



# St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 107544  
**LEA** Calderdale  
**Inspection number** 277771  
**Inspection dates** 21 February 2006 to 22 February 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Mr Martin Bradley HMI

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Portland Road
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided		Halifax
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11		West Yorkshire HX3 6LA
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01422 360646
<b>Number on roll</b>	186	<b>Fax number</b>	01422 342858
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mrs P Fothergill
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	15 January 2001	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs J Hutton

<b>Age group</b> 4 to 11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 21 February 2006 - 22 February 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 277771
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and an additional inspector.

## Description of the school

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School is situated in Halifax, West Yorkshire. There are 186 pupils on roll, a reduction of 16 since the last inspection in 2001. The great majority of the pupils are of white British heritage and come from a relatively wide area. Most have attended local pre-schools. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is lower than the national average, as is the proportion of pupils on the special educational needs register. The before- and after-school club, run separately from the school, was inspected at the same time as the school, and is reported on separately.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

### **Grade: 3**

The overall effectiveness of the school is satisfactory, with several good elements. The work in the Foundation Stage is outstanding. Overall standards and progress are currently satisfactory, having improved in the last 18 months. The quality of teaching is satisfactory, with several good elements. Pupils' personal development and well being are good, as are the care, guidance and support provided for them. Leadership and management are good, although procedures for monitoring and reviewing provision for pupils with additional learning needs and/or disabilities, are currently inadequate. Provision for these pupils on a day-to-day basis is satisfactory, but is not supported by regular assessment and recording. The school has identified this issue in its current improvement plan. Useful systems exist to track pupils' progress, and target setting is being refined to improve standards, again identified as a priority in the improvement plan. The targets led to raised standards in 2005, in comparison with 2004, but they are not yet used with sufficient rigour. The curriculum is good, with particular strengths in sport and music. Parents and pupils hold the school in high esteem. Self evaluation is good, and the school has improved since the last inspection. It provides satisfactory value for money and has a good capacity to improve.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Improve the assessment and recording for pupils with additional learning needs and/or disabilities.
- Continue to develop the use of targets and monitor these in order to raise the standards achieved by all pupils.
- Improve the quality of teaching by ensuring that tasks are matched to the full range of pupils' capabilities.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

The school's self evaluation graded achievement and standards as satisfactory and the inspectors agree with this. The school has set achievement targets for pupils for the past two years. Procedures for six-monthly target setting and reviews are in place, although not all staff use electronic versions. Practices for more regularly reviewing these targets vary between year groups and common ways of recording these are not always used. The targets had an impact upon pupils' achievement in 2005, raising this to satisfactory levels, and the school is now identifying pupils who might make even greater progress if set more challenging targets. The more able pupils are not sufficiently challenged in some lessons where work is not matched to their abilities. Pupils with additional learning needs and/or disabilities make progress, but a lack of clearly focused targets supported by up-to-date and accurate individual education plans reduces the rate of progress of several identified pupils.

On entry the school assesses pupils to be of average attainment overall. In the Foundation Stage their progress is outstanding, with their knowledge, skills and

understanding being carefully developed and supported by excellent use of assessment. Progress in the other two key stages varies significantly between classes. This partly reflects the varying abilities between year groups, but also some inconsistent classroom practices. In general, English work is satisfactory, although speaking skills are often less well developed. Achievement in science is good, resulting in above average standards. Mathematics is satisfactory, but with fewer outstanding elements than in the other two core subjects. Work in the foundation subjects is good overall, and is a strength of the school at both key stages.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

The inspectors agree with the school's assessment that personal development and well being are good. Spiritual, moral and social development are good. Very good use is made of the school's own consecrated chapel for pupils to reflect on their own faith and feelings. Through the personal, social, and health education programme, pupils learn to work together well and take their place as young citizens. They develop a good awareness of the needs of others by fund raising, often linked to the catholic agency for overseas development (CAFOD). Though the school has an almost all white population, pupils gain an increasing awareness of other cultures and faiths in religious education and, for example by links with a nearby school with different faith groups.

Children in the reception class settle quickly, gain in confidence and are eager to learn. Throughout the school, pupils have positive attitudes towards school, and behaviour is good overall. Where lessons are exciting pupils are extremely well behaved and eager to learn. However, where the pace of the lesson is slower and activities less interesting, they become restless and sometimes lose concentration. Attendance is satisfactory. Pupils say they feel safe and work towards the healthy schools award has helped them to consider healthy eating and a healthy lifestyle. They particularly appreciate the 'buddy' and 'playgroup friends' systems, saying that they never feel lonely. Opportunities to work in groups encourage pupils to be part of a team.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, but it is outstanding in the Foundation Stage.

