

# St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	115152
<b>Local Authority</b>	ESSEX
<b>Inspection number</b>	290147
<b>Inspection date</b>	13 June 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Alison Pangbourne

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	212
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Pam McCarthy
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Paul Collingwood
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	11 June 2002
<b>School address</b>	Vaagen Road Canvey Island Essex SS8 9DP
<b>Telephone number</b>	01268 683903
<b>Fax number</b>	01268 515843

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector in one day.

## Description of the school

This school is of average size. The majority of pupils are Catholic. Most pupils come from White British backgrounds, with a few from minority ethnic groups. None are at an early stage of learning to speak English. When children start school, their skill levels are below national expectations, although this is not the case for all children. The proportion taking a free school meal is low and the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is above average. A higher proportion than usual joins or leaves the school, particularly during Years 3 to 6. The school is part of the Canvey schools' partnership. The school has been awarded the Activemark.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

This is a good school. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about it. One wrote, 'Mr Collingwood has his hands on the helm of a very good ship that knows its course and will reach its destination!' The pupils agree, saying: 'It's a really good school. Everyone is friendly and we all know each other'.

Pupils' personal development is outstanding. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent, reflecting the Catholic ethos of the school. Pupils are polite and friendly and their behaviour is excellent. They are given outstanding care, support and guidance and, as a result, they grow in confidence and take on a wide range of responsibilities. The exceptional emphasis on healthy lifestyles and keeping safe means pupils know the importance of eating fruit and vegetables and how to keep fit. They make an excellent contribution to the community, raising funds for a wide range of charities and looking after younger pupils. Pupils enjoy coming to school very much. Attendance is average because some families take their children on holiday in term time, despite the school's best efforts to dissuade them.

The curriculum is good with some significant strengths. Provision for music is excellent and pupils learn to play a wide range of instruments and take part in festivals. There is a strong emphasis on physical education with expert tuition in some sports, through the local sports partnership. A wide range of visits, visitors and extra-curricular activities further enrich learning. Provision is good for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities.

All pupils, including those with learning difficulties, achieve well. Children get a good start in the Reception class and most reach the expected standard by the beginning of Year 1. Pupils make good progress through the school. There has been significant improvement in standards this year, particularly in mathematics. Assessments for 2007 show that by the end of Year 2, standards are above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils in Year 6 are on course to meet the challenging targets set for them and standards are above average in English and mathematics. This is due to the good quality of teaching and learning. Exciting methods motivate pupils strongly. Expectations of what pupils can achieve are high and tasks are closely matched to their needs. Teaching assistants are deployed effectively and relationships are good. Pupils have a good understanding of their own learning because they have their own targets which are also shared with parents.

The school's success is due to good leadership and management. There is a strong sense of team spirit between teachers, support staff and governors. The headteacher and the senior leadership team monitor progress thoroughly. The significant improvement in mathematics standards is because the decline was identified two years ago and the school is working hard to introduce measures to raise standards. Staff have an accurate view about how well the school is doing. The excellent partnership with other schools and outside agencies means that the school takes advantage of a range of opportunities for learning that would not otherwise be available. Subject leaders fulfil their roles well, but leaders for English, science and information and communication technology (ICT) have insufficient opportunity to check that pupils make enough progress in their subjects. Value for money is good and the improvements that have taken place since the previous inspection show that the school has a good capacity to improve further.

## What the school should do to improve further

- Strengthen the roles of the subject leaders for English, science and ICT through more extensive opportunities to monitor teaching and learning in their subjects.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Children make good progress in the Reception class because the quality of teaching is good and the interesting curriculum encourages them to learn. All pupils make good progress through the school. Pupils meet the challenging targets set for them. In the Year 2 assessments for 2006, standards were broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics, although pupils did better in reading and writing than in mathematics. In the national tests for pupils in Year 6, standards were a little above average in English and a little below average in mathematics. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels was below average, particularly in mathematics in Years 2 and 6. Standards are now above average in reading, writing and mathematics in Year 2. Standards at Year 6 are now above average in English and mathematics, with more pupils reaching the higher level 5.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 1

