



# St Joseph's Roman Catholic VA Primary School, Ushaw Moor

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 114272  
**LEA** Durham  
**Inspection number** 279351  
**Inspection dates** 4 April 2006 to 5 April 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Mrs Heather Evans

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Durham Road
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided		Ushaw Moor
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11		Durham, County Durham
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	0191 3730355
<b>Number on roll</b>	98	<b>Fax number</b>	0191 3739214
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mrs Mary Everett
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	1 November 1999	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Anne Miller

<b>Age group</b> 4 to 11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 4 April 2006 - 5 April 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 279351
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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

## **Description of the school**

This is a smaller than average Catholic primary school in a very deprived area of Ushaw Moor in Durham. An above average proportion of children are entitled to free school meals and more than a third have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Almost all of the pupils are of white British heritage and none speaks a language other than English. On entry to the Reception class, attainment is well below that usually found for children of the same age. Mobility is high and parents regularly bring children to the school during Years 3 to 6 who have experienced learning difficulties in other schools.

## **Key for inspection grades**

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

## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

### **Grade: 2**

Inspection evidence supports the views of the staff and governors in all aspects. This is an effective school where teaching and learning and curriculum provision is good. Difficulties, including some inadequate teaching that caused some underachievement in the recent past, have been put right. The provision in the Foundation Stage is good and provides a springboard for future success, but not all children attain the expected goals by the end of Reception. By the end of Years 2 and 6, standards are close to the expected level nationally and progress is good. By the end of Year 6, a number of higher attaining children reach the level above that expected. There are strengths in the curriculum, and meticulously planned work is carefully targeted to children's abilities and needs, promoting purposeful learning. Children say it is not like work because it is such fun. The school works well with other schools and with outside agencies. The provision of care for all pupils is good. Parents, pupils and the local community hold the school in high regard. The issues identified in the last inspection have been addressed successfully. The school provides good value for money. Leadership and management are good, as is the school's capacity to improve.

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

- In order to improve, the school needs to maintain the drive to raise standards in English, particularly in writing, and in mathematics and science.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Standards are broadly average by the time pupils leave the school. From the low level on entry, achievement is good. The small year groups and a high number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities in all classes mean that it is difficult to identify trends. Children in Reception make good progress, although some do not attain all of the expected early learning goals before moving into Year 1. By the end of Years 2 and 6, most of those who do not have specific learning difficulties reach the expected standards. Standards in Years 2 and 6 in 2005 were lower than usual because of the low attainment in writing, but in Year 6 a small group of pupils exceeded national expectations. The main reason for the overall recent low results in Year 2 is a reflection of the particularly low ability of pupils on entry to the school. Also, there was recent underachievement in lower Key Stage 2 that adversely affected standards. The school reports that this underachievement was caused by inadequate teaching. The school has taken action to rectify the situation and inspection evidence confirms that the quality of teaching is now much improved. The school is working to improve writing standards with measurable success. The tracking of individual progress over time is good. Assessment data is used very effectively to plan future work. An intensive programme of staff training has raised expectations in all work, including writing. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress.

There are too few children to identify significant variation in performance between boys and girls.

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

### **Grade: 2**

The personal development and well-being of children are good. Their spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is good and reflects the Catholic ethos that pervades the school's work. Pupils enjoy coming to school. They are interested in their lessons and are eager to learn. Attendance is satisfactory and lessons start promptly. The positive behaviour programme provides a pattern that children value and understand. Children follow the school's agreed code and their self-esteem is high. Relationships between children and with adults are good. Children are polite and cooperative when working with others. The imaginative programme called 'the zones' enables older pupils to work and play with younger friends in both boisterous and reflective activities, that make lunchtimes a very profitable part of the learning process. Pupils make an important contribution to the life of the school through the school council. Their suggestions are sensible and realistic; for example, one idea is to develop a school website.

