



Saint Joseph's Roman Catholic Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 111680
LEA Redcar and Cleveland
Inspection number 278748
Inspection dates 20 June 2006 to 21 June 2006
Reporting inspector Mr Graeme Clarke

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Rosecroft Lane
School category	Voluntary aided		Loftus
Age range of pupils	3 to 11		Saltburn-by-the-Sea, TS13 4PZ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01287 640613
Number on roll	215	Fax number	01287 643121
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs Pat Howes
Date of previous inspection	1 November 2000	Headteacher	Mr Mike Atkinson

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

St Joseph's Primary School serves mainly Catholic families from villages in East Cleveland. Children join the Nursery with generally below average levels of attainment. Almost all are of a White British heritage and come from areas that are broadly below average in social and economic terms. The number taking free school meals is average, as is the proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school was re-awarded Investors in People status in 2005.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

St Joseph's is a good school with a very strong community spirit and Christian ethos. Many features of its work are outstanding, as the school itself believes. Pupils' personal development and well-being are of the highest order and reflect outstanding quality of the care, support and guidance provided for them. Good, well-coordinated teaching throughout the school helps all of them to make good progress and achieve well. Children get off to a good start in the Nursery. They do as well as most children of their age by the end of the Reception year, but could have wider opportunities to learn in the outdoor area. Pupils reach above average standards by Year 2. By the end of Year 6, many achieve well to reach above average standards. The school's new approach to tracking pupils' progress is not yet fully established in a few classes to help all pupils take their next steps to improvement. The curriculum is outstanding and contributes to the pupils' real enjoyment of school. The pupils work hard and aspire to do well. Parents comment very favourably on their children's good progress and safety. The headteacher has established excellent relationships, and he and his staff team foster an effective climate for learning in which all pupils thrive. He is very highly regarded for the outstanding way he leads the school. Governors have a sound knowledge of the school, but they could be more directly involved in evaluating its work and more keenly focused on raising achievement. The school dealt effectively with the issues from the last inspection and is well placed to improve further. It gives extremely good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve planning and opportunities for children in the Foundation Stage to learn outdoors in all areas of their curriculum.
- Fully establish the new approach to tracking pupils' progress, and use it to help all pupils to know and achieve their next steps in learning.
- Develop the governors' role in monitoring and evaluating the school's work, with a sharper focus on raising pupils' achievement.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils, including gifted and talented pupils, achieve well and make good progress to reach above average standards as they move through each stage in their time at St Joseph's. Imaginative, creative and fun activities help children in the Nursery and Reception class become confident learners. They make good progress from a below average beginning and they develop skills and knowledge expected of most children of their age. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 do well in mathematics, reading and writing. In 2005 they reached above average standards. Provisional results are higher this year. Standards were above average in the Year 6 tests in 2005 and exceeded the school's targets. Attainment at the highest level was better in mathematics and science than in English. In relation to their starting points and capabilities, all pupils did as well as

expected and many did better than anticipated. This year's provisional results show a marked upturn in both reading and written English at the highest level, as well as further improvement in mathematics.

Pupils also make good progress in other subjects. They skilfully use information and communication technology (ICT) to aid learning and enhance their work. For example, their presentations about a recent residential field trip show a really good grasp of software. Their good work in design and technology and the good skills they develop in physical education, enhance their sense of achievement. Parents are delighted with the individual support for pupils with specific learning difficulties, who, in turn, play a full part in activities and make exceptionally good progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding, so much so that pupils in Years 5 and 6 very confidently manage themselves on residential outings. They say, 'It's a great way to prove to our teachers and families that we are independent and can look after ourselves.' Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. They are mature in outlook and caring for each other. They are also very clear about right and wrong and their behaviour is exemplary. Pupils know the importance of safety and good health and how to achieve them. They enjoy sporting activities, willingly choose healthy lunches and snacks, and enjoy eating their produce from the school garden. The 'listening group' collects ideas from all pupils and helps improve resources and facilities. For example, by packing bags at a supermarket, they raise funds to improve the school grounds. At playtimes, pupils who have no-one to play with sit at the 'buddy stop', then quickly find a friend. One pupil commented, 'No-one bullies in this school.' Attendance is above average because pupils thoroughly enjoy school and being with their friends. They love topic work. They also willingly support charitable activities and help others. The Year 6 pupils rightly feel well prepared for their future and are looking forward to secondary school.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. The school makes best use of teachers' subject knowledge to raise standards, and all staff work very well in teams to support pupils in everything they do. All pupils benefit from working with well briefed teaching assistants, and pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make exceptional progress. Teachers' expectations are high and they place a strong emphasis on basic skills. They foster very good relationships and create a positive, purposeful and relaxed atmosphere. They give good attention to individuals and small groups in most lessons, and encourage pupils to use ICT skilfully and confidently in all aspects of their work. Classrooms are organised to be treasure troves for information, but opportunities to

