



# Malvern, St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Inspection Report

Better  
education  
and care

**Unique Reference Number** 116901  
**LEA** Worcestershire  
**Inspection number** 279937  
**Inspection dates** 27 June 2006 to 28 June 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Lois Furness AI

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Newtown Road
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided		Malvern
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11		Worcestershire WR14 1PF
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01684 573016
<b>Number on roll</b>	181	<b>Fax number</b>	01684 891205
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr M J Simpson
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	16 October 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Ann-Marie Wallbank

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Malvern St Joseph's Catholic school is an average-sized primary school. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is above average. Most of the pupils are White British. A significant proportion of pupils join the school at times other than the Reception year. Children start Reception with levels of skill that at least match those expected for their age. During the past three years the school has been subject to significant changes in its staff team and the school is a designated Worcestershire 'Forest School.'

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

School effectiveness is satisfactory and inspectors agree with the school's view that it provides a satisfactory quality of education. Children are given a good start in the Reception class, where provision and standards are good. However, this good start has not been built upon as well as it should be which has led to underachievement in the past. Strong action by the leadership has resulted in improvement and achievement is now satisfactory.

Standards are broadly average. Writing is a weaker aspect of the school's work. Pupils' presentation skills, including their handwriting, are unsatisfactory and they do not have sufficient opportunities to write in different curriculum areas. The curriculum is good and projects such as the 'Forest School' contribute well to pupils' positive attitudes. Personal development is good. Pupils feel safe and they say they 'want to be here.' Teaching is at least satisfactory, with good features. A particular strength is the effective use of interactive whiteboards to promote learning. However, activities do not always challenge the more able and pupils do not know clearly enough how they might make their work better.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher provides strong leadership and the influence of the subject leaders is developing. Strengths and weaknesses are known but the monitoring systems are not rigorous enough to identify whether the actions agreed are actually happening in practice. There was initially slow progress following the last inspection but, since the resolution of staffing difficulties, there has been rapid improvement. This, alongside the enthusiasm and commitment of all staff and the clear direction provided by the headteacher, shows the school's good capacity to improve further. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Improve pupils' presentation and handwriting skills and plan more opportunities for pupils to write in different curriculum areas.
- Ensure activities challenge the more able and involve pupils more in knowing how well they are doing.
- Strengthen further the monitoring systems and the influence of the subject leaders to ensure agreed actions are implemented by all.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

Achievement is satisfactory and is improving. Good teaching ensures that Reception children achieve well, and the majority of them attain the goals expected for their age by the time they enter Year 1. A significant number of children exceed the goals expected for their age.

In previous years, this good achievement has not continued into Key Stage 1 and standards by the end of Year 2 have been declining. However, this has recently been

rectified with broadly average standards in 2005. This year, standards in reading, writing and mathematics have improved even further. The achievement of this group of pupils, which has a high number of pupils with learning difficulties, is good.

Achievement in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory, despite the upward trend of recent years not being maintained in 2005 because of the longer-term effect of staffing difficulties. Records show many pupils have been underachieving in these year groups. However, because of consistently better teaching, the majority of pupils are now working at least at the level expected for their age. Science, previously a particular weakness, has markedly improved. Last year the school met the target for English but narrowly missed the mathematics target. This year, because of very good teaching during the latter part of the year, the Year 6 pupils are on course to meet the challenging targets set. However, throughout the school, more-able pupils still do not make the progress they are capable of. Writing standards, including handwriting, are a weaker aspect of pupils' work. Pupils with learning difficulties make satisfactory progress because they are provided with an appropriate level of support.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good, as is their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Behaviour is good and pupils have positive attitudes, saying they 'enjoy school.' However, these attitudes are not reflected in the presentation of their work, which is sometimes unsatisfactory. Pupils understand that there are people with different beliefs in the world but they have a more limited appreciation of living in multi-racial Britain. Children in the Reception class make good progress in their personal development, becoming confident and independent learners. Attendance is satisfactory.

