

# St Joseph's Catholic Primary School Leigh

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	106501
<b>Local Authority</b>	Wigan
<b>Inspection number</b>	324414
<b>Inspection date</b>	22 January 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Michael Onyon

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)	215
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs A Blenkinship
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Anne McNally
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	26 June 2006
<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>	Mather Street Leigh WN7 2PR
<b>Telephone number</b>	01942 606395
<b>Fax number</b>	01942 766682

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

The inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

- pupils' achievement and standards in English, mathematics and science
- the impact on learning of pupils' personal development and well-being and the care, guidance and support provided
- the quality of leadership and management and its impact on pupils' achievement.

Evidence was gathered from lesson observations, scrutiny of pupils' work, assessment information, the school's self-evaluation and monitoring records, discussions with pupils, teachers and governors and analysis of the parents' questionnaires. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own judgements, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified. These have been included in the report where appropriate.

## Description of the school

This is an average-sized school. It draws pupils from its parish area and serves a range of backgrounds. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. A below average number of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The majority of pupils are White British. A few pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and a small number speak English as an additional language. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) are provided for in the Reception class. The school has received the Healthy Schools and Activemark awards in recent years. The school also has the Wigan Early Years Quality Standard.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school that offers excellent value for money. The outstanding leadership, very capably supported by other staff and an exceedingly effective governing body, sets high expectations and maintains a relentless focus on the continuous improvement of pupils' learning. As a consequence, standards by the end of Year 6 are extremely high in English, mathematics and science. At the heart of the school's success are the clear vision and energy of the headteacher. The school exudes an ethos of purposefulness and calm, bolstered by strong Christian values, in which all pupils thrive. The school has the overwhelming support and approval of parents. 'St Joseph's is an excellent school, parents are always well informed about their child's education and what is going on in school,' is a typical comment which reflects many and sums the school up well.

Pupils' achievement is excellent. Children enter school with skills that are mostly below those typical for their age. By the end of Year 2, standards are average, with an increasing proportion achieving higher than expected for their age. By the end of Year 6, standards are exceptionally high, particularly in English and science. The pattern of performance represents one of improvement sustained over recent years. Due to first-rate evaluation, senior leaders became aware of the comparative underperformance in mathematics and have taken positive action. Initiatives introduced are proving highly effective with more pupils achieving higher levels in mathematics by the end of Year 6, matching their performance in English and science. Pupils consistently exceed their challenging targets. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those learning English as an additional language achieve as well as their classmates as a result of highly effective learning support.

The school takes excellent care of its pupils. Staff have a very secure knowledge of pupils' individual needs and respond promptly to any worries or concerns. All safeguarding procedures are fully in place. Pupils' personal development and well-being is outstanding. Positive encouragement and effective support are fundamental to all aspects of day-to-day learning. As a result, pupils grow greatly in confidence, show much care and respect for each other and become very responsible young people. For example, older pupils act as playleaders for younger children and suggest approaches to helping others. Pupils take their responsibilities seriously, such as serving on the school council and contributing to decisions on how to improve the school. For example, the provision of outdoor seating areas to offer quiet areas for pupils at playtimes originated in the school council. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary and this impacts exceedingly well on their learning. They very much enjoy school as seen in their above average attendance. They enjoy and value the many, varied opportunities they have to embrace a healthy lifestyle as reflected in the school's external awards. Pupils are very well prepared for their future economic well-being and contribute extremely well to the school and the local community.

The outstanding teaching inspires and challenges pupils to succeed. Learning is thoughtfully planned to cater for the wide range of needs in each class. Questioning is probing and explanations are extremely clear. Whiteboard technology is used skilfully to assist lesson introductions, for example considering solutions to problems involving fractions. Expectations are high and pupils thrive on the challenges that are presented. Staff have excellent knowledge of the subjects they teach and this boosts high quality learning. Classrooms are vibrant and there is an excellent atmosphere in each one. Assessment is excellent. Work is marked systematically and pupils are set targets they understand to help improve their work. They know how to improve because of the quality of guidance and the celebration of success through

high quality displays of work. The outstanding curriculum enriches and stimulates pupils' learning in a variety of ways. Literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology are developed to a high level. For example, using the Internet to look at paintings to consider the merits of different artists. Outstanding provision is made for personal development. Excellent use is made of the local community, including the parish church, to provide pupils with a wide range of first-hand learning experiences. Involvement in the project, 'Our Past – Our Future' with neighbouring schools helps to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding of their town and its inhabitants. All these opportunities, combined with visits to experience different cultures and beliefs, prepare them really well for life in a diverse society.

Leadership and management are outstanding. This is reflected in the pupils' excellent achievement, their very high standards and excellent behaviour. All adults are totally committed to providing high quality education and equality for all pupils. Community cohesion is excellent as the result of extensive local, national and international links. Pupils use video conferencing resources to speak to external agencies and with children in other schools. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive and greatly value the richness of provision. Governance is outstanding. Governors are at the heart of all the school does and provide a considerable amount of expertise and support. Excellent progress has been made since the last inspection in improving the accommodation to create exciting learning environments. This has been achieved through the drive and determination of senior leaders. They play a full and active part in improvement planning. As a result, the school has an outstanding capacity to continue to improve. Leaders are reflective and self-critical; consequently self-evaluation is accurate, with a realistic view of what can still be achieved.

## **Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 1**

Provision in the EYFS is outstanding. Children achieve very well and make excellent progress in all areas of learning. From entry points that are mostly below those typically expected for their age the majority attain the goals expected of them by the end of Reception and a number exceed them. Because staff are well prepared for their arrival and ensure that they settle quickly, children get off to a flying start. The quality of teaching is first-rate and as a result the children grow rapidly in confidence and independence. They are proud of their work and are clear about what they are doing. Children are eager to learn and thrive on the wide range of interesting tasks and activities. They are very considerate to others and increasingly accept responsibility. The range of visits and visitors that these young children experience is exceptional and this broadens their horizons very considerably. Children and adults enjoy outstanding relationships, adding to the sense of security and happiness. Staff effectively plan together to ensure that all children succeed in all their learning. Children's welfare is very effectively promoted. The provision is very well led and managed. Through careful planning, the EYFS team makes certain all learners are included. The outdoor provision is improving but does not offer full opportunities for children's physical development.

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

- Extend the quality and use of the outdoor area in the EYFS to offer full opportunities for children's physical development.

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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?	1
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	1

### Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	1
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	1

### Achievement and standards

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

<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>	1
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	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
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	1

## The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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**

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us when we inspected your school. We enjoyed the day with you immensely and were pleased to see all the interesting things you are doing in lessons and to learn about your after-school clubs. We particularly appreciated talking to many of you and hearing how much you enjoy school. Please thank your parents for sending in the questionnaire returns.

Yours is an outstanding school that is extremely well led. You make rapid progress in your work and reach exceptionally high standards by the time you leave in Year 6. You have the personal qualities to be very successful in life and the skills and knowledge to make the most of the next stage of your education. We were particularly impressed by how well you get on together and your concern for those less fortunate than yourselves. The way in which you work with and contribute not only to your local community but also to communities further afield is excellent. Many of you told us how much you like school and know that you are valued as individuals. The care and support you receive is of a very high quality. Your teachers and teaching assistants make lessons extremely interesting and enjoyable and they are very thorough in the way they check your progress and help you to do even better.

Everyone in school is committed to giving you the best possible start to your education. To broaden your education even further we have asked the school to extend the quality and use of the outdoor area for children in the EYFS so they have more opportunities for outdoor play as part of their physical development.