



# St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 101457  
**Local Authority** Bexley  
**Inspection number** 286066  
**Inspection date** 18 September 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Wendy Simmons

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Old Road
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided		Crayford
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4-11		Dartford DA1 4DZ
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01322 524162
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	208	<b>Fax number</b>	01322 526749
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mr P Tite
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Miss P Reen
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	12 February 2001		

<b>Age group</b> 4-11	<b>Inspection date</b> 18 September 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 286066
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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

## **Description of the school**

This popular school educates mainly White British pupils with a few from Black African heritages. Pupils' social circumstances are average, although the school notes that parental aspirations for their children are very varied. The school was awarded Beacon Status three years ago and works in partnership with many local schools, visiting specialists and the church. The school has a similar proportion of pupils with special needs to schools nationally. Almost all pupils have a home language that is English.

## **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 and caring school with several outstanding features, which ensure that pupils are happy, enthusiastic and successful learners. Parents strongly agree and, one wrote, 'Children are encouraged to do their best and show social responsibility in a very supportive environment'.

This school maintains above average standards and pupils achieve well. The headteacher has high expectations and, in the words of the governors, 'Everything stems from her.' The headteacher knows the pupils well and assesses their needs as individuals and then ensures that they have the opportunity to make good progress. Her work is a significant factor behind the school's success. She is well supported by a strong team of staff who provide good teaching and an outstanding curriculum.

The school is calm while having a real sense of purpose in all that is done. Standards are above average by Year 6. Differences in the range of abilities in classes mean that standards vary for some year groups. For example, they are closer to average in Year 3, due to a high proportion of pupils with learning difficulties.

The school does especially well in reading, science and mathematics by Year 6. Standards are not as high in writing and, recently, the school has focused its efforts on improving them, particularly for more able pupils. For example, the school has increased the range of writing opportunities. These are not only exciting, but result in pupils thinking of themselves as real writers. Pupils are very proud of their published poetry and spoke with excitement about working with the famous poet Brian Moses. However, standards in writing for higher attainers have not yet caught up with those in other subjects.

Learning at St Joseph's is business-like, well planned and made meaningful to pupils. It is especially enhanced by an outstanding range of extra-curricular activities, a delightful environment and high quality spiritual and moral education, which results in pupils showing outstanding behaviour and respect for all those around them. Personal development is outstanding, reflecting the strong Catholic ethos and the impact of the school's work on helping pupils to be healthy, understand about being safe and make a significant contribution to the community. Of note is the high quality singing and performance work. Pupils quickly gain confidence and develop important social skills, especially in the Foundation Stage, where good provision ensures that children are well prepared for the next stages of learning.

Pupils like their teachers, saying, 'teachers have fun with us and teach us not in a boring way, so we remember things and get excited'. Pupils have a mostly clear understanding of how to improve, although this does vary from class to class. While teachers engage in many helpful discussions with pupils and mark their work carefully, pupils are not given enough time to act on these comments to best effect. This is especially evident in their written work.

The school has been working successfully in the last term to help pupils to write in more imaginative and purposeful ways, so that their high standards in mathematics

and science can be fully matched in all aspects of English. This is because the most able pupils gain much higher results in their reading than they do in their writing. Even so, when combining their reading and writing results, standards in English by Year 6 are higher than average. The school has a good capacity to improve.

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

- Provide more time for pupils to read and act on the comments made by teachers following the marking of their work, so that standards in writing can further improve.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Standards are above average in English with the school performing within the top 20% of schools in the country for mathematics and science. Standards have been maintained at above average since 2001. The school is ambitious for its pupils, as seen in the drive to raise standards further for higher ability pupils. The school shows a good capacity to improve as evident in results from National tests taken in May of 2006. Here, the school helped over half of the Year 6 group to reach especially high levels in reading, science and mathematics. The school also focused on writing, as a main priority, but national test results did not reflect pupils' class work. Four pupils gained the high Level 5 with 6 pupils missing this by between 1 and 3 marks.

