

# St Joseph's Catholic Junior School

Riversley Park, Coton Road, Nuneaton, CV11 5TY

**Inspection dates** 18–19 September 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>1</b>
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an outstanding school.

- Pupils make outstanding progress in all subjects and leave with standards that are very high.
- Teachers assess work frequently and accurately so they always know what individual pupils need to do to improve their work.
- Teachers have very high expectations of what pupils can achieve. Pupils respond by always aiming high and trying their best.
- Pupils are very proud of their school. They treat others with respect and their conduct is usually exemplary.
- The school provides a broad range of subjects that is enriched by a strong focus on developing pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding.
- The school is being driven forward by a headteacher with an uncompromising approach to ensuring pupils' receive the best possible education.
- Leaders at all levels, including governors, are highly effective. They know their areas of responsibility in detail and share the headteacher's passion for improvement

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 18 lessons, including three jointly observed with senior staff. In addition, the inspectors listened to pupils reading and analysed the work in their books.
- Meetings were held with staff, pupils, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 40 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View. Inspectors spoke to parents formally and informally during the inspection to gather their views and also considered the views that some parents expressed in letters.
- Inspectors observed the school's work including arrangements for keeping pupils safe. They looked at a number of documents including: the schools own information on pupils' progress; the school's evaluation of its performance; records relating to attendance; and documents relating to safeguarding.

## Inspection team

David Driscoll, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Ruth Winston	Additional Inspector
Edgar Hastings	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is average. No pupils have an education, health or care plan.
- Most pupils are White British, although around 10% come from an Indian background.
- An average proportion of pupils are supported through the pupil premium (additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and looked-after children).
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The headteacher joined the school in September 2013.
- Staff at St. Joseph's are involved in providing informal support to a number of schools, to develop aspects of their provision. In the last twelve months, there has been a formal arrangement to assist in the development of maths at Weddington Primary School.

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

- Make better use of teaching assistants currently used to support pupils in top sets.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher is a relentless and uncompromising leader who commands the respect of her staff and expects the highest levels of professional standards from them. The headteacher is supported by senior staff and a governing body who share her determination and focus on quality. The school is highly organised and staff carry out policies consistently well.
- All staff share the headteacher's drive to improve. They welcome the very frequent checks on the quality of teaching (three times per week) and ask for more so that even the smallest area for improvement can be identified and addressed.
- Teachers' performance is managed exceptionally well. Those who meet their demanding targets receive pay awards, while weaker teachers are demoted. Staff receive high quality training, especially from the senior teachers, in how to improve their performance. They have many opportunities to observe others and learn from their practice.
- Pupils are assessed frequently and accurately. The results are analysed in great detail, so that pupils who are not doing as well as they should can be targeted for extra support. Governors keep a close eye on this process, expecting to know what is happening when such support does not bring about the desired effect.
- The pupil premium has been used exceptionally well to ensure that there is no longer any significant gap between the achievement of eligible pupils and others. Monies have been used in a very wide range of ways. One-to-one support is provided where needed, but help has also been provided for families who have difficulties getting their children to school or to support talented musicians to reach their potential.
- The result of the focus on individuals and addressing weaknesses is that the school is continually improving. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, for example, were not making as much progress as others in previous years. The co-ordinator completely revamped the approach to providing support, so that more individual tuition was provided and teachers were trained in setting tasks that were more closely matched to pupils' needs. The results have been dramatic, with disabled pupils and those with special educational needs making outstanding progress in 2014.
- Other staff who are responsible for aspects of the school's work are equally as effective. Subject leaders, for example, are highly focused on raising standards and have comprehensive plans for improvement. As a result, standards are very high across all subjects.
- As part of a broad and balanced curriculum, English and mathematics are taught in sets, where pupils are grouped according to their ability. This is very effective in allowing the most able to forge ahead, while at the same time helping those in lower sets to focus on the basic skills they will need further up the school. By Years 5 and 6, the boundaries have blurred as so many pupils reach high standards.
- The curriculum has been very well planned to ensure that pupils do not just leave with high standards in their academic subjects. The strong focus on developing pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding means that they leave school with a degree of maturity beyond their years. Pupils are frequently given moral dilemmas, such as 'is the invasion of a country ever morally justified?' This leads to deep discussion on the nature of right and wrong, through which pupils demonstrate their understanding of British values such as justice and the respect of rights.
- The school is well placed to use the new assessment arrangements for the National Curriculum. Leaders have decided on the approach that is to be taken and the necessary technology systems are being introduced to support this process.
- Parents, pupils and staff are full of praise for all that the school does. Many parents and staff took the time to tell inspectors what an outstanding school it is.

- The local authority rightly regards St Joseph's as a high performing school. They check its performance and provide only minimal support.

#### ■ The governance of the school:

- The governing body is highly effective. It plays a strong part in leading the school forward through ensuring plans for development are fully focused on the most important aspects of school life. Governors are highly knowledgeable about the school. They receive accurate information about all aspects of performance, both of staff and pupils. Governors supplement this with numerous visits to school to observe lessons, one-to-one support for pupils with special educational needs and check that the new curriculum is being taught and that it is preparing pupils for life outside of school. As a result, they are exceptionally well-placed to ask searching questions of the headteacher when things do not appear to be going as well as they could.
- Governors ensure that statutory requirements, including those for safeguarding, are met. Finances are managed expertly, with extra funds targeted precisely on areas such as the performance of pupils with special educational needs so that all pupils can achieve equally. Governors have taken good actions to ensure that assessments are accurate and rigorous, especially in gaining a clear picture of pupils' attainment when they join the school.
- Governors are very clear about the boundaries of their role, and are swift to support the headteacher or take difficult decisions when needed. They are fully aware of how teachers' performance is managed and its impact on raising standards. Governors are open and transparent about their work, and always seek to improve their own performance. They maintain excellent relations with staff and parents, and make sure that parents know that they are accountable for their children's education by making themselves readily available.

