

# St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Coombeshead Road, Newton Abbot, Devon TQ12 1PT

**Inspection dates** 28–29 November 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' attainment and progress have both risen since the previous inspection as the school has improved. Pupils' achievement is good.
- Well-planned teaching that focuses on the needs of all pupils provides enjoyable lessons and promotes good learning for all groups.
- Pupils enjoy school life and behave well; they display very positive relationships with adults and with one another. Pupils understand how to keep safe and school is a safe environment.
- The school is a welcoming, caring place and provides well for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The quietly determined leadership of the headteacher, fully supported by staff and the governing body, has improved all aspects of the school, particularly teaching and pupils' achievement.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There are still some inconsistencies in teaching and not enough lessons are outstanding. This is mostly because classrooms sometimes become noisy when pupils become over-enthusiastic; teachers do not always handle this effectively so the pace of learning can slow.
- The governing body does not systematically check up on all aspects of school life; it relies too much on school leaders for its view of the school.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed the school's work, looked at the school website and scrutinised a range of documents including the school's policies, assessment and other records.
- The inspector observed ten lessons taught by six teachers over a period of approximately four and a half hours.
- Meetings were held with staff, pupils and members of the governing body and the inspector held a telephone conversation with a representative from the local authority. The inspector also had informal conversations with parents and carers.
- The inspector took account of the 30 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View).

## Inspection team

John Carnaghan, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- St Joseph's Catholic Primary School is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average, but rising. The proportion of pupils eligible for pupil premium support (additional money allocated to schools by the government) is below average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is below average; almost all pupils speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported on school action is well above average. There is an average proportion of pupils supported on school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- The school has a higher than average turnover of pupils.
- The headteacher took up her post in January 2011. She is currently also the headteacher of another Catholic primary school. The school plans to federate with this school under her leadership in January 2013.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

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

- Raise the quality of teaching from good to outstanding, in particular by ensuring that pupils are well managed at all times so a brisk pace of learning is maintained throughout all lessons.
- Ensure that members of the governing body undertake independent, systematic checks on all aspects of the school.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Children enter the Reception class with abilities and skills below those expected for their age; particularly low in literacy and personal development. The well-organised Early Years Foundation Stage, where teaching is often outstanding, helps children make a good start at St Joseph's. They join Year 1 with a positive attitude to learning and with attainment similar to national expectations.
- Teachers provide very good opportunities for learning and pupils work hard to ensure they do as well as possible. Better teaching has raised attainment since the previous inspection and it is now above average. While there have been some annual fluctuations, there is a rising trend of attainment and progress across the school; pupils' achievement is good.
- Lessons are invariably well planned to engage pupils. For example a Years 4, 5 and 6 mathematics lesson included a variety of activities to challenge pupils across the age and ability range. The work of the skilled teaching assistants was also carefully planned so that each one was well placed to provide pupils with the required assistance. In consequence, all groups of pupils made good progress.
- Reading and writing are strongly encouraged in school. Pupils enjoy a very wide range of books and their attainment in reading is above average by the end of Year 6. The organisation and teaching of phonics (that is, linking sounds and letters) is good.
- Information from regular assessments is used to identify pupils in danger of falling behind. Teachers know pupils well and the school selects perceptively from a variety of different forms of help to intervene with assistance that is matched to each individual.
- Precisely planned small-group and individual work is usually effective in ensuring progress is similar across all groups of pupils and the school provides equality of opportunity for all, including those who are disabled, those on school action, school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- The targeting of pupil premium funding is effective and is helping to close the gap in achievement between these eligible pupils and their peers.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Improvements in teaching since the previous inspection have raised pupils' attainment and progress. Lessons have a number of strengths but some inconsistencies remain.
- While keen to learn, pupils can become over-excited; their talkativeness is not always well managed by staff, sometimes slowing the pace of lessons.
- The planning of lessons is usually thorough and includes brief, stimulating activities that interest pupils. Work set is carefully adjusted so that each pupil undertakes tasks that have the correct degree of difficulty. Year 6 pupils report that they enjoy all their lessons and appreciate the interesting challenges they are given.
- The way teaching assistants are used is well organised, so they contribute to learning throughout lessons. Very thorough planning and preparation in the Reception class gives children an exciting diet of rewarding activities. Teachers generally set high expectations that pupils strive to meet. However, teachers do not always set strict deadlines for pupils to complete tasks.
- Teachers use their good subject knowledge to deliver stimulating experiences. An outstanding Year 1 lesson on writing instructions was enlivened when the teacher prepared a fruit salad step by step, encouraging pupils to suggest instructions before she went on to the next stage. When they came to write their recipes for fruit salad, pupils had received excellent preparation and were able to set about the task with understanding and commitment.
- Pupils' work in books is very well marked; they have clear simple targets that are regularly

updated. Older pupils know the National Curriculum level of their work and the best way to improve on it.

