



St Joseph's RC Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 111702
LEA Middlesbrough Borough
Inspection number 278756
Inspection dates 17 January 2006 to 18 January 2006
Reporting inspector Mr Christopher Quigley

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

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|------------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|----------------------|
| Type of school | Primary | School address | Marton Road |
| School category | Voluntary aided | | Middlesbrough |
| Age range of pupils | 3 to 11 | | TS4 2NT |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed | Telephone number | 01642 819252 |
| Number on roll | 238 | Fax number | 01642 819252 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body | Chair of governors | Mr Ian Stubbs |
| Date of previous inspection | 1 May 2000 | Headteacher | Mrs Josephine Wilson |

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

Description of the school

St Joseph's is a Catholic school for children aged 3 to 11. There are 279 children who attend, including 52 part time nursery children. Whilst the majority of children are from a white British background, a growing number, currently 18, are from other backgrounds and many of those are at the early stages of learning English. The take up of free school meals is more than double the national average. A higher than average number of children join the school in Years 3 to 6, some of whom have been excluded from other schools and have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school works with Sure Start to give the youngest children intensive support in the basic skills. A learning mentor supports the growing number of children who are at risk of poor outcomes.

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 where all children feel happy, safe and respected. They make good progress, enjoy coming to school and attendance is good. This is because of strong leadership and good teaching by a highly committed team who want each and every child to succeed, no matter what their background. The youngest children get a very good start to school and then make good progress through the rest of the school. The children are taught well and standards at the ages of 6 and 11 are at the nationally expected levels in the basic subjects. However, after the last inspection, the children's progress slowed and the headteacher appointed in 2003 had a major job to do in raising standards. The school has rightly concentrated on making sure children do well in the basic skills and has been extremely successful. Alongside this, the school has improved further the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of children. It is now outstanding. The school is successful in supporting pupils with behaviour problems. It has developed very effective partnerships with other children's services to support these children and, as a result, they make good progress. The school's self-evaluation gives a very accurate view of its strengths and weaknesses, including the need to raise standards in subjects other than the basics. This is a school that gives good value for money, has a good record of making improvements and is well placed to continue its good work.

not applicable

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the leadership of areas beyond the basic skills in order to raise standards in subjects other than English, mathematics and science.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

After a period of low achievement, all children now make good progress and achieve well at St Joseph's. This is the very clear view of the school and inspectors agree. From a low, and sometimes very low starting point in nursery and reception, the basic skills are taught very well and children rapidly gain the standard expected for their age. They make very good progress. Older children have not benefited from such a good start and the school has worked hard to improve standards over the past three years. This has been successful. By the time children leave school in Year 6, they have caught up and standards in the basics are at, or above, the expected level. This represents good progress, given their low starting points and the many social factors that hinder their development. This is due, in no short measure, to the rigorous and challenging expectations teachers have for their children. The growing numbers of children who arrive at the school with little or no spoken English very quickly learn the basic skills because of very good support from teachers and other children's services. The children who are at risk of poor educational outcomes are supported very well and, as a result, they achieve well and make good progress. As a result of strong leadership and effective

teamwork, the progress that children make has steadily risen and all children reach their full potential.