### The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. It is praised by parents, pupils, staff and governors alike. Pupils in Year 3 take a little time to understand the need to work hard for the whole duration of a lesson, but the consistent focus of staff on improving their attitudes ensures that pupils quickly become used to trying their best.
- By Year 4, pupils' attitudes to learning and behaviour in lessons are exemplary. They persevere when work is difficult and are quick to help others when needed. They very much enjoy doing their homework and take great care over it. Pupils take pride in producing well-presented, neat and tidy work in class.
- Around school, pupils are polite, calm and respectful of others. They understand the impact of their actions on others, and try to be kind and understanding at all times, so that the school remains a happy and welcoming place for all. Pupils quickly do as they are asked and follow school rules to the letter. They show respect for the school environment, playing their part in keeping it a clean, bright and attractive place to learn.
- Pupils respond exceptionally well to the school's expectations of hard work and becoming a good citizen. They have a deep understanding of world issues, such as the conflict in Gaza and the rise of the Islamic State. They learn to see both sides of an argument and come to their own conclusions based on the evidence and their own strong moral code. Pupils support a number of charities and make informed choices about which to support, often using the teachings of their faith to guide them.
- Attendance rates dipped in 2012/13, but comprehensive actions and reminders to parents, together with very effective use of pupil premium funds, ensured that attendance was once again above average last year. Some individuals had their attendance improved from less than 90% in 2012/13 to 100% in 2013/14. Pupils are consistently punctual to school and lessons.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Pupils and parents have total confidence in the school's ability to keep children safe, both in lessons and on school trips.

- Bullying, name-calling and any form of discriminatory behaviour is very rare. All incidents are followed up quickly, efficiently and effectively. There has never been any repeat offence by a pupil, because they quickly come to understand the error of their ways.
- Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to keep themselves safe, especially when using the internet. They are very clear about what to do in a wide range of potentially unsafe situations.

### The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- Teachers use information from assessment exceptionally well to plan lessons that build on what individuals already know, understand and can do. Over time, this leads to pupils of all abilities and backgrounds making rapid progress and achieving exceptionally well.
- No time is wasted in lessons, as pupils strive to meet the challenging time limits that teachers have set them. When pupils have not totally grasped a concept, they are taken to one side by a teaching assistant to receive more intensive teaching that enables them to quickly return to their lesson.
- Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve, and how much work they can produce. In lessons, pupils respond by working hard for the full duration and over a year they fill book after book with their beautifully presented achievements.
- Pupils enjoy rising to the challenging tasks they are given. They are given a choice of targets for each lesson, and learn always to aim high so they are continually pushing themselves to achieve well. The most able are really stretched. They read difficult texts, such as 'Beowulf' in Year 5, and calculate angles on parallel lines in mathematics in Year 6.
- A novel online resource helps pupils learn to love reading. Pupils gain points for reading books, which they can use to 'buy' clothes and accessories for their virtual character. This has proved immensely popular; every pupil takes part. It is especially successful in encouraging reluctant readers, who now read every day.
- Homework is used exceptionally well. All pupils have a homework book and are given clear guidance on how long they should spend on completing it. The most able often exceed the time allocation because they become so wrapped up in their research and problem-solving activities.
- Teachers consistently mark work with great attention to accuracy. Spellings are always corrected and errors in calculations pointed out. Pupils always respond to their teachers' comments. They carry out corrections and practise spellings so that they learn from their mistakes.
- Pupils look up to their teachers. They want to please them because doing so would mean that they have shown that they are doing their best. There is a great deal of mutual respect between staff and pupils.
- Teaching assistants are very effective at helping lower attaining pupils make the best possible progress. In some top sets though, they are less effective. The most able pupils are frequently very independent and have the skills necessary to work through problems for themselves when they get stuck, leaving the teaching assistants with little to do.

### The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- Pupils, regardless of their background, consistently leave the school exceptionally well-prepared for the next stage of their education. Standards have been maintained at a very high level in reading, writing and mathematics. Almost every pupil who had been on roll since the start of Year 5, including those with a statement of special educational needs, reached at least the expected level of attainment in all of reading, writing and mathematics, with well above average proportions exceeding them.

- The school provided compelling evidence that the standards reached by pupils reflects the outstanding progress they make given their standards as assessed on joining the school. The work in pupils' books from the last academic year shows that all groups, including disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and those from an Indian background, made rapid and sustained progress in each year group. This is further supported by the school's own accurate data on pupils' progress.
- In the past, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs have not made as much progress as others. However, changes to the way they are taught and supported have paid dividends. In 2014 they made outstanding progress in all years, and left Year 6 with much higher standards than would be expected given their attainment on joining the school.
- The highly effective way in which pupil premium funds are spent means that pupils eligible for support make the same outstanding progress as others. In 2014, there was no gap in their achievement with other pupils in the school or other pupils nationally and they left with standards that were far in excess of the national average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The most able pupils make outstanding progress in each year group. In 2014, for example, the proportion reaching Level 5 or above in all three subjects (reading, writing and mathematics) was over twice the national average, as was the proportion reaching Level 6 in mathematics.
- Pupils' excellent attitudes to learning play a strong part in their outstanding achievement. They come to school ready and keen to learn. They concentrate fully in lessons and work hard to achieve the best that they can.

## 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>	125726
<b>Local authority</b>	Warwickshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	448584

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Junior
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	272
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Jim Crawford
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sinead Smith
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	11 March 2010
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