

# St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Yeathouse Road, Frizington, Cumbria, CA26 3PX

**Inspection dates** 19–20 May 2015

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- The headteacher provides a clear sense of direction for the school and her expertise is highly valued by staff and governors.
- This strong leadership has led to improvements in the quality of teaching and standards achieved by pupils by the end of the Reception Year, Year 2 and Year 6.
- Pupils across the range of abilities make good progress in the school. Many are making rapid progress in response to more stable and consistent teaching and additional support.
- The standards that pupils attain by the end of Year 2, and by the end of Year 6, reflect their good achievement. By the time they leave school, pupils are particularly good readers and this prepares them well for the next stage in their education.
- Provision in the early years is good. Children develop a genuine eagerness to learn new things. They achieve well.
- The behaviour of pupils is good. They are mindful of one another and the adults around them both in lessons and during breaks.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school. They learn how to keep themselves safe beyond the community in which they live.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Visitors and trips bring learning to life.
- The curriculum is well planned and provides pupils with stimulating experiences. Almost all pupils take advantage of a wide range of after-school clubs.
- The school is well led and managed by the dedicated headteacher. All staff share her commitment to developing every child's full potential, both academic and personal.
- Leaders and managers at all levels, including the governing body, have secured improvements in the achievement of all groups of pupils and in the quality of teaching. The school continues to improve.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils make too many errors in their spellings and grammar.
- Some older pupils are not secure in their mental mathematical skills.
- Pupils do not always respond to teachers' marking in order to learn from their mistakes.
- The attendance of a minority of pupils is not good enough.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching and learning in lessons taught by teachers. Three of the lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher. Sessions led by teaching assistants were observed and the inspector also listened to pupils read.
- Discussions were held with school staff, groups of pupils, the headteacher, governors and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at a wide range of documentation, including safeguarding documents, the school's procedures for gaining an accurate view of its own performance, development plans, records of pupils' attainment and progress and documents relating to attendance and behaviour. She also scrutinised pupils' work in their books.
- There were too few parental responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) to generate a report. However, the headteacher distributed hard copies of the Ofsted questionnaire to parents and the 17 returns were analysed. In addition, the inspector spoke informally to parents during the course of the inspection. The 10 responses to the staff questionnaire were reviewed.

## Inspection team

Naomi Taylor, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- St Joseph's Catholic Primary School is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium is much higher than that found nationally. The pupil premium is additional government funding the school receives for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs is above average. There are no disabled pupils in the school.
- Though most pupils are from a White British heritage, there is a very small minority of pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- Provision in the early years is full time.
- Most pupils are taught in mixed-aged classes.
- A higher-than-average proportion of pupils join the school other than at the usual point of admission.
- Since the previous inspection, a new headteacher has been appointed. Two new teachers and two teaching assistants have also been appointed.
- Some Key Stage 2 pupils have experienced several changes to staffing since the previous inspection.
- The school supports students who are embarking on their training to become qualified teachers.
- Two staff are moderators of pupils' numeracy and literacy work for other schools in the local authority.
- The school runs a breakfast club and after-school activities.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

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

- Improve teaching and learning so that more pupils make outstanding progress in order to raise pupils' achievement further by:
  - making high standards in spelling and grammar a routine expectation across the school
  - securing the ability of older pupils in mental mathematics so that they can solve problems more accurately and swiftly.
  - ensuring pupils are given time to respond to teachers' marking and learn from their mistakes.
- Continue the work of leaders and managers in working with external agencies and parents to improve the attendance of a minority of pupils who have too many absences.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher knows every pupil at the school very well indeed and is highly ambitious for each one of them. She promotes an ethos in which good teaching and good behaviour can flourish. She deservedly has the full confidence and support of staff and governors and demonstrates her expertise, skill and determination by leading school improvement. For example, she has appointed new highly skilled teachers and tackles teaching which is less than good. This has led to some changes in staffing.
- Priorities are clearly stated in the school's improvement plan. The school's systems to judge its performance are both realistic and rigorous. The headteacher has developed the role of middle leaders effectively so that they now track closely the progress of pupils across the school in their areas of responsibility. When additional support is required, this is put into place swiftly and monitored closely.
- Staff are given goals to ensure pupils make good progress and this is directly linked to salary progression. The headteacher is highly effective in building a strong team of staff while holding them to account for high standards in all that they do. She leads by example.
- Pupils experience a rich and vibrant curriculum. Learning outdoors, trips and visitors to the school capture the imagination of pupils. Their horizons are broadened by residential trips to cities such as Manchester. Many pupils get off to a good start each morning by attending the breakfast club. Similarly, attendance at after-school activities is high. Archery, gardening and film clubs bring generations of families together to allow pupils to develop new skills and interests.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is well developed. Pupils have a good understanding of British values demonstrated, for example, by the First World War topic work of Key Stage 2 pupils. Links have also been made with the democratic election of the school council and the recent general election. Displays in school also highlight the opportunities that pupils have to learn about cultures different to their own. Their exploration of Asian culture led to a visiting dancer teaching pupils a banghra dance. They also experienced henna painting, creating rangoli art, and learnt how to make an authentic curry.
- Care is taken to promote good achievement for all, including pupils eligible for support through the pupil premium. The funding for these pupils is spent well to meet their needs. This confirms the school's commitment to making sure that there is no discrimination and that all pupils have equal opportunities to succeed in this harmonious community where good relations flourish.
- The primary school sport funding is used to good effect to broaden sporting opportunities for pupils, while developing the expertise of staff, by using specialist coaches. For instance, staff and pupils now clearly enjoy learning to play tag rugby. Despite being such a small school, the tag rugby team demonstrated their skills in this sport by recently reaching the North West finals and competing in Manchester. Many pupils represent the school in a range of sports and this encourages them to lead healthy lifestyles and keep fit.
- The local authority has provided support with the process of appointing the headteacher and in addressing teaching which was less than good. There is collaboration on working to improve the attendance of pupils who have too many absences. However, despite some improvement, there are still too many pupils who do not attend regularly enough.
- The headteacher and another member of staff effectively work for the local authority in their roles as moderators for other schools.
- School leaders including governors make sure that staff and pupils are kept safe and statutory requirements, including safeguarding, are effective and fully met.

