

# St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Oxford

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	123216
<b>Local Authority</b>	Oxfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	327868
<b>Inspection date</b>	3 June 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Beryl Richmond

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)	314
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>	Mr John Vaughan- Fowler
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Sue Tomkys
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	23 May 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>	Headley Way Headington OX3 7SX
<b>Telephone number</b>	01865 763357
<b>Fax number</b>	01865 308436

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors. They evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues.

- The impact of leadership and management on raising standards in writing by the end of Year 2, and in raising standards in mathematics.
- How well pupils understand how to improve their work and the impact of this on their progress.
- How well pupils who are learning English as an additional language or who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities are supported.
- The quality of the school's provision to promote community cohesion.

Evidence was gathered from observation of lessons; discussions with staff, pupils, governors; the school's documentation; the results of national assessments; samples of pupils' work; and questionnaires returned by parents.

Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail but inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

## Description of the school

St Joseph's Catholic Primary is a large school. The proportion of pupils who are from minority ethnic groups is just above average; most of these pupils are Filipino. The proportion of pupils who are learning English as an additional language is below average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well below average. Their needs relate to dyslexia, moderate learning difficulties, behavioural, emotional and social needs, speech, language and communication difficulties and visual and hearing disabilities. Few pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. The school makes provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage children in two Reception classes. There have been changes in staffing and leadership and management in recent years. The headteacher was appointed in April 2008.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

St Joseph's Catholic Primary provides its pupils with a good education. Some aspects of the school's work are outstanding. An excellent shared ethos leads to pupils learning in a harmonious, vibrant community. They achieve well and their personal development and well-being are excellent. Good links with a wide range of organisations promote pupils' well-being. These include strong links with the local Catholic parish churches and their priests. Parents are positive about the school's work and typically say, 'St Joseph's is a wonderful school, which allows children to experience a wide range of extras within the school day. Staff are conscientious and give our children a great education'.

The headteacher has led and managed the school very effectively during a period of change. She is very well supported by the deputy headteacher. Despite varying levels of skills and experience, all other leaders are clear about what they are trying to achieve and have shown commitment to school improvement. The issues for improvement identified at the time of the last inspection have been tackled well. Consequently, pupils receive good feedback from teachers to help them improve and are clear about what they need to learn to achieve their targets. The support given to pupils who are learning English as an additional language is now good so that they make good progress. The governing body has provided good challenge, continuity and support during a period of change. All of this means that the school's capacity for improvement is good.

Monitoring and evaluation at all levels are very thorough and accurate and, consequently, the school knows its strengths and its priorities for improvement very well. Rigorous analysis of data is carried out in many ways and challenging targets for improvement are set and reviewed regularly. The headteacher meets each teacher regularly to check on pupils' progress. Prompt action is taken to remedy underachievement, including by reorganising class arrangements and by providing extra support for individual pupils. Consequently, progress throughout the school is now more consistently good.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding because of very good pastoral care and an effective focus on personal development within the curriculum. Pupils say that they enjoy school, including an exceptional range of after school clubs. Attendance is above average. Excellent relationships help pupils develop into self-confident, polite individuals. Behaviour is outstanding. The few pupils who have difficulty managing their behaviour and emotions are given regular support and this is having a positive effect. Pupils are prepared well for the next stage of learning because they are given good opportunities to take on responsibility, for example, by being involved in the process of staff recruitment, and they have good basic skills. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. They make a good contribution to the school community by sharing their views as members of the school council and in discussions with the headteacher. They have an exceptionally good knowledge of healthy lifestyles and are physically active. They understand how to stay safe, including on the internet, and know who to talk to if they are worried.

For several years standards in English, mathematics and science have been either above average or exceptionally high by the end of Years 2 and 6. Careful analysis of previous mathematics and science test results at the end of Year 6 has identified that pupils often found questions requiring them to analyse data more difficult to answer. Consequently, there has been a focus on this aspect of mathematics with the objective of improving standards. Evidence from pupils'

work and school data indicates that this initiative has been successful and that there is an upward trend in science and mathematics. Reading is a particular strength throughout the school but not enough pupils attained the higher Level 3 in writing by the end of Year 2 in 2008. The impact of the school's work to remedy this is good; twice as many pupils are on track to attain Level 3 in 2009. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve in line with other pupils because of good support by trained staff. However, the school does not sufficiently evaluate the impact of the support provided, to ensure that it is as effective as possible.

