



St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 121641
Local Authority North Yorkshire
Inspection number 292187
Inspection date 15 January 2007
Reporting inspector Christopher Keeler HMI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Station Road
School category	Community		Tadcaster
Age range of pupils	4-11		North Yorkshire LS24 9JG
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01937 832344
Number on roll (school)	45	Fax number	01937 832344
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr G Appleyard
		Headteacher	Mrs CM Forsey
Date of previous school inspection	24 January 2005		

Age group 4-11	Inspection date 15 January 2007	Inspection number 292187
--------------------------	---	------------------------------------

© Crown copyright 2007

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 one of Her Majesty's Inspectors.

Description of the school

This smaller than average school serves a wide community with pupils coming from the town and surrounding villages. The size of each year group varies from four to nine pupils. Most pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is smaller than the average, as is the number with a statement of special educational need. A lower than average proportion of pupils is in receipt of free school meals.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

St Joseph's is a satisfactory and improving school with some good features and this is acknowledged by parents. This is due to the good leadership of the headteacher, who is determined to raise standards throughout the school. Her commitment and influence has created a positive working environment where staff work closely together for the benefit of all pupils.

Pupils enter the school with attainment that is broadly in line with national expectations. They make steady progress in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, where standards and achievement are satisfactory. Results in national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2006 were average in comparison to those achieved nationally. However, the school is confident that challenging targets will be surpassed in 2007 with standards at the end of Year 6 exceeding those expected for their age. The quality of work seen during the inspection and the current progress that pupils are making in Key Stage 2 indicate that this may well be the case. This is a direct result of initiatives introduced to raise standards, including systems to track pupils' progress, target setting, effective intervention strategies and the use of information and communication technology (ICT) to support teaching and learning. While some good features are evident, the quality of teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. The use of assessment during lessons is not as effective as it should be and this sometimes restricts progress. Too few pupils, particularly the more able, attain the higher levels in English, mathematics and science in both key stages. The level of support given by teaching assistants means that pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress.

The curriculum is well planned and all pupils are able to acquire a range of skills that will equip them for the future. It is enriched by educational visits and a number of after-school activities which enable pupils to follow and develop personal interests. In the Foundation Stage, children's learning, especially in physical development, is limited by the narrow range of experiences outdoors. A particular feature of this small school is the good use made of local facilities and specialist providers to support an extensive programme of sports coaching.

The personal development of all pupils is a strength of this school. The behaviour of pupils during lessons, in the playground and on school visits, is outstanding. Pupils know what it means to feel safe and how to live healthily. Pupils make a positive contribution to the school and the wider community. They feel part of a caring family in which everyone is valued and respected and this reflects the strong Christian ethos established by the headteacher and her staff. Care and support are good and play an important part in promoting pupils' well-being and raising self-esteem.

The school's effectiveness is satisfactory. The headteacher, staff and governors, together with good support from the local authority, have successfully tackled areas of weakness identified at the previous inspection. The capacity for further improvement is good.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve assessment during lessons in order to plan future work that will enhance pupils' progress.
- Extend the learning opportunities for pupils in the Foundation Stage by improving the facilities for outdoor play.
- Increase the number of pupils attaining the higher levels in English, mathematics and science at the end of Key Stage 1 and 2.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

The very small size of cohorts leads to some variation over the years: however, an improving trend is discernable. When pupils first enter school, their attainment is broadly average, although some are less proficient with regard to language development, particularly boys. They make satisfactory progress in the Foundation Stage and by the end of Reception most pupils are working within the expected levels for their age. At the end of Year 2 pupils attain standards in line with those achieved nationally: however, few exceed them. This pattern continues, so that by the end of Year 6, while standards in English, mathematics and science reflect the national average, an insufficient number of pupils are attaining the higher Level 5. There are signs that this is beginning to change and improvements to teaching are impacting on pupils' progress, particularly at Key Stage 2. Good systems have been introduced to monitor pupils' progress as they move through the school and support has been targeted at those experiencing difficulties. Pupils' ICT skills are developing quickly and they are beginning to use them effectively to acquire knowledge and enhance understanding. As a result, standards are improving and this is supported by the work seen during the inspection. The school is understandably optimistic that results of national tests in 2007 will be higher than in previous years.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

This is a strength of the school. Standards of behaviour exhibited by the pupils are outstanding. This is because the school has high expectations of conduct and intervenes quickly and effectively to address issues when they arise. The good role models provided by staff influence pupils' behaviour. They are capable of forming very positive relationships with adults and other pupils. They are polite and considerate towards each other. One pupil commented, 'I feel part of a special family.' This reflects the strong school ethos where every child matters: care, consideration and respect are constant features in the life of the school. They demonstrate a good sense of right and wrong. Attendance is satisfactory. It is no surprise that pupils enjoy attending school and this is evident during lessons, where they listen carefully to the teacher and respond positively when asked questions. This impacts positively on learning. However, there is room for improvement in the way pupils present their work.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is good. They are developing a good awareness of spiritual issues through a well planned programme of instruction that includes reference to other faiths. An emphasis on moral values and the importance of social interaction permeate the school. Pupils are conscious of what it means to live a healthy life and have been made aware of the dangers of drug and alcohol abuse. Sex education is given to all pupils in Years 5 and 6.

