

St Joseph's Roman Catholic Primary School, Pickering

Swainsea Lane, Pickering, North Yorkshire YO18 8AR

Inspection dates	11–12 May 2016
Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Senior leaders' steadfast determination to develop good teaching has resulted in good outcomes for pupils.
- Expectations are high. Teachers and teaching assistants ask challenging questions that make pupils think deeply about their learning. Pupils respond well and make good progress.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school. Pupils are being well prepared to become good citizens.
- Pupils say they enjoy school and that they are safe in school. They behave well around the school and in class. They treat adults and each other with respect.
- The well-planned curriculum makes a good contribution to pupils' learning. Interesting tasks motivate and engage the pupils well.
- Systems to check the quality of teaching and pupils' progress are thorough. Clearly identified professional development for staff has resulted in good teaching and pupils' progress.
- The provision in the early years is good. Children make good progress as a result of good teaching and good leadership.
- Governors have an accurate view of the school. As a result, they have challenged leaders well and the overall effectiveness of the school has improved to be good.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There are times when work set does not match the needs and abilities of pupils closely enough.
- Pupils' spelling and their understanding of how mathematics is applied to real-life situations require strengthening.
- Occasionally, pupils are not given enough time to fully respond to marking and feedback.
- Plans for improvement do not show clearly how the changes to be made will improve the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching even further to strengthen pupils' outcomes by ensuring that:
 - work set matches the needs and abilities of pupils more closely
 - teachers strengthen the accuracy of pupils' spelling
 - pupils have a clear understanding of how to apply a range of mathematical skills to real-life situations.
- Increase the impact of leaders and managers by making sure that:
 - pupils are given enough time to respond to marking and feedback to deepen their learning
 - leaders are crystal clear about how planned actions will improve teaching and pupils' progress.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- Senior leaders' unwavering commitment to providing a good education for pupils has improved the school's overall effectiveness. The culture of high expectations and equality of opportunity for all pupils to reach their potential makes sure that pupils' outcomes and their personal development, behaviour and welfare are good.
- Leaders, including middle leaders, regularly check the quality of teaching using a wide range of information. Their astute and accurate assessment of teachers' performance clearly identifies areas of strength and aspects to be improved. Best practice is shared across the school and partnerships with Malton St Mary's Roman Catholic Primary School and other local schools are used to provide training and development. As a result, teaching has improved and is good.
- Teaching assistants receive good training to help pupils learn well. This is a good example of equality of opportunity.
- Systems for checking pupils' progress are thorough and identify any underachievement, which is then swiftly addressed.
- School plans correctly identify the main priorities for improvement. Actions taken are strengthening the school's effectiveness. However, leaders and managers are not yet able to measure accurately the impact of actions to improve teaching and outcomes, as plans do not detail sharply enough what is expected. The curriculum makes a strong contribution to pupils' learning. There is a good focus on literacy and mathematical skills as well as the development of other skills in a wide range of subjects. School visits and extra activities after school give pupils an enthusiasm for learning. Opportunities are available for the most able pupils to work with similar pupils from other schools.
- The promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is strong. Pupils and children in early years enjoy singing and acting in school productions. Children told the inspector about their work for charity and how they have supported work in Colombia. There are many opportunities for spiritual reflection and for pupils to develop a keen interest in learning. They have a strong sense of right and wrong, tolerance and respect for others.
- The primary school sports funding is used well. Pupils are successful in competitions and say they enjoy a wide range of sports such as judo and tennis, and professional coaching.
- The pupil premium funding, additional government money to support disadvantaged pupils, is used effectively for these pupils. They benefit from additional teaching support, the use of computers to help improve reading and spelling, and financial support, should they need it, to fully participate in aspects of school life.
- The diocese works in partnership with the local authority to visit and regularly check the progress of the school. Leaders have brokered good support with Catholic schools in the locality and the North Star Teaching School Alliance, Knaresborough, to support the development of teaching and to provide external evaluation of the school's work. The work of the diocese and the local authority has helped to improve the overall effectiveness of the school.
- Parents spoken to by the inspector were very positive about the improvements that have been made in the school since the previous inspection. They recognise that leadership has helped to strengthen the quality of teaching in the school and that the school serves their children well.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governors make a good contribution to the leadership of the school. They have a clear understanding of how well the school is doing from external reports and reports from the headteacher. Governors are ambitious for the pupils and challenge the headteacher and other leaders thoroughly to ensure that the school is improving.
 - A 'governor of the month' visits the school for a full day to check with leaders, staff and pupils that the school is improving. Governors have received training from the local authority and the diocese in how to hold the school to account and how to interpret school information. They have a detailed understanding of how all groups of pupils are progressing in comparison to other schools nationally.
 - Governors check the finances of the school and know that the sports funding and the pupil premium are having a positive effect on pupils' outcomes and personal development. Governors link teachers' performance to pay and have supported the headteacher well in his efforts to improve teaching.