### ■ The governance of the school:

- Governors are highly committed to and supportive of the school. They attend training so that they have the knowledge and skills needed to hold school leaders to account for standards at the school. The governing body has a good understanding of the data concerning the performance of the school. It has an accurate view of pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching because its members receive comprehensive reports from the headteacher, which they question and challenge. Governors check that systems to manage staff performance are implemented and that teachers' pay reflects how effective they are. Governors make sure that statutory requirements are met, that pupils and staff are kept safe and that the budget is wisely spent.

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

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Parents believe that behaviour is good at St Joseph's and this is borne out by inspection findings. There is a calm atmosphere around the school. In lessons, pupils are attentive and usually focus well on their learning. Pupils say that they enjoy school. They try hard and take care in the presentation of their work.
- The school is successful in helping those pupils with social and emotional issues to make appropriate choices and improve their behaviour.
- Pupils eat together at lunchtime and demonstrate good table manners. This is a very sociable time for pupils and adults to chat together and demonstrates how well everyone gets on with one another. Each day there is a two-minute silence during lunch when pupils are encouraged to reflect on appreciating their nutritious meal and consider those less fortunate than themselves.
- Older pupils are trained as play leaders. This qualifies them to lead activities at lunchtimes with the younger children and develops their sense of responsibility. Similarly, members of the school council represent their classmates in raising ideas for consideration. This has led to an improvement in playtime equipment and decisions about which charities the school supports.

**Safety**

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school and parents who responded to the Ofsted questionnaire unanimously agreed that their children are safe and looked after well.
- Pupils have a good understanding of different types of bullying. Pupils who spoke with the inspector were adamant that bullying just does not happen at St Joseph's. They had confidence that if there were concerns, adults would sort it out quickly and fairly. All parents who spoke to the inspector and returned the questionnaires had no concerns in relation to bullying.
- The school is determined to keep every pupil safe and take care of their well-being. As a result the support and care available for pupils and their families are exemplary. School staff work very closely with parents and other agencies to address barriers to learning that pupils and their families sometimes have to overcome.
- Attendance for most pupils is above national levels. This reflects how much pupils enjoy being at school and the positive way in which the school works together with parents. However, there is a minority of pupils whose learning is interrupted by too many absences.

**The quality of teaching is good**

- Work seen in pupils' books, displays around the school and the school's own information regarding pupils' progress confirm that teaching is usually good over time in reading, writing and mathematics. However, when this is not the case the headteacher quite rightly takes appropriate measures to address the issues.
- Classrooms are organised well and the content and timing of activities are planned effectively. Learning outdoors, trips and visitors to the school capture the imagination of pupils. For example, earlier in the term, an author had visited school. Work displayed was evidence of how this had inspired pupils to develop writing in a humorous style.
- Phonics (matching letters to the sounds that they make) is well taught and this was seen in the early years and Key Stage 1. Reception-aged children demonstrated a good understanding of the sounds that different combinations of letters make such as 'sh,' 'ch,' 'or' and 'ur.' They used this knowledge to blend sounds with other letters to work out unfamiliar words. Key Stage 1 pupils who read to the inspector demonstrated how well they used this method.
- Staff use effective questioning to encourage children to speak and develop their vocabulary. For example, when early years children and Key Stage 1 pupils were sitting on 'the magic carpet' they had to imagine their journey and then describe the picture of their destination. High-quality questioning led to pupils describing the dark roofs of the huts looking like 'burnt toast' and how the hot sun may make the inhabitants 'dehydrated'. These opportunities for speaking and listening helped pupils when they were writing their diaries about their experiences.
- Although pupils are enjoying writing, they make too many careless errors with spellings and grammar. Even though teachers mark work regularly, pupils do not always correct their work and follow up suggestions on how they can improve their work.

