

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Hazelgrove Road, Haywards Heath, RH16 3PQ

Inspection dates 10–11 October 2013

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.

- All groups of pupils, including disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and those known to be eligible for the pupil premium funding, make good progress and achieve well.
- Teaching is usually good. Relationships across the school are strong. Activities are carefully chosen to match the needs of individual pupils.
- Standards at the end of Year 6 have been consistently high. This makes pupils very well prepared for their secondary school.
- The headteacher has a strong vision for the school and a tenacious drive to improve the quality of teaching still further.
- School leaders make accurate judgements on the quality of teaching and have clear plans in place to bring about improvements.
- Governors know their school well, including the quality of teaching and how well pupils achieve. They give good support to school leaders and are challenging them to do even better.
- The headteacher and staff have built a highly harmonious learning community, where pupils feel safe and secure.
- Pupils enjoy school. They are polite, friendly and rightly proud of their school.
- The active promotion of the school's values through the 'St Joseph's Pledge' contributes very well to pupils' personal development.
- Spiritual development and a caring ethos are very strong features throughout the school. As a result, pupils behave well.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching does not always extend or challenge the more able pupils as much as it should and pupils are not always given sufficient opportunity to learn for themselves.
- Marking of pupils' work does not always give clear guidance about what the next steps in learning are. Pupils are not given enough opportunities to respond to teachers' comments.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 20 lessons, three of which were observed with senior leaders. The headteacher was observed giving feedback to a teacher.
- During observations, inspectors looked at pupils' work, spoke to pupils about their learning and considered the role of additional adults in lessons.
- Meetings were held with members of the governing body, a consultant who has been supporting the school, staff and pupils.
- Inspectors looked at a number of documents, including the school's own information on pupils' current progress, planning and monitoring documentation, the headteacher's reports to the governing body, records relating to behaviour and attendance and documents relating to safeguarding.
- Inspectors took account of the 151 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) received during the inspection, the 13 responses to the staff questionnaire and the school's own recent survey of parents. Inspectors listened to pupils reading. Playtimes were observed, when inspectors talked informally with pupils.

Inspection team

Joanna Toulson, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Duncan Heryett

Additional inspector

Susan Gadd

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is slightly larger than the average-sized primary school. It is expanding and now has two classes in each year group up to Year 2. Building work to increase the number of classrooms is ongoing. Reception children have just moved into a new, purpose-built block.
- The headteacher was appointed in January 2013. There is an acting deputy headteacher.
- Around two thirds of the pupils are White British. The next largest group are of Indian heritage. A higher-than-average proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language.
- Only a very small number of pupils is supported through the pupil premium (additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and children who are looked after by the local authority).
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action, school action plus or with a statement of special needs is below the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectation for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- To make sure that pupils always make rapid progress, ensure that:
 - more able pupils are challenged to think and work hard right from the start of the lesson
 - target setting and marking for pupils show more precisely what they need to do to achieve in daily lessons and throughout the year
 - time is given in lessons for pupils to act on the teacher's comments
 - pupils are given more opportunities to reflect on their learning and to learn independently.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children join the Reception year with levels of skills and knowledge that are broadly expected for their age. Well-planned activities, such as sorting shapes, identifying and describing ingredients using smell and using foam and jelly to make letters, encourage the development of language and result in children making good progress so that they join Year 1 with good levels of development, particularly in reading and mathematics.
- Assessments to clarify how well pupils are doing are recorded termly and discussions take place about which pupils need additional support. As a result of this careful monitoring, all groups of pupils make good progress as they move through the school, so that they leave Year 6 with attainment that is consistently above national averages in English and mathematics.
- There is no difference in the achievement of pupils from different ethnic backgrounds or those who speak English as an additional language. Pupils who are supported by the pupil premium over the last two years have achieved at least as well as their peers in both English and mathematics. Good support from teaching assistants, both in the class and in intervention groups, ensures that disabled pupils and those with special educational needs also make as good progress as their peers.
- Pupils enjoy reading. The phonics check in Year 1 shows that nearly three quarters of pupils are working at the expected standard; this is above the proportion found nationally. In 2013, all Year 6 pupils reached the expected standard in reading and over half achieved the higher levels in the national reading test. The introduction of electronic books to engage pupils in Year 5, and targeted support for weaker readers in Year 3, is supporting the drive for even better achievement in reading.
- Pupils make good progress in writing because they secure the basic skills of grammar, spelling and punctuation and have good opportunities to apply these when writing at length in their 'Independent Writing Books'.
- Sorting dominoes, solving logic puzzles and exploring the relationship between multiplication and division are some of the engaging activities that support pupils' good learning in mathematics. This application of skills to real-life problems and puzzles results in good achievement in mathematics and an increasing proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels in national tests by the end of Year 6.
- Achievement is not yet outstanding because, while pupils make good progress overall, occasionally, more able pupils do not make the progress they should and there are small variations in the progress pupils make in different year groups as they move through the school.