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. All aspects of safeguarding, including those relating to staff appointments, are checked closely by leaders and governors.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- Leadership's relentless focus on improving the quality of teaching has ensured that teaching is good. New teachers, training with other good or better schools, and the support of the school's senior leaders have led to strong improvements. Parents said they recognise that teaching has improved over time.
- Teachers' questioning is skilful and probes pupils' learning and understanding well. They ask challenging questions to make pupils think deeply about what they are learning and allow a good amount of time for pupils to give answers. Expectations are high, with teachers asking supplementary questions when necessary, to draw out high-quality responses that deepen learning.
- Teachers plan interesting tasks to build effectively on pupils' prior knowledge and understanding. Pupils are motivated by the work set for them and learning attitudes are good. Work set usually meets the needs and abilities of pupils to help them make good progress. However, there are occasions when a task is too easy for some and for others the task set is too hard. On these occasions, pupils' progress slows.
- An analysis of pupils' work showed that homework makes a good contribution to their good learning and progress. Pupils have good opportunities to read and research topics in a wide range of subjects; the most able benefit exceptionally well from research. There are good opportunities to write at length, by hand or by using computers, although spelling is not consistently accurate.
- There are good opportunities to use mathematical skills in a wide range of subjects. Pupils' work in mathematics, and discussions with pupils, showed that they use a variety of problem-solving activities. However, pupils' understanding of how to apply different mathematical skills in real-life situations is less well developed.
- The school's policy for marking and assessment supports good learning. However, there are occasions when pupils are not given enough time to respond comprehensively to make even stronger progress. Leaders, including subject leaders, have not identified this and remedied it.
- Teaching assistants make a good contribution to pupils' learning both inside and outside the classroom.
- Good relationships between adults and pupils feature strongly in each class. The experiences planned for pupils contribute well to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are polite, courteous and respectful to visitors. Even the youngest children are confident in entering into discussions with adults about their learning and work in school.
- Pupils treat each other with respect and play well together at break and lunchtimes. They are very active playing games and using the trim trail. Older pupils look after younger children to make sure they always have someone to play with.
- Pupils know how to keep safe, fit and healthy. Fruit and vegetables are readily available at break and lunchtimes. Pupils told the inspector how important it is to eat fruit and vegetables to stay healthy. Visitors from the fire brigade and the police service contribute to pupils' understanding of how to keep safe. The school organises safety days with other agencies to raise awareness of staying safe.
- All the pupils who spoke with the inspector said they enjoy school and are safe in school. They said that bullying is very rare and they are confident that adults deal with it appropriately. Pupils are clear about how to keep safe when using the internet. The school held a competition to design posters to promote internet safety and the winning posters are displayed around the school.
- Pupils have good opportunities to take up posts of responsibility and many do so. Pupils vote for the school council and this is a good introduction to democracy as are visits to the Houses of Parliament. Pupils make suggestions for improvement to the school and know their views are listened to and acted on. For example, they suggested a shelter to keep pupils out of the rain when outside and the headteacher ensured that it was built. Pupils have a good understanding of British values and this prepares them well for life in modern Britain.

- Pupils are smart in their uniform. They usually take pride in their work. Pupils are proud of their school and say, 'Everyone is welcoming and it's like a big family.'
- School leaders have good systems in place to support pupils' welfare and safety.
- Parents are very confident that their children are safe and well cared for in school.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils conduct themselves very well around the school, moving quietly, safely and quickly to and from class. They line up in an orderly manner at the end of break and lunchtimes. At the end of morning break, they greet each other and their teachers by saying, 'Good morning and God bless you'.
- Pupils know what is expected of them and behave well in class; their attitudes to learning are good. Very occasionally, a few lose concentration on their work but do not interrupt the learning of others.
- Currently, attendance is broadly average with very few pupils regularly absent from school. Good attendance is rewarded with certificates and prizes for the best attending classes and to those pupils who do not miss a day. Pupils are well aware that they should be punctual to school and almost all pupils are.
- The school's environment is well cared for and children enjoy the opportunity to use the school's 'Prayer garden' and 'Butterfly garden'. Displays of pupils' work, such as on the Romans in Britain and other educational displays, are well cared for and promote good learning.
- Pupils told the inspector that behaviour is good and the overwhelming majority of parents agree.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- Senior leaders have successfully tackled inconsistencies in the quality of teaching. As a result, pupils' progress in reading, writing, mathematics and a wide range of subjects is good.
- Published performance information shows that since the previous inspection there has been a significant increase in progress in key stage 2 and improvements in attainment in key stage 1. In 2015, all pupils leaving school at the end of Year 6 made the progress expected of them in reading, writing and mathematics with a good proportion making better progress. Teaching in mathematics has strengthened and progress improved particularly well in 2015.
- The inspector carried out an analysis of the current pupils' work across the school. It showed that pupils currently make good progress in key stages 1 and 2, not only in English and mathematics but also in a range of other subjects.
- The most able pupils are challenged particularly well and attain standards that are the same as similar pupils in other schools. The inspector saw high-quality writing from these pupils and a determination to solve challenging mathematical questions. These pupils read particularly well and this supports their good learning.
- Disadvantaged pupils make similar progress to other pupils in school, and occasionally better, because of the good support they receive from additional teaching and homework clubs. Overall, gaps are beginning to close between disadvantaged pupils and others in school. There are too few disadvantaged pupils in school to make meaningful comparisons between their attainment and that of others nationally.
- There are very few pupils who have special educational needs or disability. These pupils receive good support and make similar progress to others in school.
- The school is promoting reading very well. Pupils enthuse about the library that has been built since the previous inspection. They have regular library sessions as well as using the library to help them research their topic work. Pupil librarians said there is a 'great selection of books in the library'. Others said they enjoy reading 'to find out facts we had never heard of before'.
- Pupils are keen to read to adults. The inspector listened to pupils reading and saw pupils reading keenly with teaching assistants at the start of the day. Groups of children use computer technology to improve their reading skills and their ability to link words and sounds to read well. The teaching of early reading skills is good and has improved since the previous inspection. As a result, the large majority of pupils reached the expected standard in the most recent screening check for reading at the end of Year 1.