enhance the youngest children's experiences in the outside area are not fully developed. Exceptionally good displays reflect pupils' good standards and achievements and give them a wealth of clues and strategies to help them succeed. In this environment, pupils develop a very positive attitude to learning, show remarkable independence and, in turn, make good progress. Parents work well with the school and help with homework. Teachers mark pupils' work well, but not everyone fully exploits the information available from monitoring their individual progress well enough to help pupils know clearly what they have to do next to improve their learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is outstanding. It is very well planned and coordinated to ensure that pupils experience a very good balance of subjects. Excellent attention is given to English, mathematics, science and ICT through direct teaching and exciting topic work. The first session each morning is so very well organised that it has a really major impact on pupils' enjoyment of learning. Pupils say, 'We learn things in different ways through topics and we can find out new things by researching for ourselves.' Excellent opportunities to learn through practical situations foster pupils' progress. French lessons, art with a visiting expert, and many visits and after-school clubs considerably enrich pupils' lives and learning. In the Foundation Stage, the indoor curriculum carefully blends and balances all six areas, and a wide variety of visits out of school greatly enhance children's knowledge and development.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school maintains a relaxed and open family atmosphere within which it provides outstanding care, guidance and support. Each pupil is valued as an individual. Very good procedures for risk assessment involve the pupils so that all feel safe and secure in school. Close supervision of planned activities in outdoor play areas promotes excellent behaviour. Child protection procedures are in place and staff understand them well. Staff have good communication with each other and a very high level of understanding of the individual needs of all pupils. The school assesses pupils' work on a regular basis and has recently introduced innovative procedures to track each pupil's progress. Teachers use of the information to highlight gaps in learning and to make adjustments when planning lessons supports children's progress especially well in Years 2 and 6. Excellent partnerships with carers and external agencies, and notably with parents through the school's 'parent university', contribute extremely well to uniting everyone in support of pupils' learning.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher's outstanding leadership has established a climate for learning in which pupils and adults respect each other and

have confidence in what they do. Everyone here outstandingly makes certain that every child does matter. The school is very well managed because: it ensures that all pupils know they are safe and valued; it fosters their enjoyment and accomplishments; it enables many of them to contribute significantly, and it puts the building blocks of their future economic well-being securely in place. One parent commented, 'It's a wonderful school.' All staff work well together and the headteacher does much to ensure their effectiveness through training and support. The new leadership team is strongly making its mark in raising achievement. The headteacher and senior staff strengthen their overview of the school's work by observing staff and pupils in lessons. The recently developed 'learning-walk' approach to monitoring usefully focuses attention on key aspects, such as developing thinking skills. The headteacher's evaluation of strengths and weaknesses, enhanced by valuable contributions from staff, accurately identifies clear priorities for improvement. Dedicated governors ensure that the school is well regulated and spends its money wisely to obtain excellent value from its resources. They learn about the school from the headteacher's informative reports and their own informal contacts. However, their first-hand knowledge of pupils' work is not as full as it could be and their evaluation is not focused sharply on raising achievement. Determined leadership has resolved the issues from the last inspection and continues to raise achievement. The school has a good capacity for further improvement.

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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?	1	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	2	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	1	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1	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?	1	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	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	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	1	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	1	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	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

Alexandra House

33 Kingsway

London

WC2B 6SE

T 0207 421 6800

F 0207 421 6707

Ofsted helpline

08456 404045

The Listening Group

Saint Joseph's Roman Catholic Primary School

Rosecroft Lane

Loftus

Saltburn-by-the-Sea

TS13 4PZ

23 June 2006

Dear Pupils

Mrs Ulyatt and I really enjoyed visiting your school on Tuesday and Wednesday this week. Thank you for helping us when we came into your classrooms to see you at work and visited your assembly. You were so very polite and helpful. We were very impressed with the work that you do. We especially liked seeing all the things that you do first thing in the morning and the way you take part so enthusiastically. We were very impressed with all the lovely work you have displayed in your classrooms, in the hall and around the school. We enjoyed talking to you when we met those of you in the 'listening group' and some of you at lunchtime. It was great to see how much you enjoy coming to school.

St Joseph's is a good school with a very friendly atmosphere. You are being taught well and you make good progress with your work. You are really well behaved, and you have good manners and work hard. You are safe and happy because the adults in the school all look after you very well. Mr Atkinson is an exceptional headteacher, and he and the other teachers and staff are, quite rightly, very proud of you.

We have talked with the governors and Mr Atkinson and asked them to give all the children in the Nursery and Reception class a wider range of things to do in the outside play area. We've also asked your teachers to use the information they get from marking your work to help you know what steps you can take to do even better. Finally, because we know how hard you work in classrooms and elsewhere, we have asked the governors to see for themselves just how well you are doing.

With best wishes to you all

Graeme Clarke

(Lead inspector)