The school council allows pupils to take an active role in school affairs and serves to strengthen the sense of belonging. They meet every week and take their role seriously. One councillor said, 'I like to feel that we make a difference.' They are learning a great deal about the democratic process and as such are being well prepared to take their place in society.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. This is why standards and achievement are in line with those expected for their age. There are some good features emerging with regard to the quality of teaching which were witnessed during the inspection. These are directly responsible for an improvement in pupils' progress. Good systems to track pupils' progress from when they first enter school until they leave have been introduced. These have been used effectively to employ a range of intervention strategies, particularly in respect of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. These strategies are administered well by teaching assistants, who make a positive contribution to pupils' learning. Other key features include the use of interactive whiteboards to enhance teaching, the introduction of individual pupil targets and planning that clearly identifies what it is that the pupils are expected to learn. The assessment of pupils' progress during lessons is not as effective as it should be. On occasions, gaps in pupils' understanding are not identified and acted upon quickly enough. This can inhibit progress, particularly with regard to the more able pupils. The quality of relationships between pupils and staff is consistently good and this creates a positive learning environment.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory and meets all statutory requirements. The outdoor play provision for pupils in the Foundation Stage is limited: however, the school is aware of this and intends to rectify the situation. Good opportunities are provided for pupils that instil positive attitudes and help them to acquire a range of skills that will equip them well for the future. The development of pupils' ICT skills has improved significantly since the previous inspection. Planned opportunities enable pupils to apply ICT skills in other subjects throughout the school and this is making an important contribution towards raising standards. Planned opportunities for pupils to apply literacy and

numeracy skills in other subjects are less well developed. The school has worked hard to ensure that pupils do not miss out on sporting activities. An extensive programme of coaching is available including football, netball, tennis, cricket and swimming. As a result, the school is justifiably proud of pupils' sporting achievements and attitudes. A range of visits and visitors successfully enrich the curriculum.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The quality of care, guidance and support are good overall and this view is shared by parents. Care and support are very good and this underpins the ethos at St Joseph's. Pupils feel safe and secure. Child protection measures are in place and good links exist with external agencies so that the needs of pupils who require support can be met. Every member of staff, in whatever capacity, has an accepted responsibility for the care of every pupil. The pupils know this and turn readily to any member of staff for advice and assistance when necessary, in the knowledge that they will be listened to and action taken if required. There is no evidence of bullying or racist incidents. Guidance for pupils is generally satisfactory and work is marked on a regular basis. Good systems are in place to track pupils' progress over time. Individual pupil targets in mathematics and English alert pupils as to what they need to do to improve. However, the assessment of pupils' progress during lessons is not as rigorous as it should be and therefore not used effectively to plan future work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The leadership of the headteacher is good. She has identified areas for improvement through effective self-evaluation and compiled a useful school improvement plan to address them. There is a direct link between the quality of leadership of the headteacher and improvements to the quality of educational provision since the previous inspection. Initiatives to improve the quality of teaching, monitor pupils' progress and raise standards in ICT have played a significant part in taking the school forward. To manage all areas of the curriculum effectively in such a small school is a major undertaking. Staff do the best they can, often overseeing two or more subject areas, while also responsible for teaching a complete key stage within their class. These managers require further support and training in order to keep on top of their roles. This is particularly the case with regard to the management of the provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The governing body is supportive and increasingly involved in the work of the school. Governors are aware of what is going on and are beginning to hold the school to account. The school is well placed to improve further and gives satisfactory value for money.

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

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	-----------------------

Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	3
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	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

¹ 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

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
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	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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

Thank you so much for welcoming me to your school recently. I enjoyed talking to you and watching you work and play. I would particularly like to thank the school council for showing me their computer presentation. It was fabulous! Perhaps you would like to know what I thought of your school.

The main strengths of your school are:

- the good leadership of the headteacher
- the way your teachers work well together in order to help you learn
- the care shown by all adults in the school and the kindness that you show towards each other
- your behaviour is excellent
- the way all pupils use the computer to help you learn
- the opportunity to learn lots of different sports.

To help you do even better I have asked the school to:

- look very closely at how you are getting on during lessons and to help you if you are finding it difficult
- to ensure that some of you reach very high standards in English, mathematics and science, particularly when you are 7 and 11
- provide children in the Foundation Stage with better opportunities to learn outside.

So, what about you? What can you do to help you get better at your work? First of all keep up the excellent behaviour, especially during lessons. Now here is a new target! Try to take more care with the way you write in your exercise books. It can be untidy sometimes.