Early years provision

is good

- New leadership has strengthened what the school offers the children. Currently, the progress children are making is good because the quality of teaching is good.
- Over time, progress has improved and the attainment of children is improving. Children enter the early years provision with skills that are typical for their age. The proportion of current children set to attain a good level of development at the end of Reception is above average. A good number of children are exceeding expected attainment in areas such as reading, writing and mathematics.
- The early years leader has established an impressive system for assessing and recording children's learning. Assessment is shared with parents at the end of each week. They receive a copy of an electronic learning journal that presents clear and accurate information about their children's learning. Parents make a good contribution to children's learning by completing 'home to school diaries' that record what their children have been doing at weekends. Daily assessment is used to plan next steps and activities for the following day to meet the needs of children.
- The curriculum makes a strong contribution to learning and is 'sparked' by children's interests, ideas and needs. For example, activities to capture a dragon were exciting children and giving them great enjoyment in learning. Teachers focus well on early reading, writing and mathematics, and offer children good opportunities to develop their skills in all areas of learning. Children's development of spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is strong.
- Behaviour is good in the provision with children working well together and listening well to adults. Children's personal development and welfare are good. Children learn how to keep safe and healthy. For example, a visit to the local shops to buy vegetables led to children making soup and promoting healthy eating. A visit by a nurse prompted children to find out about the work of doctors and nurses.
- Children are happy in the very well-resourced, stimulating indoor and outdoor provision. There is a calm, purposeful environment in early years. Adults know the children well and ask good questions to develop their curiosity. Children have good opportunities to work with adults and to explore their learning independently.
- Safeguarding procedures are effective and all the relevant welfare requirements are met.
- Children are being well prepared for the next stage of their education.

School details

Unique reference number	121654
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	10011959

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	109
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Fr Kentigern Hogan
Headteacher	Mr David Harrison
Telephone number	01751 473102
Website	www.st-josephs-pickering.n-yorks.sch.uk
Email address	admin@st-josephs-pickering.n-yorks.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	5 February 2014

Information about this school

- The school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported through the pupil premium is average. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. There are no pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils who have support for special educational needs or disability is well below average.
- There are no pupils with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan.
- Children in the early years receive part-time education in the Nursery during the morning. In Reception, they receive full-time education.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- There have been significant changes to staffing and leadership since the previous inspection.
- In April 2014, the acting headteacher was appointed as executive headteacher of the school. He is also executive headteacher of Malton St Mary's Roman Catholic Primary School, which is an outstanding school. The executive headteacher, a national leader of education, spends half the week at St Joseph's. The deputy headteacher is at the school for the whole of the week.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed a range of teaching and learning in parts of lessons. Three observations were undertaken jointly with the headteacher.
- Throughout the two days of the inspection, the inspector spoke with pupils, both individually and in groups, about learning and safety.
- The inspector listened to pupils reading. He reviewed pupils' work in lessons and analysed samples of work in pupils' books with the headteacher.
- The inspector held meetings with the chair of the governing body and two other governors. He also held meetings with senior leaders and other staff. The inspector held a meeting with a representative of the local authority and a representative of the diocese.
- The inspector looked at the school's review of its own performance, its development and improvement plan, school policies and the minutes of the governing body meetings. He considered a range of documentation in relation to child protection, safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.
- The inspector spoke with parents during the inspection and analysed 33 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. He also analysed a school questionnaire completed by parents.
- During the inspection, Year 6 pupils and Year 2 pupils spent some time taking national curriculum tests.

Inspection team

James McGrath, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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