributes to the strong promotion of pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development. As a result, behaviour is consistently good and at times, outstanding. Attendance is regular and in line with that of primary schools nationally.
- Members of the governing body play a significant part in making important decisions which drive the school forward. The school's focus on continuous improvement based on an accurate view of its performance demonstrates that it has a good capacity to sustain improvement.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There are inconsistencies in teaching that limit some more-able pupils' achievement, particularly in Years 3 to 6.
- Attendance is not yet good because some families take holidays in term time.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out with half a day's notice and took place over two days.
- The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 17 lessons, taught by nine teachers.
- They held meetings with the headteacher, senior leaders, members of the governing body, the local authority, staff and groups of pupils.
- They listened to pupils read.
- They spoke to parents and carers and took account of the nine responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection.
- They observed the school's work, and looked at school policies, including those relating to safeguarding and equality, the governing body minutes and planning documents.
- They scrutinised pupils' work and evaluated nine questionnaires returned by staff.

Inspection team

Barbara Atcheson, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

David Westall

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- St Joseph's is an average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium is just above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is above average.
- The proportion of those pupils supported at school action plus and those with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The school is a member of the Darlaston Collaboration of Schools who share resources and provide extended school activities.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school gained the Intermediate International School Award in 2011.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching by ensuring:
 - teachers' expectations of what more-able pupils can do are raised so that this group is always suitably challenged, particularly in Years 3 to 6.
- Work with parents and carers to improve the rate of attendance so that it is at least good.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- School records show, and inspection evidence confirms, all groups of pupils achieve well and make at least good progress from their starting points. This prepares them well for the next stage of their education. Evidence from Parent View and discussions with parents and carers confirm that they are happy with their children's progress.
- Pupils join the school in Nursery with skills, knowledge and understanding which are lower than normally expected. Good and, at times, outstanding teaching ensures that they make good progress during the Early Years Foundation Stage. Most reach the levels expected for their age but relatively few exceed these on entry to Year 1.
- In Key Stage 1, progress is generally good and standards of attainment are broadly in line with the national average at the end of Year 2, and show a rising trend. The proportion of more-able pupils reaching Level 3 is also increasing.
- In Key Stage 2, pupils' progress is also good, accelerating in Years 5 and 6 so that the proportion of pupils attaining Level 4 is significantly above average and the proportion attaining Level 5 is average by the end of the key stage. While more-able pupils make good progress overall and none is less than satisfactory, their progress lacks consistency and they do not always maximise their achievement.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress. This is because of the high priority the school gives to meeting their needs. By ensuring consistent and high-quality help from well-qualified teaching assistants wherever it is needed, the lower-attaining pupils, those entitled to the pupil premium and those whose circumstances may make them vulnerable make good progress. As a result, any gaps between them and all pupils nationally are closed effectively.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language also make rapid progress from their starting points due to well-planned tasks and the aid of bilingual staff.
- Pupils achieve well in mathematics. Achievement in writing has improved as a result of the good measures taken by the school since the last inspection. Reading is a strength across the school due to the systematic use of the well-embedded phonics (letters and sounds) programme.
- Outcomes of the most recent phonic screen check in Year 1 show that a large majority achieved or exceeded the required level. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils reach average standards in reading and significantly above average standards by the end of Key Stage 2.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers and teaching assistants are very enthusiastic and their professionalism shines through in each lesson. This inspires and motivates pupils to have positive attitudes to learning and ensures their behaviour is never less than good in lessons.
- Accurate use of assessment ensures that tasks are generally well matched to pupils' needs and helps them to extend their knowledge and understanding and make good progress. However, when more-able pupils have to cover the same work as their peers before moving on to the more challenging work of which they are capable, it limits their achievement.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and use questioning accurately to check pupils' understanding. They plan effectively with teaching assistants to meet the pupils' wide-ranging needs, including those who are at the early stages of learning English and those with a variety of disabilities and/or special educational needs. Effective work in small groups helps those pupils in danger of underachieving to eliminate any learning gaps that exist.
- Good teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage provides a strong base for children's future learning. Adults plan a wide range of opportunities, both inside and out of doors, to develop children's independence and acquisition of basic skills in literacy and numeracy.
- Teaching is sometimes outstanding. In an outstanding lesson on grid multiplication in Year 6, pupils demonstrated an excellent mathematical understanding as a result of the teacher's

high expectations and her expert subject knowledge. They relished the opportunity to demonstrate their newly acquired skills in quick-fire computation and rose to every challenge enthusiastically.

- Reading, writing and mathematics are taught well and pupils apply their skills across the curriculum. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects are also taught effectively across the curriculum and this leads to pupils' good development.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- School records and inspection evidence confirm parents' view that behaviour is good. It is often outstanding in lessons because pupils are motivated and engaged in their learning. Exclusions are rare but, when used, have been highly effective in helping pupils manage their behaviour more positively.
- Good spiritual, moral and cultural development enables pupils to develop a clear set of personal values. They work and play harmoniously. They are polite and have positive attitudes towards learning. However, on a few occasions, they are not given enough opportunity in lessons to take responsibility for their own learning.
- Pupils are aware of different types of bullying but say there is very little, if any, bullying. They are knowledgeable about how to stay safe on the internet, in school and at home. They say they feel safe in school and know that there will always be someone who will listen to them if they have any concerns.
- Despite the school's robust procedures for improving attendance, the school does not always receive full cooperation from a few parents and carers who take their children on holiday during term time. Consequently, the rate of attendance is satisfactory rather than good.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and senior leaders have high aspirations and convey their expectations convincingly to all staff. As a result, there is a consistent commitment to continuous improvement.
- School improvement plans are well focused, based on robust, accurate self-evaluation, and include a sensible number of priorities that the school is actively pursuing. The management of teaching performance is good with effective professional development, based on the needs of the staff, and the school is making significant improvements to the quality of teaching and learning in the school.
- All teachers are held to account for pupils' progress at regular meetings, where the school's accurate tracking system highlights any underperformance. This, together with the school's good care and guidance for all pupils, ensures that the school's provision to secure equal opportunities and to tackle discrimination is good.
- The curriculum meets the needs of all pupils and is effective in providing opportunities for learning for all pupils, particularly in reading, writing and mathematics. A broad range of experiences and opportunities are planned to ensure that pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The school's work for the Intermediate International Award has been particularly important in helping prepare pupils for life in modern democratic Britain.
- The school's partnership with parents and carers is good. Workshops and reading records help parents and carers to play an important part in their children's learning. A trained parents' support adviser provides useful guidance and good support for parents and carers in areas such as parenting skills and building self-esteem.
- The school works in purposeful collaboration with a group of schools and a children's centre to share resources such as a school's meals service and speech therapists, and to provide extended school activities.
- The school's arrangement for safeguarding meets statutory requirements.
- The local authority provides light touch support for this good school.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- members of the governing body are well informed and effective
- they have a good knowledge of the strengths of the school and areas for development
- they effectively challenge and support senior leaders and play an important role in the strategic direction of the school
- they ensure that performance management systems, including the performance management of the headteacher, improve the quality of teaching and leadership
- they ensure that statutory duties are met and that financial resources, including the pupil premium, are managed effectively.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	104235
Local authority	Walsall
Inspection number	402938

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	233
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Richard Dalton
Headteacher	Kevin Mee
Date of previous school inspection	17 September 2007
Telephone number	0121 5686496
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Email address	postbox@st-josephs.walsall.sch.uk

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