Whilst in the lessons seen the quality of teaching was good, the overall standards achieved by pupils are satisfactory and the impact of target setting has yet to be fully realised. Learners make good progress and show good attitudes towards their work, especially where lessons are planned effectively and resources well used. The recent addition of interactive whiteboards has enhanced the quality of teaching, especially where other resources are used to augment teaching as well. Pupils are very interested in the whiteboard work and good use is made of pupil pairing to provide opportunities

for quick discussions prior to full class work. These lessons also provide good challenges for pupils.

The school has a large number of teaching assistants and two voluntary helpers. At times the number of adults leads to them not being deployed to maximum effect, especially where pupils are being too directed in their work, at the expense of more independent learning. Pupils with additional learning needs and/or disabilities receive good day-to-day support. However, the assessment and recording of these pupils' achievements is inadequate and not always up to date.

Relationships with parents are good, and they expressed particular appreciation of the better reading partnership programme coordinated by a teaching assistant.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is good overall and is outstanding in the Foundation Stage. Legal requirements are met. The increased time allocated to numeracy, literacy and information and communication technology (ICT) in the current year is improving standards. The use of drama is raising standards in writing. The school has taken positive steps to ensure that creative subjects are provided with sufficient time. As a result it has been awarded the Artsmark gold standard, and all pupils in Years 3 to 6 learn to play a musical instrument. Similarly, all pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 can take part in a range of sports enriched by lunchtime and after-school clubs. Working for the Healthy Schools Award encourages pupils to take responsibility both in and out of school. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is satisfactory, but in some cases, long term planning and review is inadequate. Pupils who have a gift or talent are suitably identified and linked with community groups to further develop their skills. Good use is made of local museums and other facilities as well as visiting speakers to make learning meaningful and interesting.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Care, guidance and support are good. All staff ensure that pupils feel secure and happy. The arrangements to protect pupils, including the most vulnerable, are known to all adults, and the assessment of potential risks is in place. While regular health and safety checks are made, the storage of equipment in the hall presents a hazard in physical education (PE) lessons. As part of the health and safety programme, a 'walking bus' is organised each morning by one of the teaching assistants.

Pupils are well supported, and the guidance provided by the pastoral care worker is outstanding. Pupils with problems know where to turn and, following the recent death of a teacher, very effective counselling and support work has been provided for pupils. Links with other professionals contribute to the well being of pupils with additional learning needs and/or disabilities. Pupils are well informed about their future options. Good links with secondary schools allow smooth transfer to the next stage of their

education. At present not all pupils are sufficiently aware of their detailed targets to improve their work.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The school graded its leadership and management as being good. Whilst the inspectors agree with this, the oversight of the work with pupils with additional learning needs and/or disabilities is currently inadequate as records and regular reviews are not always maintained.

There is clear evidence of a common sense of purpose amongst the staff. Self evaluation is effective overall and includes accurate consideration of the views of all the major stakeholders, including the governors. Managers have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and have generally dealt with these effectively, particularly the issues arising from the last inspection. The school's caring ethos, which lies at the heart of its approach, is demonstrated by the high commitment of all staff to promoting pupils' personal development and well-being. This aspect of the school's work is particularly well led. Targets have been set for learners for the past two years and greater challenges are being planned.

The school runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis. Materials and equipment are used well. All adults who work in the school are subject to vetting procedures. Links with parents are good and the school is seeking to extend these. The leadership and management provide the school with a good capacity to improve.

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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>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	3	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	1	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

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

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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	3	NA

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2	NA

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
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 the welcome you gave Mrs Halifax and myself when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed meeting you and really appreciated the help you gave us, especially in sharing your work and ideas about the school.

We think that your teachers and the other staff work very hard to help you with your work and all the other activities which the school provides. They are very concerned to make sure that you get on well together, and we were pleased to see how well you behaved. We thought that the work with the youngest children was particularly good, and that the teaching assistants added a lot of things to the life of the school and helped the teachers to do their job well.

The school has improved in many ways recently, and we have asked the staff to improve some parts of its work. These are: the ways the school plans and records its work with children who have special learning needs; to continue to give you challenging targets for your work and to check that you are meeting them; and to make sure that all of you are given work which helps you to learn more.

With good wishes for your future success.