



# St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Barnoldswick

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 119685  
**Local Authority** Lancashire  
**Inspection number** 291505  
**Inspection dates** 23–24 November 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Eric Jackson

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 address</b>	West Close Road
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided		Barnoldswick, Lancashire
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11		BB18 5EN
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01282 813045
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	137	<b>Fax number</b>	01282 854846
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mr James Bond
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Catherine McDonald
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 February 2001		

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

This small school admits pupils from two parishes, a number of the pupils being bused from nearby villages. Its Catholic mission is central to its work. Socio-economic circumstances locally are broadly average, as is children's attainment on entry. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is below average, but the number with statements of their need is above average. This proportion varies considerably between different year groups, resulting in variable results by the end of Year 6. The turnover of pupils at other than normal times of leaving or joining the school is generally average but there was very high turnover for last year's Year 6 since Year 2. Almost all the pupils are of White British origin, but there are small numbers of pupils of Pakistani heritage.

## 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, with some outstanding features. The school's Catholic mission is interpreted very successfully to include all pupils. One parent movingly said, 'I asked the head if my child with special needs could be admitted. She told me that all God's children are welcome here.' Other parents confirm this acceptance: the school's partnership with them, the parish and the local community is strong. Pupils learn to act safely and live healthily, and feel secure because they are very well cared for. They really enjoy and appreciate what the school does for them.

Pupils' achievement is good across the school because of good teaching, guidance and support. This includes effective support from teaching assistants for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Children in Reception make good progress because provision is good, although the provision for outdoor learning is no better than satisfactory. Most Reception children achieve the levels expected by the end of the year and some reach higher levels, especially in reading. Pupils do really well in Years 1 and 2. Results have improved to above average in Year 2 national tests in reading, writing and mathematics. In Year 6 national tests, results are usually good and rose to be in the top 20% nationally in 2005, representing good progress from Years 3 to 6, especially in English. Provisional data for Year 6 in 2006 suggests that these standards have been maintained in reading and mathematics and raised in science; however, the writing results fell sharply and the overall English results were therefore much lower than usual. They were well below those predicted by the school, particularly at the higher levels, although the predictions for reading, mathematics and science were exceeded. The school feels that the wide disparity between results for reading and writing is inexplicable. Nevertheless, it has taken action to ensure that test results in writing swiftly return to previous levels. Progress in the current Year 6 is good, including what was seen in their writing. However, the pupils' handwriting and the presentation of their work are not good enough because the teachers do not give them enough priority.

Pupils' personal development is good, as is their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils learn to take on tasks and responsibilities from an early age and by Year 6 perform a variety of school duties confidently, including as school councillors. They behave exceedingly well, work and play well together, and are well prepared for the transfer to high school. Through involvement in the parish, activities in the town and with other local schools, pupils make a good contribution to this school and to wider communities.

The school's success is founded in good leadership and management. The headteacher gives clear direction to the school's work, ably supported by other staff and the good governing body. A strength of the school is its focus on effective staff development to improve the quality of teaching and learning. The school's own evaluation of its effectiveness is accurate and it has improved well since the last inspection. The school is therefore well placed to continue to improve. It provides good value for money.

## What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in writing across the curriculum by the end of Year 6.
- Provide continuous outdoor learning for Reception children to improve their quality of education.
- Insist that pupils present their work neatly, particularly their handwriting.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Achievement is good and standards are generally above average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. The small size of the groups make the national test results fluctuate but over time boys and girls achieve equally well. Pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities achieve well and better than similar pupils nationally. Pupils from minority ethnic groups also make good progress. Children start school with an average attainment and achieve well in Reception. Many reach the expected levels in all of the areas of learning, some going beyond them. Pupils make good progress in Years 1 to 6 because teaching is good, and occasionally outstanding. For example, Year 4 and 5 pupils made very good progress in playing chords using tuned percussion instruments because the teaching was of high standard. In order to ensure results in writing return to previous high standards, Year 6 pupils receive small group support and are making good progress. Pupils do well in music, physical education and information and communication technology (ICT). Because of the fall in the writing results in 2006, the inspection took particular note of the pupils' current progress in English. The school's renewed focus on writing is evident throughout the school, and much is of good standard for the pupils' ages. However, the presentation of pupils' work and their handwriting are generally not good enough.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development is good, and they are looked after very well. Parents say that they feel very comfortable leaving their children with the staff as they know they are in good hands. The national drive to promote safe behaviour and healthy lifestyles are strongly promoted by the staff, and the pupils understand how to achieve them. Children in Reception quickly learn the class routines, and settle happily to work and play well together. Attendance is good. Pupils' behaviour is excellent, allowing lessons and other activities to flow smoothly. Pupils' attitudes to school are very positive, and some from Year 6 said that they really enjoy their time here. This was clear in an Achievement Assembly where the genuine pleasure at other pupils' success led to enthusiastic applause from the whole school. Relationships are very good, and the pupils' spiritual and moral development is developed very effectively. Pupils also learn to get on well together, and there have been good improvements in pupils' understanding of the diverse cultures and traditions of the world, including through a residential French visit.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are typically good and occasionally outstanding and the pupils enjoy their lessons and other activities. They make good progress because the staff plan work well to meet their needs. This planning is based on effective assessment of pupils' progress so that the work set is challenging for all the different groups. This is important as pupils are generally taught in mixed-age classes. For example, Year 1 pupils in Class 1 are often taught separately from the Reception children so that staff can focus more on creative and independent learning. Because of the recent fall in the test results of writing in Year 6, the teaching of writing was a particular focus for the inspection. It was found to be good, especially in English lessons. The Marking of the pupils' written work was particularly effective in English lessons and the teachers' comments gave pupils a clear idea of how well they were doing and how to improve. Whilst expectations of pupils are generally high, some teachers do not model handwriting consistently nor insist on high enough standards of presentation. The teaching staff foster very good working relationships with and between the pupils which ensure pupils' excellent behaviour and good attitudes to their work. Provision in lessons for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is good and accounts for their good progress.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 2

