



St Joseph The Worker RC Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 105961
LEA Salford
Inspection number 277454
Inspection dates 26 June 2006 to 27 June 2006
Reporting inspector Mr Stephen Wall CfBT Lead Inspector

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Cutnook Lane
School category	Voluntary aided		Irlam
Age range of pupils	3 to 11		Salford, Lancashire M44 6GX
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0161 7754548
Number on roll	159	Fax number	0161 9211699
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Fr L Devany
Date of previous inspection	6 December 1999	Headteacher	Mrs Jennifer Murphy

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

St Joseph the Worker Roman Catholic Primary School is a smaller than average school situated on the fringes of Salford about eight miles from the centre of Manchester. The area served by the school is diverse and varies from average to below average levels of economic affluence. Nearly all pupils are of White British heritage. The number of pupils entitled to free school meals is below average, as is the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The number of pupils on role has been falling significantly for several years. Since the time of the last inspection many new staff, including the headteacher and deputy headteacher, have been appointed. The school holds Investor In People status.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

As the school rightly judges, this a good school where effective teaching promotes good learning and achievement. It offers good value for money. The quality and standards are good in the Foundation Stage. Children achieve well because of the good teaching and learning, but there are some limitations in the outdoor provision. Pupils continue to achieve well and make good progress in Key Stages 1 and 2. Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. They enjoy school, generally behave well and are courteous and polite. The school has made good improvements in its provision for information and communication technology (ICT) which teachers use well in lessons to promote the pupils' acquisition of good ICT skills. The good curriculum meets pupils' needs and there is a wide range of enrichment activities. Pupils feel safe in school and all the necessary procedures are in place to ensure their security and well-being. Tracking of pupils' progress as they move through the school is thorough and effective. The school is well led and managed with a particularly effective governing body which both supports senior managers and holds them to account. Senior managers know the school well but the quality of planning for future development does not pinpoint precisely enough the priorities for further improvement. Since the last inspection, the school has made good progress and has definite capacity to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Make the outside area for the children in the Foundation Stage into an attractive and stimulating learning environment and provide more good quality outdoor resources.
- Make development planning much more focused on specific priorities to raise standards and achievement further.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils enter the Foundation Stage with attainment levels below those normally expected. During their time in the Foundation Stage, they make good progress to achieve standards which are average. Pupils continue to make good progress in Key Stages 1 and 2 where results in national tests are broadly average in English and mathematics. In science, a high number of pupils achieve above average standards because the subject is particularly well managed and teaching is very good. National data for 2005 indicate that pupils in the Year 6 cohort made only satisfactory progress during Key Stage 2. However, the school is able to demonstrate convincingly, using its own thorough assessment records, that the majority of pupils made good progress considering their starting points. In addition, the fact that one pupil in an already very small cohort of 17 pupils did not take the mathematics test means the data are not an entirely accurate representation of the true picture. All groups of pupils, including

those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, make similar, good progress. Challenging targets are invariably met and, in science, regularly surpassed.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. Children in the Foundation Stage gain good levels of independence, learn to listen well and relate positively to adults. Pupils are courteous and friendly towards visitors. They respect their teachers and each other. They generally behave well in most lessons and enjoy learning and joining in all the activities the school offers them. Play is harmonious at breaktimes and pupils show good concern for others if they are accidentally hit with a ball or fall over. Pupils said, 'Bullying is rare but occasionally we have minor fall-outs.' Attendance is average and punctuality good. Pupils are encouraged to attend regularly and wait with eager anticipation in assemblies for the announcement of the class with best weekly attendance. Pupils understand the importance of leading safe and healthy lives. One pupil commented, 'We used to eat crisps at break, now we have milk, fruit and toast to keep us healthy.' Pupils are acquiring the skills that will equip them well for the future. They accept responsibilities well and carry out their duties sensibly. They voice their opinions through the school council and help to improve the school. For example, councillors initiated a 'sponsored skip' to buy new tables and chairs for one of the classrooms. Pupils develop a good awareness of those less fortunate through raising money for a range of charities.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall with some examples of outstanding practice. Lessons are well planned and usually conducted at a good pace with a good variety of activity to keep pupils motivated and interested. In one outstanding science lesson, for example, pupils were on the edge of their seats with excitement as they investigated the properties of different materials. Teachers make particularly good use of interactive whiteboards to add an extra dimension to their teaching and the good use of ICT in lessons encourages pupils to carry out their own research and develop good independent learning skills. Pupils work very well together and willingly share ideas. Pupils are usually appropriately challenged but, on occasions, not enough demand is made on higher attaining pupils. Behaviour in most lessons is good because pupils are interested and keen to get on. Very occasionally, however, pupils become restless and chatty when the teaching fails to engage them fully. Classroom assistants are used effectively to support teaching and learning.

Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and thoroughly. The quality of their comments is good and nearly always gives clear guidance for improvement. The school's

procedures for tracking the progress of groups and individuals as they move through the school are thorough and allow the early identification of those who need extra help and support.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. It meets pupils' needs and caters appropriately for the mixed age classes. The curriculum for science gives strong attention to investigation work and pupils particularly enjoy this and achieve well. There is good enrichment provided by a varied range of out-of-class activities and interesting visits and visitors to the school. Pupils eagerly demonstrated their basic skills in speaking French saying 'Bonjour' and asking 'Comment t'appelles-tu?' (What is your name?). The school successfully promotes healthy and safe lifestyles. Personal, social and health education is given good attention and is interwoven through a range of subjects. The recent alteration to the timing of the school day has led to a more flexible timetable and the school is now seeking ways of linking different subjects to add further enjoyment to learning. For example, the recent 'Arts Week' focused on healthy eating and culminated in the children making a vibrant three-dimensional display of healthy food. The Foundation Stage curriculum is good overall. However, there are weaknesses in the outside learning environment: it is neither attractive nor stimulating and there is a shortage of good quality outdoor play equipment.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good. Pupils say, 'Teachers look after us and if you fall over they are there straight away.' They feel safe in school and know who to turn to if they need help. Child protection procedures are in place and understood by staff. Careful attention is paid to health and safety. Checks of the building and site are carried out routinely. The school complies with local authority guidance and procedures for making appropriate checks on adults working in the school. Pupils are guided well in their learning and this contributes to their good achievement. Extra help is given promptly to individuals or groups of pupils when it is needed. The support for vulnerable children, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, is good. The school works effectively with a range of outside agencies to make sure the pupils receive the help they need. Arrangements for transition from the Foundation Stage to Year 1 are effective and the school prepares older pupils well for entry to the secondary school of their choice.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher, ably supported by the senior managers, promotes good teamwork and a shared sense of purpose among the teaching staff. The challenges facing the school in the form of falling rolls and consequent

reduction in finances have been handled skilfully to minimise any adverse effect on standards and achievement. In this, the senior managers have been ably supported by well informed governors who are very committed to the school, know its strengths and weaknesses and are not reluctant to question and hold the school to account when necessary. The induction of many new teaching staff, including several newly qualified teachers, has been successfully managed and good morale has been maintained during an unsettled period. The quality of teaching and learning is monitored regularly and the school is able to demonstrate some success in how this has helped some teachers improve their teaching. However, the outcomes of monitoring are not used consistently with sufficient rigour to link them to raising pupils' achievement. Senior managers know the school well and their self-evaluation gives an accurate picture of the school's effectiveness taking into account the views of parents and pupils. Issues from the last inspection have been addressed effectively. However, the quality of forward planning lacks sufficient focus to identify specific priorities which will be effective in raising standards and achievement even further. The headteacher has established good working links with other schools, especially the local high school, and is extending business links with the community to promote the school's good reputation further.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for making us welcome when we came to inspect your school. We are grateful to those of you who gave up some of your lunchtime to talk to us. This letter will explain what we found out about your school.

We think you go to a good school. Your teachers work very hard to provide you with interesting lessons and take good care of you. We particularly liked the way you get on with each other and how well most of you behave in lessons and around the school. You make good progress as you move through the school and enjoy all the extra clubs and activities the school offers. We think your headteacher manages the school well and all your teachers concentrate on making sure you are given every chance to do as well as you can.

To make your school even better, we are asking for the outdoor facilities for the children in the Foundation Stage to be made more attractive and interesting and we are also asking for the school to be clearer about what it intends to do to make sure you make even better progress than you do now.

We wish you the very best for the future and know you will continue to work hard to do your best.