- In Key Stage 2 the work that pupils were doing in mathematics was linked to their First World War topic. The work was well planned to meet the needs of the range of abilities as they drew numerous types of trenches using various measurements. Pupils demonstrated their understanding of working out areas and perimeters while developing their understanding of the limited space in the trenches.
- There is now a systematic approach to teaching mathematics across the school. However, some pupils have gaps in their learning and lack fluency in using mental mathematics when solving problems.
- Effective teamwork by teachers and highly skilled teaching assistants ensures a high level of support for all groups of pupils.

### The achievement of pupils

is good

- Pupils make good progress during their time at St Joseph's and are well prepared for the next stage in their education.
- In 2014, the proportion of pupils who reached the expected levels in Year 1 phonics screening checks was higher than the national average. This is because teachers and teaching assistants are highly skilled in the teaching of phonics. The few pupils who struggle to read are given very effective support and this leads to rapid improvements. Pupils develop a love of books from an early age and older pupils eagerly told the inspector who their favourite authors are and why.
- Assessment and test results at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 tend to vary because they are dependent on the attainment of very small groups of pupils. These small year groups often include pupils who have started school at times other than expected and who have not benefited, therefore, from the good start in the Reception Year.
- Standards reached in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1 have continued to rise since the previous inspection. This is as a result of the headteacher instigating whole-school approaches to the teaching of these subjects. All pupils reached at least the expected levels in 2014. The proportion reaching the higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics showed an improvement on previous years and were above the national average.
- By the end of Key Stage 2 in 2014 the vast majority of pupils made the progress expected of them in reading, writing and mathematics. Two thirds of pupils made better than expected progress in reading, which is much higher than the national average. Those making better than expected progress in mathematics and writing were similar to the national average. This demonstrates good progress overall given their starting points.
- Results from tests in spelling, punctuation and grammar were disappointing in 2014. The school has identified that spelling is a particular weakness and the timetable in Key Stage 2 now provides more opportunities for improving this aspect.
- Pupils who are disabled and/or those who have special educational needs make good progress. This is because their additional needs are identified early and are fully met through one-to-one and small-group sessions taught by highly skilled teaching assistants. Strong links with external agencies also support both the academic and personal needs of individual pupils and their families. The care and attention that the school provides are exemplary.
- Pupil premium funding is used effectively and is directed towards supporting the disadvantaged pupils. This ensures that these pupils make progress as good as, and sometimes better than, their classmates. In 2014, the disadvantaged pupils were a term ahead of non-disadvantaged pupils in mathematics and reading. They reached standards similar to the national average in mathematics and two terms ahead of the national average in reading. Although they are two terms behind their classmates and the national average in writing there is an improving picture across the school and the gap is closing in the current year groups.
- The very few pupils who speak English as an additional language are given bespoke support. Staff work closely with parents to encourage family learning beyond school. This ensures that these pupils make the same good progress as their classmates, although some have not benefited from attending early years and Key Stage 1. The school ensures there is no discrimination and every pupil has the opportunity to succeed.
- The most able pupils make good progress. For example, in the last two years there have been pupils working at levels normally associated with pupils in Key Stage 3 in mathematics and English. Teachers have worked well with the local secondary school to develop their planning to challenge these pupils. A small number work alongside Year 7 pupils during workshops held at the local secondary school.

**The early years provision****is good**

- Strong links between nurseries, home and school ensure that children settle well into school routines. Parents told the inspector how much they appreciate spending time with their children in school before they attend full time.
- A very small number of children join Reception each year and their attainment on entry varies. As a result their skills when they start and the standards they reach at the end of early years fluctuate considerably but are usually weak in communication and numeracy. From their varied starting points, children achieve well and good levels of development are evident. They are well prepared for learning in Year 1.
- Staff check thoroughly what children can and cannot do when they join the school. This means the school has an informed and detailed foundation on which to start their assessment and record of every child's progress. Staff use this information to ensure children benefit from high expectations, challenging activities and probing questions and so learn well.
- Children's 'learning journeys' give a detailed account of their good progress. Parents are kept well informed about how to support developing their children's skills at home and so be fully involved in their learning.
- Children learn to adopt very good manners towards one another and the adults around them. They behave well, take turns to play with different equipment and need no prompting to say 'please' and 'thank you' when sharing.
- Adults keep the children safe. They also embed in the children how they can keep themselves safe by, for example, using scissors in a safe manner. Through their project on animals, children discussed which food would be healthy and which would be unhealthy for their pets to eat. This helped them to develop a sense of responsibility for keeping their own pets safe.
- The early years provision is well led and managed with a strong team approach by staff who quickly get to know the children and build activities around their interests. Improvements to the provision have been made since the previous inspection.
- Teaching is of a good quality. Children particularly enjoyed their visit to the 'pet shop' in the outdoor area to buy things for their pets. Good questioning encouraged the children to consider what they wanted to buy and why, which helped to develop their range of vocabulary and use appropriate grammar when talking. Children are usually encouraged to answer using full sentences, which helps them when they are writing, although this is not always the case.

## 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>	112350
<b>Local authority</b>	Cumbria
<b>Inspection number</b>	461920

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>	66
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Anne-Marie Roeber
<b>Headteacher</b>	Julie Burn
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	13 September 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	01946 810702
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