The school provides a good curriculum, firmly founded on its Catholic mission. The staff successfully promotes pupils' personal development as well as effectively teaching the basic curriculum of English, mathematics and science. This leads to good achievement for pupils across the school. The Reception children work in a well-planned classroom that covers all the required areas of learning. The children have many interesting and stimulating activities using the school grounds and on visits in the locality. However, the outdoor learning area is not used regularly enough to support progress across all areas of learning. The school has developed its resources for ICT well, and pupils develop good skills under the guidance of a skilled teaching assistant. Pupils benefit from French lessons which are taught from Reception to Year 6. There are also many musical and sporting activities to extend and enrich pupils' experiences.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 2

Care is excellent, and guidance and support are good. The staff look after the pupils very well and all required procedures for safeguarding and child protection are in place. This ensures that, as the pupils themselves say, they feel secure and comfortable in school. The staff monitor pupils' progress closely, commenting in lessons and in their marking how pupils can improve. Good records are kept of assessment data, and this

is used to plan further work, and improvements in the school's provision. This is exemplified by the rapid action taken by the school in response to the 2006 poor writing results in Year 6. Support staff are skilled and work effectively with pupils identified with learning difficulties or disabilities, including those with statements of their need. Very good links with the receiving High Schools ensure that relevant information about these pupils is shared and used at transfer. Able, gifted or talented pupils are recognised, and take part in challenging activities with other pupils from local schools.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good. The school's self-evaluation is accurate. It shows the school's strengths and matters for improvement clearly and is used effectively to plan improvements. The headteacher gives clear direction to the school's work and with the rest of the staff sets a good tone and atmosphere for learning. This ensures that all pupils are fully included in all that the school offers. Excellent mechanisms are in place to ensure equality of opportunity and to tackle any discrimination so that all pupils achieve as well as they can. The pupils take full advantage of the school's generally high expectations to make good progress in their learning. Governance is good, and training has been arranged in the school for new governors. Improvement since the last inspection has been good in ICT, the curriculum for children in Reception and in planning for improvement. Staffing has been stabilised, and good standards and achievement have been maintained. The school now gives good value for money and is well-placed to continue to improve.

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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>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
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>	2
<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	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

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School,

West Close Road

Barnoldswick

Lancashire

BB18 5EN

27 November 2006

Dear Children

Thank you for your kind welcome when Mrs Sharkey and I came to your school. You will remember that we were checking how well your school looks after you and helps you to make progress in your learning.

Year 6 told us that they really enjoy school and think that the staff work hard to help them learn. Almost all your parents feel the same. From observing you at work and play, and from talking to you and looking at your work, we agree with you that St Joseph's is a good school that helps you make good progress, especially in reading, and cares for you really well. You are safe, learn about living healthily, get on very well together like a big, happy family, and enjoy what the school provides for you. A really good aspect of your school is that everyone is included in all that goes on.

You and your parents play a big part here. They are very supportive of the school, even running a fund-raising shop in the town! You also help by behaving so well, working hard, and looking after one another. We were disappointed, though, that some of you do not take enough care in your handwriting. You can help your teachers to raise standards even further in English by trying harder to present your work well. We also think that the Reception children should have more chances to work outside. I saw them having a Bear Hunt in the rain but they ran away when they thought the bear was coming!

Finally, thank you for your lovely singing. We enjoyed joining in with 'Shine on Me' and we thought that the 'orchestra' did well to play for us without practice in your celebratory Achievement Assembly.

With best wishes for your futures, wherever they may take you!

Yours sincerely

Eric Jackson Lead Inspector

Sue Sharkey Trainee Inspector.