

# St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Haywards Heath

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	126059
<b>Local Authority</b>	West Sussex
<b>Inspection number</b>	315416
<b>Inspection dates</b>	15–16 October 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Janet Simms

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

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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 (total)	306
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	42
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Maria Lenartowicz
<b>Headteacher</b>	Fran Ryan
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	4 May 2005
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Hazelgrove Road Haywards Heath RH16 3PQ
<b>Telephone number</b>	01444 452584
<b>Fax number</b>	01444 414760

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This is a larger than average primary school, where pupils enter from a wider geographical area than its immediate locality in the centre of Hayward's Heath. The school population has changed in recent years to include a larger proportion of children entering the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and other year groups with little or no prior experience of speaking English. These pupils come from a very wide range of other language backgrounds. Their families' occupations are often of a nature that leads to transience and relocation, so mobility in the school is high. A high proportion of staff have been absent on planned leave recently.

## 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 overwhelmingly commend their children's experience here, commenting particularly favourably on their 'good personal and social development', which is a great strength of the school. This comes about because of an exceptional level of pastoral care and support from all adults. Excellent links with parents, the Church and other organisations provide useful partnerships, which have a positive impact on learning. These create, in parents' words, a 'vibrant Catholic community' where pupils develop into 'well-rounded, moral individuals'. The good curriculum, with its wide variety of enrichment and extra-curricular opportunities, contributes strongly to pupils' learning and personal development. Good leadership and management accurately identify areas for improvement, but evaluations of teaching do not focus enough on the impact of teaching on pupils' learning, particularly in lessons.

While broadly as expected for their age, children's skills on entry to EYFS vary year by year. Attainment on entry has declined since the previous inspection and now includes a very wide spread of competencies, particularly amongst children who are new to speaking English. These pupils and their families form an important, valued part of the school community. They are celebrated for the richness of culture and language they bring to others' experience. They settle quickly and make good progress, including in their acquisition of English.

Standards at Year 2 have declined, broadly mirroring the fall in intake levels. While test results improved in 2008, more able pupils did less well than expected. Standards at Year 6 were above average in 2007 and 2008 and remain so. Pupils achieve well overall, but the school's analysis clearly identifies unevenness in progress across the school and between groups. Progress accelerates in Years 5 and 6. Effective help for pupils with English as an additional language, or those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, leads to good progress.

Teaching is satisfactory overall. The school has compensated well during key staff absences. It has provided additional extra-curricular and other help for pupils, and the strong oversight by senior managers is successfully identifying and redressing gaps in learning. Teaching is improving but although there is good practice, it does not always stretch more able pupils enough. This limits their progress and the degree of independence they can develop. Academic guidance through marking does not provide consistently helpful advice about how pupils could help themselves to move forward.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Children get a good start to schooling in a caring, supportive environment which promotes good welfare and good learning. They settle quickly, enjoy learning and make good progress. Parents' views, for example, that children 'even ask if they can go to school at weekends!' reflect how much they enjoy it. Children learn important basic skills such as phonics thoroughly. They experience a wide range of activities, so play leads to good learning of language, mathematical and other skills. Making choices involves children properly in their own learning, so they grow in confidence, leaving them well placed to progress further. All this ensures they enter Year 1 well equipped in key areas. EYFS leadership and management are good and all staff are involved in assessing learning, giving adults a good understanding of the next stages for children's development.

Progress is excellently supported by strong links with parents, who often visit classes and become personally involved in learning with their children. The interesting outdoor environment provides a rich, exciting learning resource, but relies on adult supervision because one class lacks a secure, accessible outside area. Staff reflect carefully about how to improve provision, but are less analytical of pupil performance or individual needs in identifying areas for development.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Improve teaching so that the planning of pupils' work matches individual needs more precisely, particularly those of more able pupils.
- Improve the consistency of marking and involve pupils more in assessment procedures to give them clearer guidance on how to improve their work.
- Focus evaluations of teaching more precisely on the impact teaching has on pupils' learning and the extent to which it helps to develop pupils' independence as learners.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

With the altered entry profile, standards have fallen, particularly at Year 2, but for the majority of pupils, progress is good across the school in all subjects. Pupils gain a thorough knowledge of English, mathematics, information and communication technology (ICT) and science, and their learning is supported by a strong understanding of more abstract dimensions such as feelings and emotions. In addition, they do well in subjects like music and physical education, where good achievements add significantly to their enjoyment of school. Parents greatly appreciate this balanced, 'holistic approach', as one put it. Some more able pupils have not reached the higher standards of which they are capable, a fact recognised by the school, but not fully resolved in the classroom. Pupils who find learning difficult, for whatever reason, make good progress. Those with English as an additional language do well in learning English and acquiring other skills because all adults and their classmates help and support them sensitively.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

These are confident, friendly pupils who form good relationships with each other and with adults. Behaviour around the school is exemplary. Pupils know that staff will help them with any problems and they use peer mediators and 'lunchtime cards' sensibly to communicate feelings. They contribute actively to the immediate and wider community through the school council, 'buddy' reading, participation in church events and raising funds for charity.

Pupils respond very positively to visits and visitors. The school uses these extremely well to stimulate pupils' learning and personal development. Year 3 for instance, with their African drumming coach, showed high levels of concentration and excitement in a lesson where they achieved very well. Development of spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is strong. Personal interaction with classmates from a range of backgrounds results in well developed understanding of the diverse nature of society.