Good achievement is evident for all groups of learners. The school's records show that children's language and communication skills are no longer as strong as they were when they start school. When joining the school now, standards are as expected in the Foundation Stage. Children make good progress and often exceed the goals expected for these young children by the beginning of Year 1. Good progress continues from Year 1 to Year 6, reflecting the impact of good teaching and an outstanding curriculum.

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

### **Grade: 1**

Personal development is outstanding. Pupils' behaviour is excellent; they are polite, courteous and keen to talk about why they like their school and enjoy learning. They especially like football and the range of sports and confidently talk about the importance of healthy lifestyles and eating habits. One pupil summed up the school's work by saying, 'We have fun, work hard, burn off fat and work together like sportsmen'. Pupils agree that staff are very caring. As a result, pupils have the confidence to talk about many issues and become aware of how to be safe, seek advice and make a positive contribution to the wider community. Spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is of very high quality and reflects the Catholic ethos of the school. Pupils learn to respect different beliefs and traditions, collaborate well and

know what makes a good citizen. Pupils are very well prepared for their future lives at this school.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching is good so that pupils learn well and make good progress. Lessons are interesting and very well prepared, so that the needs of all learners are carefully considered. Teachers have good subject knowledge, show high expectations and have good relationships with the pupils. As a consequence of this, learning is effective with pupils being attentive and eager to do their best. Teachers use assessment information well to help them to plan pupils' learning. Pupils and teachers make the most of discussion times to clarify what they are learning, Teachers mark pupils' work, so that they are often given ideas how to improve. However, pupils are not given sufficient time to respond to these comments, in order to enhance their skills, especially in writing.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 1**

The school provides an outstanding curriculum, which enriches and enlivens pupils' personal development very effectively. It is very well planned, balancing basic skills, creative work, sport and social skills so that learning is fun. Links with the community enrich the opportunities given to pupils and ensures that those with learning difficulties and those of higher ability make good progress. Pupils love the range of clubs, and spoke excitedly about music, art and information and communication technology. Pupils agree that visits help them to remember things, as was evident when they spoke enthusiastically about video conferencing links with the Maritime Museum in history. Work by specialist teachers and visitors enables a high proportion to learn musical instruments and to take up subjects such as Latin and French.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 2**

Care, guidance and support are good. The school does especially well at developing pupils' spiritual guidance and self-esteem. Progress for all pupils is tracked very closely, with most pupils knowing their targets for improvement. The school is aware that pupils are not always given enough time to follow up comments made when teachers mark pupils' books.

Children settle quickly in the Foundation Stage. Child protection procedures are well established and rigorous. Pupils commented that, 'adults look after us well and listen to what we say'. Parents are happy with the care provided.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good. Leaders and managers have an accurate view of the school due to the school's clear and focused self evaluation. This takes into account pupils' and parents' views of the school. The school is driven by the strong leadership from the headteacher. She is effectively supported by staff who work well in partnership for the benefit of the pupils. Parents agree that the school is well led and that their children are happy. A few parents commented in the questionnaire that pupils' views and suggestions are not sufficiently taken into account. The school has taken effective action to address the issues raised at the time of the last inspection and has a clear and appropriate plan for further development. The school shows a good capacity to improve.

Governance is good, and provides good support for school improvement. Not least by allocating funds to improve the school's accommodation, which now provides a wonderful learning environment for pupils.

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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	1
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

### **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

You may remember that I came to your school recently to find out how well you were doing. Thank you for being so friendly and telling me about your school. I am writing to let you know what I found out.

You clearly enjoy learning and value all that the staff do for you. Teaching is good because teachers give you outstanding activities that are interesting and help you to reach high standards. Your behaviour is outstanding and a great credit to you all. Well done for being so polite, respectful, and helpful to each other. You are well cared for and make good progress because your teachers work hard to make learning challenging.

Most importantly, your headteacher and all of the staff and governors are working especially hard to make the school even better for you. Your teachers often give you good ideas about how to improve your work, so I have asked them to give you more time to read these comments and do what they suggest. This will help you to make even better progress, especially in your writing.

Yours sincerely

Wendy Simmons(Lead inspector)