The area of weakness is in the standards of subjects other than the basics. These subjects have been relatively neglected as the school has concentrated on English, mathematics and science.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Children's personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. This is because the school has a strong emphasis on helping children to become caring, responsible and reflective citizens. This is having a direct, positive impact on learning and progress, with children developing good attitudes to their work. The school rightly judges this to be a strong area. Children enjoy school and attendance is above the national average. Behaviour is good, even among those children who find good behaviour difficult, and children respect each other, regardless of their background or race. Older children talk about being 'examples' for younger children, and their need to promote their school. For those children who find it hard to behave well this is a very good achievement. Children are involved actively in local and national projects and in supporting charities. The new lunchtime salad bar is a direct result of the school council's influence and children say they enjoy the healthy options. Children say they feel safe and happy because they can always get a problem sorted out if they have one. Children are prepared well for the future because of the good progress they make in the basic skills and because teachers give them good opportunities to work in teams.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The school's view is that children achieve well because of good and sometimes outstanding teaching. This is exactly what inspectors found. The teachers track children's achievements carefully and plan rigorously. This helps all children to make good progress. All children understand their learning targets. They have a clear idea of what they need to do to improve over the coming weeks or months. Most work is carefully marked, and teachers tell the children how well they are doing during lessons, so that the children know how to improve the work they are doing. Each class has a wide range of attainment, including some pupils who are at the early stages of learning English. Teachers and their assistants work as an effective team to make sure all children get the right support. All staff respect the children and the well matched support for all abilities makes children feel clever and confident. This helps them to take a full and active part in lessons. In the most effective lessons, children check their own work against a list of what the teacher is looking for. They take responsibility for their own learning. The lessons that inspectors saw that were outstanding inspired children and helped them to make rapid progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. Well planned programmes of work, designed to raise standards, have led to improved outcomes for children in the basic skills. Extra lessons are effective in helping older children to catch up if they are falling behind with their work. The school recognises its success in improving the basics and now acknowledges that the rest of the curriculum can be developed so that standards in areas other than the basic skills improve. The school places a high emphasis on the way that all children develop as caring, responsible and reflective individuals and, as a result, children make rapid progress in this area, from low starting points. Children say they enjoy the visits, extra-curricular activities and the special activities that make the curriculum more enjoyable and this helps them to do well.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are outstanding aspects of the school's provision. Each member of staff plays an important part in ensuring that the needs of every child are met, and that their personal safety is prioritised. The learning mentor plays a vital part in this and very effectively supports children at risk of poor outcomes. This has led to good progress for all groups of children, and has reduced levels of absence, unacceptable behaviour, and exclusions. Child protection procedures are thorough and effective, and understood by all staff. Provision for pupils' health and safety is good, and children are fully justified in saying that they feel safe and well supported by adults. The very effective tracking of children's achievements has been a major factor in improving the progress they make.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The good progress that children make in both their academic and personal development is a direct result of good leadership. The headteacher and governors have created an effective team that has worked relentlessly on raising standards in the basic skills. This has meant leaders have had to transform the way teachers plan lessons and track children's progress. As a result of this, the quality of teaching is consistently good, with some outstanding practice. At the same time, leaders have not lost sight of the importance to the school of the spiritual development of children and this aspect of the school's work has gone from strength to strength. With such a positive track record, the school is well placed to continue to improve. It recognises that its next job is to develop the work of subject leaders so that standards rise further in areas beyond the basic skills. Effective partnerships with other children's services and with the local authority help children who are learning to speak English, or who have challenging behaviour to achieve well. The school knows itself well. It takes good account of the views of children and parents and its improvement plans are evidence of effective management.

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Inspection judgements

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

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? | 1 | NA |
| The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 1 | NA |
| The behaviour of learners | 2 | NA |
| The attendance of learners | 2 | 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 | 2 | 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 | 1 | 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

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St Joseph's RC Primary School

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17 January 2006

Dear Children

I would like to thank you for welcoming us to your school during the recent inspection.

In the first assembly we saw, you told us we would find kind, hard working and well behaved children and that is exactly what we did find. We think that the way you care for each other and respect everyone is one of the best things about your school.

The school has improved a lot over the last few years and the older children told us they like the way staff are friendly, calm and helpful. We have seen how much progress you make at school. When we talked to you about your learning targets, you explained very carefully what you need to do to improve and we thought this was helping you to do well at school.

Some children find it difficult to behave well, but we were impressed by how hard you try and we were very pleased with the way the school helps you. We think Mrs Wilson and all of the staff work very hard to help you do well and they know exactly what still needs to be done in the school.

We have asked your teachers to carry on making work exciting and interesting especially in areas outside English, mathematics and science. You can help them by continuing to work hard and giving your best.

Yours sincerely

Chris Quigley

Lead inspector