

St Joseph and St Teresa's Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106769
Local Authority	Doncaster
Inspection number	309228
Inspection dates	9–10 January 2008
Reporting inspector	Elizabeth Godman

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	199
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr G Turton
Headteacher	Mrs S Hilton
Date of previous school inspection	15 March 2004
School address	Doncaster Lane Woodlands Doncaster South Yorkshire DN6 7QN
Telephone number	01302 723320
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is an average size primary school. Pupils attend from different villages and suburbs to the north of Doncaster. It serves some areas of social and economic disadvantage. The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. Fewer than average numbers are identified as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Following a review of pupil numbers in the Hallam Diocese, the school was federated with another Catholic primary school. In addition to the headteacher, there is a federation headteacher working closely with the school.

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 and a significant majority of parents agree that it provides a good education. The effective leadership enables all staff to work together as a team thus ensuring that pupils make good progress overall.

Pupils enter Key Stage 1 with broadly average skills. Good teaching ensures they make good progress so that by the end of the key stage they reach standards that are above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Although satisfactory teaching slows progress as pupils start Key Stage 2, good progress in Year 5 and Year 6 means they leave school having reached standards just above average. Overall, staff know the pupils well and plan work that is matched to their starting points. Activities in lessons involve pupils from the outset. In every lesson different levels of expectation are set for different groups so that high attainers, average pupils and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive work they can do. Pupils of all abilities are challenged in the good and, sometimes, outstanding lessons, resulting in rapid progress. In these lessons pupils have good opportunities to review how much progress they have made against the planned expectations and they know how to move to the next level in their work. Where teaching is satisfactory, challenges are less demanding and the review of progress is less exacting. This limits pupils' opportunities to refine and improve their work.

Since September 2007, teaching has been enlivened by a revised approach to curriculum planning, built around themes linked to the different subjects. This allows pupils to develop their literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology skills in different subjects. Pupils say this has made lessons interesting, but it is too soon to evaluate its effect on achievement and standards. There are frequent opportunities to reflect that help pupils to have an outstanding sense of morality and to be highly sensitive to the needs of others and very socially responsible. Pupils also have outstanding awareness of why it is important to lead healthy lives. Year 6 pupils join the 'healthy school task force' meetings and check, for example, whether 'the salad bar' is having an impact on pupils' eating habits at lunchtime. Pupils thoroughly enjoy the opportunities to take part in different competitive sports and play energetically outdoors at break and lunchtimes. Good levels of care ensure pupils feel safe. Pupils make a positive contribution to the local community and raise money to help poorer communities overseas. They are well prepared for their future lives for they have above average literacy and numeracy skills and respect themselves and each other. Good attitudes to learning secure good responses to adults and good behaviour in lessons.

The school is well led and managed. Rigorous and accurate self-evaluation ensures the headteachers, staff and governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. The continuous self-review and thorough planning have secured good teaching and maintained high standards. This and judicious management linked to the strong federation partnership have ensured good value for money. The improvement in achievement and standards since the last inspection and senior staff's clarity about how to secure further improvement give the school good capacity to improve.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Good provision gives children a good start to their learning when they first come to school. They learn to be independent and to persevere with tasks. Routines are established quickly so

that children learn to organise themselves, checking they have moved their names on the 'activities board'. Good teaching and good support enable them to make good progress. An exceptionally strong feature is the amount of time staff spend talking to children, developing their communication skills and extending their vocabulary. As a result, from a just below average starting point, most are close to the levels expected by the end of the Reception year and a very small proportion sometimes exceed them. Links between the indoor and outdoor curriculum and opportunities for active learning are at the early stages of development. The systems to assess children's progress are good and provide a clear record of children's development in all areas of learning. Children's welfare is promoted well. Good links with parents successfully encourage parents to be involved in their children's learning. The provision is well led and managed, ensuring that planning is consistent and effective in both Nursery and Reception years.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that all lessons are challenging for all pupils, so that good teaching is consistent across the school.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils enter Key Stage 1 with skills close to those expected for their age and make good progress in the key stage in all subjects. Over the last three years pupils have reached above average standards by the end of Year 2. Thorough assessment and carefully planned activities, based on their starting points, allow all groups of pupils to achieve well. Those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities progress well. This is because adults and the pupils themselves are very clear about the next steps in their learning, and achievement and progress are rewarded and recognised. By the end of Key Stage 2 overall standards remain above average. In 2007, most pupils reached the expected levels in all subjects, but a number of higher attaining pupils did not reach the higher levels in the tests. Since then, rigorous analysis of the progress of the pupils now in Key Stage 2 has ensured steps are being taken to secure the expected progress of all the pupils. This is particularly effective in Years 5 and 6, where careful planning and exciting teaching challenge pupils to achieve well. In lower Key Stage 2 pupils are not always clear about what they need to do to reach a higher level, resulting in satisfactory, rather than good progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy coming to school, behave well and become confident learners. They get on well with their teachers and with each other. Attendance is broadly average. Pupils work hard and enjoy challenges, although some younger Key Stage 2 pupils freely admit they could work harder. Bullying is rare because pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. A strong sense of morality nurtured by frequent opportunities to reflect helps them to be sensitive to the needs of others and socially responsible. Many pupils make contributions to the special prayer book, explaining why they want people remembered in school prayers during the week. Year 6 pupils, trained as play leaders, take turns to organise lunchtime games for younger ones. As a result, pupils say, 'No one is lonely outside because everyone in school is friends'. The school council shows a mature sense of responsibility,