Pupils achieve well because teaching and learning are good, and sometimes outstanding. In particular, teachers question pupils well and challenge them to think. Pupils are very well motivated, engage well with their learning and say that they feel fully included in lessons. An exciting and stimulating curriculum includes very good provision for learning basic skills and a wide range of other subjects, including foreign languages. A parent described the choir as 'second to none'. A particular strength is the wide range of opportunities that older pupils enjoy on a Wednesday afternoon. These include environmental studies, animation, set design, charity fund-raising and musical performance. Visitors, like a NASA astronaut, and visits, including those that offer adventurous activities, add further enrichment to the curriculum. The school's exceptional extensive outdoor environment provides many opportunities for pupils to learn in a practical way.

Community cohesion is promoted well. The school is a cohesive, diverse community and has good links locally and nationally. However, provision to develop pupils' understanding of communities in the wider world is relatively weak. The school is seeking to resume its former international links and to develop these further.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Children make a good start to school. Their starting points are broadly in line with the expectations for their age. Some children started school with limited English because they are learning English as an additional language, but because of the good support that they have received, they are now fluent. Children settle happily into school because of a strong, nurturing environment and positive links with their parents, which are maintained on a daily basis. Teaching and learning are good. Consequently children achieve well, so that usually, by the time they start Year 1, most have reached the goals expected of them and many have exceeded them. Children are making very good progress in learning letters and sounds because the school has improved the way that it teaches them.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is managed well. Teamwork is strong. For example, the staff plan together and provide an exciting, interesting curriculum for the children. Displayed questions are used well to focus the learning, for example, 'Can you make up a story using the horses?' This encourages children to role-play and consequently develop their language, imaginative and social skills. Staff are knowledgeable and know when to support or challenge the children, who learn effectively in groups and also through following their own curiosity. Regular assessments contribute to each child's record. Outdoor provision is good. Children can move freely from indoors to outdoors and there is cover to ensure outdoor learning whatever the weather. Staff care for the children exceptionally well and relationships are very good. Consequently, children's personal development is outstanding and they behave very well. Skills of independence are promoted well. There are clear priorities for improvement, including the monitoring of the implementation of the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum to ensure

that there is collective responsibility for its implementation and consequently consistent quality throughout this stage of learning.

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

- Promote community cohesion beyond the local and national communities.
- Evaluate the impact of the support provided for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to ensure that they make the most rapid progress possible.

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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 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?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
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

<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	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>	2
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?	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	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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**

16 June 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Oxford, Headington, OX3 7SX

Thank you very much for helping us during the inspection, particularly by talking to us about your school. We were impressed by your friendliness and politeness. Your school is good. Here are some of the best things about it.

- Your headteacher leads your school very well. All the staff and governors are working together well to make your school even better.
- You behave exceptionally well and are very interested in your learning. This means that your classrooms are pleasant places to learn in and you have excellent relationships with adults in school.
- You are making good progress because teaching is good and sometimes outstanding. You make exceptionally good progress in reading.
- Your school has some good links with other organisations, particularly your local parish churches, which provide interesting opportunities for you to learn. There is an exceptionally good range of after school clubs.
- Children in the Reception classes have a good start to school.
- Your parents are very interested in your learning. A large number of them completed the questionnaires and many wrote comments about your school.
- You enjoy a very varied and rich curriculum, which gives you opportunities to learn in a fun way and to develop the skills you will need to have a successful adult life.
- You are developing exceptionally well personally and have an excellent understanding of how to stay healthy. You know how to stay safe and who to talk to if you are worried about anything. You contribute well to your school community in many ways.

We have asked your school to improve its international links so that you can learn more about communities abroad. Also we would like staff to continue to check on how successful support programmes for pupils who have difficulty with learning are. This is so that the school can improve them if necessary.

I would like to send you my best wishes for your future success in whatever you choose to do.

Yours faithfully

Beryl Richmond

Lead Inspector