Pupils have a good awareness of safety issues, following carefully the safety guidelines related to the 'Forest School' and out-of-school visits. They take regular exercise and have a satisfactory understanding of the need for healthy living. However, the choice of food for their lunches does not always reflect this understanding. Older pupils have a good sense of responsibility through the work they do with the younger ones and through the recently formed school council. Their involvement in community events both in the parish and beyond is good and, consequently, they are developing a good understanding of social responsibility. Pupils' satisfactory skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology are providing adequate support for their developing economic well-being.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Teaching is satisfactory, with good aspects. Teaching is good in the Reception class and activities planned meet childrens needs well. In all classes, the interactive

whiteboard is used successfully to engage pupils' interest and to support learning. Teachers have good knowledge of their subjects and good questioning skills. They ask probing questions which encourage pupils to think hard. However, assessment information is not used sufficiently well to ensure that the more able pupils make the progress they are capable of. Expectations are sometimes too low. Untidy and careless work is accepted as good enough. In some classes, marking is helpful and pupils are clearly aware of how they might improve. However, not all teachers provide this good guidance. Teaching assistants are used well to support pupils with learning difficulties.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is good and meets the needs of most pupils. In some lessons, however, it is not adapted well enough to challenge more-able pupils, and this hinders their progress and achievement. The Foundation Stage curriculum is good, with a good balance between child-led and adult-led activities. Through the 'Forest School,' all pupils experience unique opportunities to explore nature, learn about the environment and prepare effectively for future life. The improvements in the provision of numeracy and literacy are influencing overall standards. However, pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to develop their writing skills in other subjects. The experiences of all pupils are enriched by a good range of after-school clubs and activities, as well as regular well-planned visits, including a residential visit for Year 6 pupils.

A well thought out programme for personal, social and health education provides good opportunities for pupils to learn about the benefits related to healthy living, safety and personal relationships.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory. Procedures to ensure health and safety and child protection are fully in place. Staff know pupils well and respond willingly to those needing help. The very few cases of verbal bullying are dealt with speedily and fairly. Good links with other schools and with the local church support pupils' learning and there are good links with outside agencies to support pupils with learning difficulties and those who may be vulnerable. Parents are appreciative of the work of the school.

Arrangements to support pupils' academic progress are satisfactory and improving. Tracking and target-setting systems are detailed and underachievement is carefully identified. However, information is not always used sufficiently well to maximise progress and to help pupils understand how they can make their work better. In the view of one pupil, there is more emphasis on 'keep trying harder.'

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## Leadership and management

### Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher has successfully steered the school through a difficult time. Through strong leadership, staffing difficulties have been resolved and all staff share the clear vision for school improvement. The influence of this can be seen in the very much improved standards in science and improving achievement elsewhere. The school is successful in ensuring that most pupils are treated equally well, although more could be done to ensure that the most able achieve their best. Governors are supportive, making sure all statutory requirements are met. Self-evaluation is satisfactory. Although procedures accurately identify strengths and areas of weakness, checking the effectiveness of agreed action is an area that is insufficiently rigorous. Known weaknesses, for example, marking, are not checked upon regularly enough. Subject leaders are developing their skills and are influencing practice satisfactorily. However, the determination to improve achievement and the strong and effective leadership of the headteacher, with the support of the committed staff team, mean that the school has good capacity to improve.

The school seeks the views of parents and takes their comments and suggestions seriously. For example, the school has changed the format for reports in response to parental concerns. Pupils are becoming more influential in school improvement through the school council. The school benefits from good links with other organisations, including local schools.

**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).**



## 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	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	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	3	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>	3	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>	3	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	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	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

<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 being so polite, friendly and welcoming when we visited your school recently. We would now like to share with you what we think about your school. We liked these things most of all

The youngest children get a good start in the Reception class.

We are pleased you like coming to school and behave well. We understand why you enjoy the 'Forest School' so much, as you do lots of interesting and exciting things when you are there.

We think that teachers use the interactive whiteboards very well to help you learn new things.

We are pleased that you feel safe in school, knowing there is someone to talk to if there is a problem.

It is good to know that your headteacher and staff are determined to make school life better.

These are the things we have asked your school to work on now

We have asked your teachers to make sure you have lots of opportunities to practice different kinds of writing and help some of you to write more neatly. We also think that some of you could present your work more carefully.

We have asked that all of you have work that makes you think as hard as possible. We think that you should have more help in understanding what is good about your work and how you can improve it.

We have asked your headteacher and the teachers responsible for English, mathematics and science to check regularly that new ideas are working well and making learning better.

We hope you will all achieve much more as a result of these improvements.