

# St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Station Road, Tadcaster, North Yorkshire, LS24 9JG

## Inspection dates

18 September 2012

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
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.

- Pupils achieve well. They make rapid progress in each year group.
- Attainment has risen significantly over the last 18 months. It is above average in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- Teaching is good, especially in mathematics. Matching work to pupils' individual needs is a notable strength.
- Pupils have good attitudes to learning. They behave well in lessons and work hard. They feel safe and enjoy playing with their friends at break and lunchtimes.
- The Interim Executive Board is highly effective. It brought stability to the school in terms of finance and staffing, including the appointment of the headteacher.
- The shadow governing body is equally effective.
- The headteacher has secured improvements in teaching and learning through rigorous monitoring.
- The leadership uses community links very effectively to raise aspirations and accelerate pupils' learning and progress.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The teaching of phonics (linking letters and sounds) is not as strong as it should be and so some pupils are not very confident at reading or spelling new or unfamiliar words.
- The headteacher and the shadow governing body have more to do to continue the good pace of improvement, including ensuring new members of the governing body are quickly established in their role.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed six lessons or part lessons taught by two teachers and support staff.
- She heard a third of pupils read.
- Year 6 pupils showed the work they had done this term in English and mathematics to the inspector and talked about their learning.
- The inspector held meetings with pupils, staff and members of the Interim Executive Board, the shadow governing body and the local authority.
- The views of 12 parents who responded to Parent View were taken into account. They represent the views of a third of parents.

## Inspection team

Lesley Clark, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Pupils are taught in two mixed-age classes.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage and a minority come from mixed White or other backgrounds. None is at an early stage of learning English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is broadly average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- A broadly average proportion of pupils is known to be eligible for the pupil premium.
- There have been significant staffing, governance and financial difficulties since the last inspection.
- The headteacher, after an 18-month period as acting headteacher, was appointed from 1 September 2012.
- A shadow governing body was established in November 2011 to shadow the Interim Executive Board prior to normal governance starting on 1 October 2012.
- The school meets the current government floor standards.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen the teaching of phonics so that pupils read and spell new or unfamiliar words more confidently.
- Enable the headteacher, together with the shadow governing body, to continue the good pace of improvement by:
  - ensuring new members of the governing body are quickly established in their role
  - ensuring success criteria in the school improvement plans are more precisely focused on pupils' outcomes.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

is good

- Pupils achieve well from starting points that are generally below average. Their progress has accelerated in the past 18 months. Attainment is now above average by the end of Year 6 in English and mathematics.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress. Pupils who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium sometimes outperform their peers. Support for these different groups of learners is very effective because it is tailored to their needs. This reflects the school's successful drive to eliminate discrimination and promote equality of opportunity.
- Attainment in mathematics has shot up significantly. A large proportion of pupils now reach the higher Levels 5 and 6 in mathematics in national tests at the end of Year 6. Pupils are adept at solving problems, learning new skills methodically and setting each other mathematical challenges.
- The proportion reaching the higher Levels 3 and 5 in English at the end of Years 2 and 6 has also increased. In each year group, the majority of pupils make better than expected progress.
- Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They settle quickly into the school routines. They lead much of their own learning and show considerable maturity when selecting and using resources. They ask many questions and play imaginative games well together.
- The children currently in Reception are making good progress in understanding how well letters and sounds link together. For example, one child proudly 'read' what she had told an older child to write for her, pointing out individual letters.
- Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve well. In terms of their phonic knowledge, they are at a similar stage. This is because Year 2 pupils did not benefit from a systematic approach to learning how letters and sounds link together.
- Sometimes, pupils in older year groups also find it hard to read unfamiliar words. This is because they do not have the skills to sound out and make sense of new words, stumbling over words such as 'stared', for example. More-able readers, however, read hard words, such as 'blurred' or 'unfurled' without hesitation.
- Pupils are enthusiastic readers. Year 6 pupils readily discuss their favourite books and talk about complex issues. They read expressively, with a sense of audience.
- Pupils write well for their age but sometimes their spelling mars an otherwise good piece of work.