The quality of teaching is good

- Pupils benefit from teaching which is mostly good. Relationships between pupils and teachers are very positive and pupils are confident to 'have a go', even if they make mistakes. Teaching assistants generally provide good support, especially to those pupils who need extra help.
- Classrooms are bright and inviting with work well displayed and lots of prompts to which pupils can refer when working. Pupils' work in books is well presented, with neat handwriting.
- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage encourages children to talk to each other and to the adults. This emphasis on developing language is enabling children to quickly become confident and happy learners.
- Lessons are well planned to link with previous learning. Pupils are clear about what they are learning in each lesson and how they know whether they have been successful.
- Teachers' questioning is used well to check pupils' understanding and to build on what pupils have previously learnt.

- Sometimes teachers do too much of the talking and this limits the time pupils have to think problems through for themselves. On these occasions there are too few opportunities for pupils to learn independently.
- Teachers know pupils' levels of achievement and plan activities which meet their needs. Occasionally, however, tasks are too easy for more able pupils, who have to listen to the teacher explaining what they already know rather than making a start on more challenging work. In such lessons, progress slows.
- Marking has been a school focus and has improved. However, it does not always link closely enough to what pupils need to do next to move their learning on. Opportunities are lost for pupils to respond to the marking and reflect on how they can meet the targets set for them.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- High expectations of how pupils should behave are established through the 'St Joseph's Pledge', which states what behaviour is expected from every pupil. Adults are excellent role models and so pupils are respectful and well mannered.
- Behaviour in lessons and around the school is very good. The school is calm and lessons flow smoothly. Documentary evidence and the positive views of pupils, staff and parents indicate that good behaviour is typical over time.
- Playtimes are harmonious and Year 6 'Peer Mediators' are on hand should minor disagreements occur. School councillors, prefects, friendship buddies and a head girl and boy all contribute well to the life of the school. Pupils from all backgrounds, including those from different ethnic heritages, get on well with each other and this view is strongly endorsed by pupils themselves.
- The school has good strategies to encourage attendance and as a result, attendance rates are consistently above the national average.
- Pupils are friendly and welcoming and speak highly of their teachers and of the experiences that the school offers. Those parents who submitted a response on Parent View were unanimous that their child is happy at school and is kept safe.
- Pupils are adamant that bullying in school does not occur. They are confident that if it did, they would be able to talk to an adult about the problem. Pupils mostly understand about the different types of bullying, but are sometimes less clear about cyber bullying. Pupils know that staff care about them and this creates a secure environment in which pupils feel safe.
- Pupils are attentive in lessons and keen to work hard. However, behaviour and safety are not outstanding because pupils' attitudes to learning could be further improved by encouraging them to take an active part in lessons and find out things for themselves, rather than, on occasions, being told by the teacher.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher shows strong leadership and is well respected by staff, parents and pupils. She has very high expectations for the future of St Joseph's School.
- The success in maintaining good levels of achievement and securing improvements to the quality of teaching illustrates the school's capacity to continue to improve.
- Newly appointed middle leaders who clearly share the headteacher's vision for the school are receiving appropriate training and already beginning to work with others, by supporting their planning, to improve provision.
- The performance of teachers is managed effectively. Clear guidance is given about what is expected of teachers, depending where they are on the salary scale. Senior leaders check the quality of teaching frequently and give extra support where it is needed. Newly qualified teachers are given good support to quickly become effective. The school has plans for more teachers to visit other schools to secure their understanding about what constitutes outstanding teaching.

- The school's self-evaluation procedures are thorough and good use is made of a consultant to support the school in its ongoing development. The local authority provides very light-touch support.
- Pupil premium funding has been used to ensure that the very small number of pupils who are eligible are able to take part in day and residential trips. It has also supported eligible Year 6 pupils in their transition to secondary school. As a result, there is no gap between the achievement of pupils eligible for pupil premium funding and their peers.
- The school's own survey as well as feedback from Parent View shows that parents are happy with their child's education.
- The curriculum is well planned, with sufficient depth and breadth to ensure that learning is meaningful. A new trim trail, basketball hoops and more competitive sports with greater pupil participation, such as netball and cross-country running, are testament to a renewed focus on sports provision and are welcomed by pupils and parents.
- The very evident care that the school has for every pupil is reflected in the success of the school's promotion of equal opportunities. There is no discrimination of any kind.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body shares the headteacher high expectations for every pupil and has an accurate picture of the school's strengths and relative weaknesses, including the quality of teaching. It provides good support to the school as well as appropriate challenge for school leaders. Governors know the school well because they visit regularly and often accompany pupils on day visits. They know how well pupils are doing compared to those nationally and are committed to ensuring the school can be as good as it can be. They ensure that the performance of teachers and of the headteacher is managed in a way that brings about improvement in how well pupils achieve and is linked to where teachers are on the salary scale and the level of their responsibilities in the school. They manage the budget effectively and have plans in place to evaluate the impact of the money the school is receiving to support physical activities. They know how the pupil premium funding is being spent and how this is improving pupils' achievement. Safeguarding procedures are robust and meet statutory 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

Unique reference number	126059
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	426635

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	351
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Andy Henry
Headteacher	Cath Walker
Date of previous school inspection	15–16 October 2008
Telephone number	01444 452584
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