Pupils are keen to learn and try to do their best. Links with a school in Malawi give them a real understanding of another culture and a focus for raising funds for others who are less fortunate. They have an excellent understanding of healthy eating and fitness, choosing healthy meals at lunchtime and through 'Activityburst' sessions and regular swimming lessons in the school pool. The school council takes its role very seriously and pupils make an excellent contribution to the wider community, singing at music festivals, leading a children's mass and raising funds for many charities. Year 6 pupils act as prefects and contribute positively to the smooth running of the school. Pupils are building a good foundation for later life and the next stage in their education.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

Teachers' planning includes provision for those pupils with different learning needs and levels of attainment. In the best lessons, exciting and imaginative activities encourage pupils to learn. High expectations, clear explanations and challenging questions give pupils the confidence to express their ideas and teachers' responses contribute positively to their learning. The pupils agree, saying, 'The teachers are kind and explain things clearly'. The purposes of the lesson are shared with the pupils and lessons proceed at a good pace and hold their attention. All this leads to good progress. Teaching assistants are managed well and contribute to the achievement of all pupils, particularly those with learning difficulties. In some lessons, teaching is more pedestrian and lacks excitement. Sometimes pupils are given insufficient time to think before they are given the answer to a question. Pupils have targets in English and mathematics, based on thorough assessment. Marking is good and helps pupils know what they need to do to improve.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is planned well. Subjects are linked effectively so that what is learnt in one lesson is developed and practised in another. Music has a high profile and there are opportunities to learn to play instruments such as piano, saxophone and guitar. The partnership with a nearby sports college offers unusual opportunities for physical education, such as archery. The pupils are full of praise for the sporting facilities. There is a strong focus on the basic skills and ample opportunity to develop ICT skills. Provision for personal, social and health education is good and promotes pupils' personal development effectively. Good use is made of the extensive outdoor areas for both enjoyment and learning, but the outdoor area for children in the Foundation Stage is identified for improvement and refurbishment as it limits opportunities for these children.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

This is a very caring school. Procedures for safeguarding pupils are rigorous and child protection procedures are in place. Pupils' progress is tracked very well and those who need extra support are quickly identified. Pupils with significant difficulties are integrated seamlessly into the school. The local steering committee for autism described the school as 'an example of excellence in the transition of special needs children into mainstream'. Pupils know their targets and this has a positive effect on their achievement. Other examples of the exemplary care the school provides include the provision of a social worker to support pupils and parents. Those with poor attendance or punctuality are invited to attend sessions for circus skills before school to encourage them to attend regularly. The school also guides pupils with particular talents towards outside agencies who can meet their needs.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The strong leadership shown by the headteacher and his deputy is fundamental to the school's success. They monitor standards and achievement thoroughly to identify areas for improvement and address any areas of weakness successfully. For example they have worked hard to raise standards in mathematics. Standards in reading and writing are now rising for the younger pupils because a special programme to develop these skills has been implemented. Governance is good. The governors are committed and understand the school's strengths and weaknesses. They have recently funded more teaching assistants to give pupils as much support as possible. Many governors visit the school regularly and the school plans to strengthen their monitoring role further. Subject leaders fulfil their roles well but there are insufficient opportunities for the leaders for English, science and ICT to check standards and progress in their subjects. This means that they do not have as good an understanding about how their subjects are taught as they might have.

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## Annex A

## 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>
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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?	1
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	3
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
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>	2
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	1

<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.



## Annex A

**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	1
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**

13 June 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Canvey Island, Essex, SS8 9DP

Thank you for helping me when I visited your school. I enjoyed talking to you and watching you learn. I would like to tell you what I found out.

Your families know that you go to a good school where you make good progress, and we agree. You told me that you go to a friendly school. I thought your behaviour was excellent and that you were polite. You have lots of interesting things to do in lessons and all the adults take very good care of you and help you learn and do well. You have worked hard to improve your mathematics skills. You know how to keep healthy by eating the right foods and I enjoyed watching some of you keeping fit in the swimming pool. You are lucky to have your own pool! The links that your school has with others means that you can try lots of interesting sports like archery.

I have asked Mr Collingwood if the teachers who are responsible for English, science and ICT could check to see how you are getting on in those subjects to make sure that you learn as well as you can.

I hope you carry on enjoying your time at St Joseph's and do well in your next school.

Best wishes

Alison Pangbourne

Lead Inspector