### The quality of teaching

is good

- Teachers are skilled at teaching a wide age and ability range in their classes.
- An outstanding feature in mathematics lessons is the active mental and oral sessions. For example, in one lesson, four different groups of pupils leapt to their feet at different points when multiples of their assigned numbers occurred during a count to 100. More-able pupils swiftly identified common multiples.
- Lessons start with a very brief introduction which sets out what pupils are going to learn and why. Learning objectives are in child-friendly language and so pupils can check their progress. Pupils agree, 'Our teachers' explanations are good and help you to learn.'
- Pupils have a sense of continuity because they know what they have learnt successfully and where they struggle. For example, older pupils realised that they had found it hard to identify the rule for working out a mathematical sequence and so tackled the next lesson on sequencing with gusto, working out clear, precise steps to guarantee success.
- Pupils are quickly engaged in practical, thought-provoking tasks so they have the maximum amount of time to learn through investigation, practising new skills and finding out for

themselves.

- Older pupils find teachers' marking helpful. They especially like the 'steps to success' which they use to help them to improve their next piece of work.
- Staff who teach younger pupils keep detailed daily records of pupils' learning and progress. They then use this information to help them determine what to teach next and to target individual pupils who may be struggling.
- The teaching of phonics is a relative weakness because teachers are still getting to grips with the gaps pupils have in their phonic knowledge owing to previous shortcomings in provision.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are good

- Pupils thoroughly enjoy coming to school. They love the fact that it is a small school because, 'We get to take part in all the sports and drama so we can try out everything.'
- Attendance has improved markedly and is now above average.
- Pupils work and play well together. They work sensibly in groups and tackle problems with perseverance. They ask for help when they need it and are quite analytical about the difficulties they encounter.
- Pupils feel very safe. They are adamant that there is no bullying in school. 'It's too small,' they say, 'everyone knows everyone else.' They recognise that some pupils have behavioural problems but feel that they are being helped to manage these better.
- Pupils definitely feel that they have a voice in their school. Their comments include: 'The teachers listen to your suggestions,' 'If you have a problem they will try to sort it out', and, 'They don't leave anyone out.'
- Pupils are kind and considerate towards each other. They respect each other's beliefs.
- Pupils' contributions to an assembly based on 'I can say good things about myself', showed how much they value qualities such as making people laugh, being helpful, caring and showing determination and courage.
- These qualities form the basis of their strong spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

### **The leadership and management** are good

- The local authority provides light touch support for this good school. It gave intensive and highly effective support when the school was in difficulties three years ago.
- The headteacher clearly had immediate impact in her position as acting headteacher. She tackled shortcomings in teaching and learning with very specific, high-level interventions to remedy underachievement and accelerate progress.
- Rewriting the school's aims to ensure they are relevant to the school community was a key initial action. It drew together the school community and raised staff and pupils' aspirations. Other actions that followed, such as developing the indoor and outdoor learning environments, boosted pupils' independent learning skills and opened up a range of different teaching techniques to staff.
- The leadership of teaching is a strength. Senior leaders check the impact of teaching over time through checking progress in individual lessons, over a period of a week and over a half-term.
- The headteacher uses performance management well to challenge and support staff improvement. The result is skilled teaching, including very effective individual support for pupils who need extra help at times.
- Pupils' progress meetings are used effectively to ensure that staff are accountable for the progress their pupils make.
- Continuing professional development through training, including teaching phonics, visits to other schools and working alongside colleagues, further strengthens teaching effectiveness.

- Community networking with other schools is very successful. The school is outward-looking and ambitious as a result. An example of the impact of this aspect of the school's work is the increasing proportion of high-performing pupils who reach Level 6 in national tests in mathematics.
  - The school's self-evaluation is accurate and used well to form the basis for school improvement planning. Action plans themselves are not always as specific as they should be with regard to ensuring success criteria are sharply focused on pupils' outcomes. This therefore makes it hard to evidence their precise impact.
  - **The governance of the school:**
    - The Interim Executive Board has been highly effective in ensuring a rapid pace of change through securing financial and staffing stability and appointing an effective headteacher.
    - It has worked very hard to develop an equally strong shadow governing body.
    - The shadow governing body is a good mix of new and well-established members who also served on the Interim Executive Board. This has ensured a seamless transition of governance for when the new governing body takes on its normal role shortly.
    - Understandably, the next step is to ensure that new members become proficient in their roles as quickly as possible.
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## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	121641
<b>Local authority</b>	North Yorkshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	402043

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	41
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Interim executive board
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Philip Turnpenny
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Kate Gilmore
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	24 March 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01937 832344
<b>Fax number</b>	01937 831568
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