Pupils make good eating choices because they have an excellent understanding of healthy lifestyles. They also enjoy keeping fit through physical education and sport. They feel physically and psychologically safe in school, so they want to attend and attendance is good. Secure basic

skills prepare pupils well for the future, but more able learners are less independent than they could be because teaching does not always maximise their potential.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Management recognises the impact of temporary teaching to cover absences and its subsequent actions minimise it well. Good teaching is identified by the school and some was seen on inspection. Here, a variety of well planned activities results in good learning, so pupils make good progress in interesting, well paced, engaging lessons. They are eager to seize opportunities to extend their thinking, working well with 'talk partners' for instance. Well focused additional help from adults supports those who need assistance in their learning. Where teaching is less effective, pupils' positive attitudes, excellent behaviour and good relationships are not harnessed well enough into activities that challenge them. This is especially true for the more able. Progress can be slow because sometimes questioning styles are limited and planning is too general to match the full ability range. Nevertheless, pupils enjoy lessons very much and are compliantly responsive to their teachers whom they trust and respect. Although there is some good marking, the school rightly prioritises this as an area for improvement so that pupils can understand more clearly how to progress further.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The new creative curriculum ensures good progression in key skills and makes increasingly interesting and enjoyable links between subjects. Pupils like this approach, speaking enthusiastically about their projects. Parents and their children appreciate the wide range of opportunities for enrichment and many are involved in musical and sporting activities. Specialist sports teaching has improved provision, contributing well to pupils' health and fitness. The school rightly identifies the need to monitor this new approach carefully, but recognises that it is already proving successful in promoting greater enjoyment and achievement. The strengthened curriculum makes a significant contribution to pupils' learning in many subjects, but it is not yet tailored finely enough to match differing abilities or learning styles in lessons.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 2**

Pastoral aspects of care and support are outstanding. Typical comments from parents such as 'staff genuinely care about children's well-being', 'a fantastic family atmosphere' and 'a warm, caring and committed staff', accurately reflect inspection findings. Safeguarding is secure and pupils who need additional help are supported sensitively with provision well matched to their needs. Parents hugely value this 'happy school', a phrase much reiterated in questionnaires. They also appreciate the success of the provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and that for pupils with English as an additional language. Good induction procedures for new entrants allow them to settle quickly and feel well included in school life. Parent focus groups play an important part in integrating everybody, as do 'Friends' of the school and 'buddy' parents.

Academic guidance is satisfactory. Tracking systems provide senior staff with a clear, regularly updated view of pupils' progress, but this information is at the early stages of working through to classroom use. Teachers do not always use it to set clear, short-term targets that challenge pupils, especially the more able, sufficiently. Pupils are not involved in understanding or setting their own targets, but the school is currently looking at ways to achieve this.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Good leadership, management and governance have moved the school forward well since the last inspection despite significant staff absences. Measures taken by managers, such as improved tracking of progress, have minimised the effects on pupils' learning of recent significant changes in staffing. This track record, together with a clear, shared direction, show good capacity to improve further. All involved have confidently, cheerfully and successfully tackled the challenges demanded by the recent changes. A key strength is the school's outstanding contribution to community cohesion, based on its strong belief in an inclusive, welcoming ethos.

Senior staff monitor pupils' progress frequently, pinpointing where extra support is needed and providing it successfully. School level targets are challenging, but teachers do not always use individual pupil targets sufficiently in class to drive up achievement. Governors understand and support the school effectively, providing high levels of well informed challenge for senior staff, who welcome critique and are open to ideas about how to improve the school. The issues identified for improvement are reflected well in development planning. Middle managers' roles are strengthening, but they do not yet have enough information, for example from observing lessons, to clarify where and why weaker learning occurs. School self-evaluations are largely accurate, but those relating to teaching do not focus precisely enough on how well pupils are progressing in lessons.

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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?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	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/or disabilities make progress	2

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<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.

## Personal development and well-being

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

## 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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

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

28 October 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Joseph's Primary School, Hayward's Heath, RH16 3PQ

Thank you so much for welcoming us into your school for the inspection. We enjoyed our time there, talking to many of you, seeing you in lessons and at play and looking at your work. I am writing to tell you what we found out.

- Yours is a good school where you progress well.
- We were very pleased to see the way you welcome children from other countries into your classes, making friends with them so that they quickly feel happy and settled. Your behaviour is excellent and you come to school keen to learn.
- We agree with your parents who say that you really enjoy school and tell them all about what happens. They are helping your learning well because of the school's very good links with them, so the important family atmosphere links your homes with what happens in school.
- Your personal development is good, especially the way you understand about healthy eating and take part in lots of sports to keep fit.
- All adults take really good care to keep you safe and do everything they can to make sure you enjoy school. They provide you with interesting topics to study and you like the way English and mathematics are now part of these projects.
- The headteacher and senior staff track your progress well, so they know what you need to do to make your work better. Teachers are trying to find ways to explain this more clearly in their marking, so you can help move yourself forward towards your targets. Not all of you understand these very well yet.
- We found some good learning in lessons, but work does not always challenge quicker learners, so we have asked teachers to plan ways to make sure that these pupils progress better.

You can help your school to improve further by reflecting on what your teachers say and trying to find ways to improve your own work. Thank you again for your welcome.

Yours sincerely

Janet Simms Lead inspector