



St Joseph's Catholic Junior School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 125726
Local Authority Warwickshire
Inspection number 293346
Inspection dates 23–24 November 2006
Reporting inspector Gerald Griffin

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

Type of school	Junior	School address	Riversley Park
School category	Voluntary aided		Coton Road
Age range of pupils	7–11		Nuneaton CV11 5TY
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	024 76383807
Number on roll (school)	275	Fax number	02476371415
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	J Crawford
		Headteacher	R Phillips
Date of previous school inspection	24 May 2001		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Most pupils at the school are of White British heritage. There are a few pupils at the early stages of learning English. Pupils enter the school with above average standards. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is average. There have been several recent appointments to the leadership team.

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 school. When pupils join the school in Year 3, they are attaining above average standards. Their achievement is satisfactory and standards when they leave at the end of Year 6 are also above the national average. However, there is a bit of variation in how well pupils are doing in different subjects. As a result of the work that the school has done in the past year, good progress is being made in writing, pupils' skills in reading are good and they are now achieving as well as they should in English. Progress in mathematics is steady but not as good as that in English because pupils do not have enough opportunities to practise solving mathematical problems. Teaching is satisfactory. Classes are orderly and relationships are positive. As a result, pupils' behaviour is good and they are keen to learn. Occasionally, the pace of learning slows because teachers do not plan work that is closely matched to pupils' needs. This results in pupils sometimes working at levels that are too easy or too hard.

Pupils' personal development is good and they thrive in the school's happy atmosphere. Pupils have a good understanding of the need to be healthy and put this into practice in their choice of food and through taking frequent exercise. Pupils' outstanding community involvement is shown by their readiness to accept responsibility as monitors and house captains, their support for a range of charities and participation in the school council. The curriculum is good and promotes pupils' interests through activities such as well attended sports clubs and regular visits to places of interest, for example, museums. Pupils talk with real enthusiasm about the good opportunities to learn to play a musical instrument and performing in the school choir.

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory. Parents are very happy with the quality of pastoral care the school provides. Typically, they say 'The teachers are approachable and supportive and my child is very happy at school.' The academic targets that the school sets for pupils are appropriate and the procedures to check pupils' progress towards meeting them are satisfactory. The guidance and support given to pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities as necessary are satisfactory and ensure that they make sound progress in relation to their individual targets. Those pupils in the early stages of learning English benefit from well targeted support and make steady progress in their acquisition of the language.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Self-evaluation ensures the school has a sound understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. Some weaknesses, such as the quality of pupils' writing, have been effectively rectified. However, the checking of the quality of teaching and learning has not been entirely effective. As a result, weaknesses in teaching have not always been identified and resolved. This means teaching is satisfactory rather than good and achievement is no better than sound. Improvements since the last inspection and the recent rise in standards show the school has satisfactory capacity to make further gains.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve opportunities for pupils to practise their problem solving skills in mathematics.
- Sharpen teachers' planning to make sure that pupils are given work at the right level.
- Ensure that the quality of teaching and learning is robustly checked.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Standards are above average by the time pupils leave school and achievement is satisfactory for all groups, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities and pupils at the early stages of learning English. Pupils' performance in national tests is generally above, and at times well above, the national average. Above average standards are reflected in the 2006 national test results when the school met most of its targets.

Standards have risen in English dipped in 2005 but have improved over the past year. This is because the school's drive to improve pupils' handwriting, spelling and sentence construction has been successful. Pupils' good practical and observational skills are the foundation for above average standards in science. Standards in mathematics are not quite as good as those in English and science because pupils' skills in using their knowledge of number in investigations are not well developed. Insufficient opportunities are provided for pupils to improve these skills and this slows progress in mathematics, especially for more capable pupils.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and is well supported by the school's strong Christian tradition. Pupils respect and value each other and the world around them. Pupils' appreciation of their place in a multicultural society and their understanding of a range of religions is satisfactory. Pupils are very polite to each other and to adults. Their good behaviour comes from a clear understanding of right and wrong.