Children enjoy a range of creative, physical and sporting activities. They know about safe and healthy life choices. The healthy lunchtime menus and their physical activities contribute well to this. They share in activities that enable them to develop an awareness and understanding of different traditions, values and cultures. Visitors with special skills teach them to play the tin whistle and the Northumbrian pipes. They have high quality tuition at the county sports centre. Children perform in church and for local residents and raise funds for charity. These experiences prepare them soundly for their future life.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching and learning are good. Reported inadequate teaching resulted in some pupils underachieving, but this has been addressed successfully. Teachers are knowledgeable and have a good understanding of the needs of the children and the subjects they teach. In the mixed-age classes, children work in ability groups based on previous learning. Skills learned in English, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT) are used to good effect in other subjects. Teachers and skilled teaching assistants promote successful learning through the use of the 'carousel' system, a programme where important elements of the National Curriculum are taught using practical work, including games, to develop skills in reading and mathematics. They work towards specific targets with small groups, using such practical experiences to enthuse children. Many pupils not only want more work but involve their parents by continuing the process at home. Assessment is rigorous and is used to celebrate success

and to inform future planning. The system of rewards and sanctions promotes children's positive attitudes to their work. Pupils make sensible choices that reflect their understanding about their personal targets, progress and achievement.

The school is committed to improving the learning skills of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Teaching for these children is structured well and uses assessment effectively. Records show clear evidence of their good progress.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum and the range of extra-curricular activities are good. The school has successfully extended national guidelines to make the curriculum accessible to all children by linking subjects together. Learning is relevant and exciting and standards are beginning to rise. Children use their skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT to good purpose in other subjects. The Foundation Stage curriculum is rich and varied and provides a good base for future work. Children's success in French, music and gymnastics enhances their self-esteem. It is, however, the 'carousel' programme and the dedicated work of the teaching assistants that make this curriculum special. The children relish the range of lunchtime activities that make this time a profitable part of the day. Educational visits and talented visitors effectively enrich their experiences and their enjoyment of school.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The strong Catholic ethos, safe environment and good relationships across the school reflect the effective care, guidance and support given to all children. The partnership of teachers, support staff, parents, the church community and outside agencies ensures that the children's well-being is secure. Child protection procedures and all other risk assessments are in place.

Children of all ages are confident that bullying is not an issue. They say they feel safe and would know who to turn to with any worries or concerns. Children's academic progress is tracked meticulously. Children know their individual targets for mathematics and English and what they need to do to attain them. The care and support given to children with learning, behavioural or emotional difficulties are outstanding and enable them to work to the best of their capabilities.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher is highly committed to the school and the local community. She knows how she wants the school to develop, and has been very successful in getting the governors and the teaching and support staff to share her vision. She knows exactly where the school's strengths lie and which areas need further attention. She is resolved to bring about

improvements within a sensible and achievable timescale. An intensive programme of monitoring, encouragement and shared training has already begun to raise standards. Confidence and expectations have been raised throughout the school. The involvement of the mid-day staff in the leadership and management of lunchtime activities in 'the zones' has improved children's attitudes, behaviour, morale, sense of enjoyment and well-being.

There is a good level of distributed leadership. The deputy headteacher, with the teachers, teaching assistants and the governors, shares a very effective partnership with the headteacher. Subjects and carousel groups are managed effectively. The shared knowledge of current standards and what needs to be done next has enabled well conceived plans for improvement to be established.

The governing body is effective and is very aware of the need to hold the school to account. Governors know what has been achieved already and are in full support of what the senior managers are seeking to achieve. The school has 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>	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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2	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	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	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>	2	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	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	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

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The Children

St Joseph's Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary School

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4 April 2006

Dear Children

Thank you for your help when I inspected your school. Please let everybody know how much I enjoyed talking with you and sharing your work. St Joseph's is a very friendly school, where you are learning to play and work together well.

I liked so much of what you shared with me, particularly the things in this list.

You work, play and learn in a cheerful, friendly place and it is good to see that you get on well with one another. You behave well in lessons and in the grounds, where the lunchtime supervisors help you to get so much pleasure using the zones.

You are working hard in English, mathematics, science, sport, music and ICT. I know some of you find writing hard but it is getting better and it will help you in other subjects.

Your teachers and classroom assistants work hard. They care for you and plan such exciting work in the carousel groups that you tell me learning is fun. They help you to learn well.

The places you visit and the many visitors to the school, such as the chance to learn the tin whistle and the pipes, are helping you to play a part in preserving the culture of the North East.

You are doing better in your work and tests because most of you come to school every day except when you are ill.

You told me your teachers say that you need to work harder to reach your targets, and attain high levels in your tests. You also know that they are right. You say it will be hard but that you intend to try. Do your best and then you might find that your teachers will have more time to help you to build your website so that you can tell everyone how many good things are happening at St Joseph's.

Thank you.

Heather Evans

Lead inspector