



St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Bishop Thornton

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 121636
LEA North Yorkshire
Inspection number 281064
Inspection dates 5 October 2005 to 5 October 2005
Reporting inspector Mrs Paula Allison CfBT Lead Inspector

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

| | | | |
|------------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| Type of school | Primary | School address | Bishop Thornton |
| School category | Voluntary aided | | Harrogate |
| Age range of pupils | 4 to 11 | | North Yorkshire HG3 3JR |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed | Telephone number | 01423 770 083 |
| Number on roll | 21 | Fax number | - |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body | Chair of governors | Mr Father Waldron |
| Date of previous inspection | 24 January 2000 | Headteacher | Miss J Collins |

| | | |
|-----------------------------|---|------------------------------------|
| Age group 4 to 11 | Inspection dates 5 October 2005 - 5 October 2005 | Inspection number 281064 |
|-----------------------------|---|------------------------------------|

© Crown copyright 2006

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This very small school, with a Catholic foundation, serves a number of parishes across a wide geographical area. The socio-economic circumstances of families are mixed, but all children are of white British heritage. There are no children who are eligible for free school meals and the proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. Attainment on entry varies considerably from year to year, but is average overall. Children join the school at different times in their school career. Since the last inspection, there has been an almost complete change in teaching staff, including a new headteacher who took up the post in January 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. Despite being expensive to run because it is a small school, it gives good value for money. Leadership and management of the school are good, with the outstanding leadership of the new headteacher making a significant impact. During their time in school children make good progress and reach above average standards. They are well cared for and their personal development is good with some outstanding features. The school has the overwhelming support of parents, who are delighted with the quality of what is provided. The school provides well for children in the reception class and the quality of the teaching in the school as a whole is good. The curriculum offers a wide range of activities and experiences, although the use of information and communication technology (ICT) is still being developed. Teachers know their children very well and are successful in meeting their individual needs. However, assessment systems do not provide the leadership with a clear overview of the progress children are making through the school. The school development plan has sensible priorities, but these are not linked closely enough to an evaluation of how well the school is doing. Good progress has been made in the recommendation to improve the role of governors. This is now good. The school has an ample capacity to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Develop an assessment system to track pupils' progress through the school and provide leaders with a clear picture of how the school is performing.
- Improve school development planning by linking an evaluation of the performance of pupils with what the school needs to do next.
- Ensure that better use is made of ICT to enhance teaching and learning across the curriculum.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

As the number of children in each year group is very small, comparing their results in the national tests with other schools is unreliable. Inspection evidence shows that standards are above average and progress is good. This matches the school's own evaluation. Parents are very happy with how their children are doing and the children themselves are visibly proud of their achievements. They have challenging targets, which they usually meet. The school's focus on individual children, and the effectiveness of the way in which their needs are met, ensure that all of them achieve well. For instance, even those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities reach the expected levels. Children are developing good literacy and numeracy skills, which will support them well in the future. Their skills in ICT are developing well but they have insufficient opportunity to use these skills to support their learning in other subjects.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The school fulfils its vision: 'to create a secure and welcoming community that values and respects each individual person.' Parents say how welcoming the school is and recognise the impact the ethos has on their children's learning. Children's personal development has many outstanding features, as shown by the ease with which pupils of all ages work together. They obviously enjoy school immensely: 'It's great!' was one comment, a sentiment echoed by other children. Throughout the school, children's enthusiasm for learning is very evident. Parents commented that their children are happy to go to school and 'come out with a smile on their face'. Attendance rates have improved and are now well above average.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very effectively promoted. The moral stance, which stems from the school's faith foundation and is at the heart of what the school is about, provides a clear framework within which children develop values, such as respect for others. The school's 'Golden Rules' are well known to children and their behaviour is exemplary. The school's good links with the local community help children to gain a secure understanding of life in a small neighbourhood. In school, they know that their contributions and views are valued. Whilst the school widens children's horizons in many ways, the provision for promoting their understanding of cultures other than their own is not as strong. Children are taught how to keep themselves safe and to adopt healthy lifestyles. Recent developments have enabled children to take part more in outdoor activities and to eat more healthily.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

I agree with the school that teaching and learning are good. There are some very special strengths in the teaching, such as planning to meet the needs of a wide range of ages, abilities and personalities. The classes may be small, but it is not easy to provide for the range with which these teachers are faced. They manage it extremely well and enable every child to make good progress. Parents are appreciative of the quality of teaching and they feel they are able to be involved in their children's learning, for example through the way in which homework is used.