Pupils feel safe and secure and report that the very rare incidences of bullying are effectively resolved. They are confident that they can approach a member of staff if they have a worry, knowing their concerns will be quickly dealt with. Pupils have a good understanding of the need to maintain healthy lifestyles and do their best to keep fit through taking regular exercise. They are clear about the pitfalls of a poor diet and choose a healthy lunch. Whilst pupils enjoy coming to school, and are particularly enthusiastic about the good range of extra-curricular opportunities on offer, they do not always find the work in lessons engaging enough to sustain their interest. Good literacy and numeracy skills and pupils' skilful use of computers ensure good preparation for their future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teachers have good subject knowledge, provide clear explanations and make skilful use of information and communication technology (ICT) resources in the classroom. As a result, pupils are generally keen to learn. However, teachers' planning does not consistently take account of what pupils have already learned and can do. Consequently, pupils sometimes find they are repeating work undertaken previously. Furthermore, plans do not take enough account of test results and targets to ensure pupils get work at the correct level. This sometimes results in pupils losing interest because the task is either too difficult or too easy. Teaching assistants are well informed and ensure that pupils who are the early stages of learning English can participate fully in lessons. They are also well deployed to provide support as necessary for those with learning difficulties and disabilities.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum supports pupils' personal development well. Strong links with the local church help develop pupils' strong moral sense and their good behaviour. Good provision for music and French contribute to pupils' good cultural development. Provision for sport is good. Popular sports clubs and physical education lessons support pupils' good efforts to keep fit. Regular residential and day visits to places of interest, such as museums, broaden pupils' horizons and raise their aspirations. Pupils' skills in writing have been improved through extending the range of opportunities for them to write for a variety of purposes in subjects across the curriculum. However, not enough opportunity is provided for pupils to use and apply their mathematical knowledge.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Sensitive support and care are provided as necessary for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. This enables these pupils to participate fully in lessons and make at least satisfactory progress. The pupils at the early stages of learning English integrate well into lessons because of the good support provided by teachers who can speak their home language. The school is making effective use of external agencies and specialists to promote the welfare of individual children when the need arises. Child protection procedures and health and safety arrangements are robust. The school is using effective measures, such as rewards, to maintain above average attendance.

Pupils are set challenging targets. The procedures to check pupils' progress are generally satisfactory but not enough use is made of the information to ensure that learning moves on at a consistent pace and that all targets are met. Pupils who do not make

sufficient progress are given extra help through booster classes and this helps them to make up lost ground.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Recent appointments have strengthened the leadership team and this has led to an improvement of the school's view of its strengths and areas for development. This stems from more systematic checking of the school's performance by senior managers. Some weaknesses have been tackled well. For example, writing has significantly improved and standards in ICT have risen because of well judged action taken to enhance pupils' access to computers and software. The school has made changes to the mathematics curriculum to improve pupils' problem solving skills but it is too early to judge the success of these.

Measures to improve the quality of teaching and learning are not rigorous enough. Until recently, there has been insufficient emphasis on improving teachers' planning to ensure lessons are consistently challenging and engaging. Subject managers have not been checking lessons to see that teachers take due account of targets and test results so the work set for pupils is at the right level to accelerate progress. The school recognises that this is an area for development and is revising its procedures to improve teaching. It is too soon to see their effectiveness.

The governing body provides the headteacher with good support. Through their developing understanding of data, governors are beginning to ask searching questions about the standards and progress of pupils. Recent improvements in standards and achievement in English, and improvements in strategic planning that is identifying the right priorities, show that the school has a sound capacity to get better.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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 effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
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	2
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	2
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	3
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	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

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?	3

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	3
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 for welcoming us to your school and being so friendly. We enjoyed our conversations with you about your work and the other things that you do at school. The school provides you with a satisfactory education.

Here are some of the 'highlights'

- You work hard in your lessons.
- Your behaviour is good.
- You have a very interesting range of clubs which most of you attend.
- You have a very strong commitment to the school community.
- All the staff care for you very well.
- You make good progress in writing as you move up the school.
- You reach good standards at the end of Year 6.

What we have asked your school to do now

- Improve your mathematics by making sure you have more practice at problem solving.
- Make sure all your lessons provide work that is at the right level.
- Ensure that the school checks lessons and helps teachers with their work.

Best wishes for your future and the future of the school.