- Teachers are confident and foster very good relationships, showing great courtesy towards pupils. Praise and rewards are much appreciated by pupils who usually react to their adult role models by being polite and helpful themselves. Teachers encourage pupils to reflect on moral and cultural issues by exploring important topics such as the environment and life in developing nations.
- Test and other assessment information and teachers' first-hand knowledge of pupils all help accurate identification of those who are finding learning difficult. Staff act rapidly and skilfully to select the correct support to put in place. The success of the actions taken, largely by skilled teaching assistants, is evident in the consistently good progress made by different groups of pupils, including those supported with additional pupil premium funding.
- Very thorough checks on progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage build a clear picture of each child's development and keep staff and parents and carers well informed.

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

- Teachers, pupils, parents and carers agree that behaviour is good and express very few concerns.
- The school's caring nature means pupils feel very safe at school and teachers ensure they have a good understanding of how to avoid risks, such as on the internet. Pupils are fully confident that they can turn to their teachers when they have concerns and that these will be effectively dealt with.
- Behaviour around the school, on busy corridors, in the playground and in the dining hall is mature and sensible. In class, pupils show good attitudes to learning, listen carefully to adults and are generally obedient; this promotes good progress. When pupils' enthusiasm for what they are doing carries them away they sometimes become too talkative; this occasionally slows down the pace of learning.
- Bullying of all kinds is well understood by pupils because they are well briefed about the issues. For example, they know about cyber-bullying and how to avoid it. Pupils confidently report that bullying of all types is very rare and that any hint of it is quickly acted upon by staff.

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

- Since her appointment in January 2011 the headteacher has firmly tackled issues that held the school back. Significant staff changes have improved the quality of teaching and the capability of the school to develop. Monitoring of teaching and learning is accurate and perceptive and well used to eliminate weaknesses.
- The school benefits from good links with the local authority. This has helped it come to an accurate self-evaluation.
- Regular checks on pupils' attainment give leaders and managers a clear picture of strengths and weaknesses. Frequent pupil progress meetings with class teachers identify pupils who require extra help and trigger additional support. This fully promotes equality of opportunity and ensures no discrimination.
- Pupil progress meetings are additionally used to hold staff to account for the success of their teaching in promoting the best possible learning for all.
- The school has made good progress since the previous inspection. In particular, teaching and achievement are now both good. Issues raised in the previous inspection have been addressed; the school demonstrates a good capacity for further improvement.
- Themed events like Fair Trade week incorporate varied activities that link a number of National Curriculum subjects. Fair Trade week encompasses other aspects; the student council organises relevant fund-raising and parents and carers are invited to a Fair Trade

coffee morning.

- Staff plan together to provide attractive, relevant topics for study. The school has very clear systems to check that skills pupils need are delivered in a logical order, ensuring that all required areas are fully covered.
- Constructive links with the nearby secondary school enrich the curriculum; for example, the accelerated reading programme encourages higher attaining pupils to tackle more challenging books. The wide range of after-school clubs is popular with pupils.
- Lessons offer regular opportunities for pupils to develop spiritual and cultural understanding. For example, Year 3 pupils improved their descriptive language when describing the appearance of the Hindu god, Ganesh.
- Positive relationships are a testament to pupils' good moral and social development. Assemblies provide moments to reflect on important moral issues, such as how to 'build bridges' with one's fellow citizens, as well as occasions for prayer and reflection.
- Parents and carers hold very positive views of the school and are pleased with recent improvements. The school's close partnership with a similar school that it is soon to federate with, has enabled the sharing of good practice and joint staff training.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body supports the school fully. It understands additional pupil premium funding and contributes to discussions about how this money is spent. Most is used to provide more teaching assistant time to give extra support to this group of pupils. Governors check that results for these pupils match the extra expenditure, ensuring good value for money. The governing body is aware that teachers' targets are closely tied to the school's own priorities. Governors ensure that performance management firmly links teachers' pay progression to pupils' academic and other performance. The governing body does not plan enough systematic checks on the school, relying too much on informal visits; this limits its capacity to challenge the school about its performance. It does, however, pay close attention to pupils' safety. Parents, carers, staff and pupils agree that the school is a safe place and the school meets safeguarding requirements.

## 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>	113467
<b>Local authority</b>	Devon
<b>Inspection number</b>	401372

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>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	120
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Christopher Coward
<b>Headteacher</b>	Liz Hamilton
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	25–26 November 2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	01626 352559
<b>Fax number</b>	01626 335079
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