Adults and children get on well with each other and there is often friendly banter, which enhances children's enjoyment of school and helps them to feel secure. Children are not afraid to have a try at things and will risk being wrong because they know their efforts will be valued. Teachers are adept at ensuring that all children, regardless of their age, are able to contribute in lessons. For example, in a numeracy lesson, children were able to explain the way in which they were working out a problem and this helped them to make positive gains in their understanding of how numbers work. Teachers'

good knowledge of children ensures that they assess their work effectively and challenge them all well.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school is right in judging that it has a good curriculum. This is carefully planned to ensure that in the mixed age classes all children receive a balanced range of experiences. Provision for literacy and numeracy is good and the current development in approaches to problem solving in mathematics is having a positive impact on learning, especially for the more able children.

Collaboration with other schools helps to extend the range of the curriculum, in areas such as swimming, sports and art. The wide range of enrichment activities and experiences is appreciated by parents and children alike and has a positive effect on children's attitudes, their enjoyment and achievement.

Recent improvements to resources have had a good impact on children's motivation to learn; 'we now have really colourful text books' said one child and eagerly showed them to a visitor. Provision for children in the reception class has been imaginatively enhanced, especially in the linking of the indoor and outdoor environment. Resources for ICT have been increased; teachers are beginning to develop ways of using these to enhance learning across the curriculum, but this is still at an early stage of development.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school takes good care of children. Parents are quite rightly confident that children are well supervised at all times by adults who have the best interests of the children at heart. Children feel safe and say that they know they are listened to at all times. The very good knowledge that teachers have about the children results in them giving them good guidance and support.

The school treats children as individuals and takes care to identify particular needs. To this end, teachers work well with parents and outside agencies. Children who joined the school recently say that they were helped to settle in and made friends very quickly because everyone was friendly and made them feel welcome. Child protection procedures and other arrangements required to keep children safe, work well.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

'we are delighted with the way in which St Joseph's is evolving under the new headteacher's leadership'

The headteacher provides outstanding leadership. In the short time she has been at the school, she has brought about sweeping changes across a wide canvas of the

school's work; for example in improving pupils' attitudes to their work and relationships with parents. She has gained an exceptionally high level of support from parents, who recognise how she has transformed the school - 'a great credit to the school', 'fantastic'. A strong team of teachers and support staff work together; their shared vision, based on including and valuing everyone, is reflected in all aspects of the school's work. The role of the governing body, which was a weakness at the last inspection, has developed well. Governors now have a good understanding of the work of the school and fulfil their responsibilities effectively. The good improvement since the last inspection and the development of new management systems are helping the school to move forward and ensuring that children make good progress. As such the school is very well placed to continue to improve. These are however early days for a new management regime. Whilst self-evaluation is well considered and some useful improvements have recently been made, governors, parents and pupils are not sufficiently involved in the process. Moreover, there is a need for the school to become more rigorous in evaluating its performance to effect improvements.

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.

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 |
|--|-----------------------|--------------|

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 | 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 | 1 | NA |
| The attendance of learners | 1 | 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 | 2 | 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 | 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 | 1 | 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 |

| | |
|---|-----|
| 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

N/A

As you know, I recently visited your school to find out how well your teachers are helping you with your learning. Thank you for being so friendly and finding time to talk to me. I enjoyed my visit and it was interesting to listen to what you had to say and to find out what you think about your school.

I agree with you that the school is a good one and is giving you the sort of education that you should receive. The things I thought were really good about your school are:

- The amount of learning you do and how much progress you make to reach your targets.
- The way you behave in school and how much you enjoy learning.
- The support you get from all the adults in the school and how they look after you and keep you safe.
- How your new headteacher has worked to try to make the school even better.
- How the school helps you to be responsible and friendly to others and to be healthy.
- The good teaching that helps you to learn.
- How much your parents like the school.

I have asked your teachers to improve these things to make your school even better:

- I want them to check on how well you are doing in your learning as you move from one year to another and to use this information to see how they can help you to learn even more.
- I want them to make sure that you use computers, and such things as your new Smart Boards, to help you learn.

Thank you for helping me with the inspection of your school. I hope that you carry on enjoying your lessons and being a part of such a good school.