explaining, 'We sort out sensible suggestions from the silly ones in the suggestion box', which they set up to make sure they took pupils' views fully into account.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching is good overall, ensuring that pupils progress well. Strong relationships enable pupils to feel secure and to respond enthusiastically to questions and tasks posed by the teachers. All the lessons seen were well planned and structured, with a variety of activities, allowing pupils to become involved and to contribute their ideas. Careful assessment and tracking systems mean that teachers and support staff have a secure understanding of the range of levels at which pupils are working. Some outstanding teaching in both key stages accelerates progress because teachers use their knowledge of pupils' attainment to provide work closely matched to the different abilities in their class. There is also a strong emphasis on challenging all pupils to reach the next level and pupils are able to identify accurately how well they have done in reaching the expectations set for them. In lessons where satisfactory teaching results in satisfactory progress, there is less pace and challenge particularly for the more able, and opportunities for pupils to reflect accurately on how well they have done and to refine and improve their work are missed.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school makes good provision for literacy and numeracy. A recent initiative to link subjects together creatively is having a positive impact on enlivening and enriching pupils' learning. Themes such as 'One Parable' where the work has a religious focus or 'Ready Steady Cook!' where science and design and technology are the main focus help make learning relevant to pupils' daily lives. It is too soon as yet to measure the impact of this on pupils' overall progress. A comprehensive range of extra-curricular activities successfully extends pupils' educational experience, giving them frequent opportunities to work alongside or compete with pupils from different schools. A distinctive feature is musical and dramatic productions at the end of each term.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school's systems to safeguard pupils meet current government guidelines. Child protection procedures are in place. Consequently, pupils feel safe at school. Good systems help pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to make good progress. 'steps to success' booklets provide clear guidance to both adults and pupils ensuring that progress is both recognised and rewarded. This encourages pupils to try hard. Talented or gifted pupils are catered for well, with young gifted mathematicians, for example, joining more advanced classes for numeracy lessons. The systems to support academic progress are good and lead to effective learning. Marking is good and gives clear indications as to how pupils might improve their work. Target-setting is used throughout the school, but is more accurate and challenging in some classes than in others. It is highly effective in Year 6 where targets are highly individual and used effectively by pupils to improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher and federation headteacher work effectively in partnership to secure a strong sense of direction. The federation has successfully provided teachers with opportunities to share expertise and to work with others. An emphasis on promoting personal development and well-being has secured outstanding spiritual, moral and social development of pupils and the school's inclusive approach enables all pupils to feel valued and to make progress. Senior staff have a clear focus on raising achievement through improving teaching and the curriculum which is understood by all staff. Resulting teamwork secures the school's good teaching and, consequently, the pupils' good progress. Monitoring and school self-evaluation involves all staff and systematically draws on a good range of evidence to accurately identify the school's strengths and to recognise areas for improvement. Careful planning ensures actions that follow are focused on improving pupils' achievements. Resources are well used to improve provision and to secure good value for money. Governors work hard showing a good understanding of strengths and recognising how improvements can be made. They have a strong commitment to the federation, recognising its benefits for pupils' learning and for community cohesion.

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Annex A

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?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ 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

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	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

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
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.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Inspection of St Joseph and St Teresa's Catholic Primary School, Doncaster, DN6 7QN

On behalf of the inspection team, I would like to thank you for being so friendly and polite and looking after us so well during the inspection. We enjoyed visiting your lessons and talking with you in meetings and around school. We found that St Joseph and St Teresa's is a good school. Your teachers give you work that helps you to make good progress in your learning. Usually, this work challenges you well and you are very clear about how you can do even better. You agreed with us that in some classes you could have harder work. We think that the themes you follow in your lessons help to make learning interesting and help you to use your literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects. We noticed how many of you go to the clubs because you enjoy them and they help you to learn more interesting things.

We were very impressed by the way in which you have times to think and to pray quietly. These help you to be very thoughtful, especially about others. You also have an excellent understanding about how to be healthy and follow this in your food choices and in the exercise you take. Your teachers and helpers take good care of you and this helps you to stay safe and to enjoy your time at school. All of this is helping you to grow up into sensible and responsible people who understand the importance of taking care of yourselves and of other people.

We think your headteachers, the staff and governors have a very accurate view of what is good about your school and how to make it even better.

We have asked your headteachers to do one thing to improve your learning.

- Make sure that all your lessons challenge all of you so that you each do well as you can.

We feel sure that you will continue to do your best and that you will enjoy working hard to do even better.