

# St Josephs Catholic Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	107733
<b>Local Authority</b>	Kirklees
<b>Inspection number</b>	331435
<b>Inspection dates</b>	9–10 June 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Ian Richardson HMI

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>	5–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	209
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 S Riley
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Maureen Fletcher
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	29 March 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>	Healds Road Dewsbury West Yorkshire WF13 4HY

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<b>Age group</b>	5–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	9–10 June 2009
<b>Inspection number</b>	331435

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one additional inspector.

## Description of the school

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School is an average sized school situated in Dewsbury. It attracts pupils from a large catchment area covering seven council wards in Kirklees, some of which are relatively economically disadvantaged. The school serves the Catholic faith community, but children with this background make up only two thirds of the pupils in the school. The percentage of pupils that are from minority ethnic groups is below the national average, but the proportion whose first language is not English is slightly above average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below the national average but the proportion with statements of special needs is broadly average. The school has been awarded the Investors in People standard in 2005; the Kirklees Gold Healthy School standard in 2007; the national Healthy Schools standard in 2007; the Bronze Eco Schools Status in 2007; Activemark in 2008.

## 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 Catholic Primary School provides pupils with a satisfactory education but also demonstrates several good features, not least the good personal development and well-being of pupils. The school collaborates well with others to promote learners' well-being. The care, guidance and support that pupils receive is also good, and it is very clear that the school is a place where everyone is valued. The school has strong links with the parish church, the local pyramid of Catholic schools, the Leeds Diocese and the local authority. The school proclaims itself to be a community of faith and, while around two thirds of pupils come from Catholic homes, the school admits pupils of different faiths and ensures these are celebrated and learned about by all pupils.

The school is a highly inclusive place where all pupils receive their entitlement to a balanced education. There is no evidence of discrimination on the basis of faith, ethnic heritage, gender or other factors. The school is redolent with displays and information about a wide range of cultures, and barriers to a cohesive community are not tolerated. Classes have adopted different countries around the world and diversity, both in school and worldwide, is a matter of celebration. Pupils enjoy their education; they feel safe and show good relationships with each other and their teachers. The school provides them with a good understanding of what they need to do to stay healthy.

The national test results for 2008 showed standards and achievement to be well below the national average for pupils at the end of Key Stage 2. For pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 the data from 2008 show standards and achievement overall to have risen to around the national average. Scrutiny of pupils' work and observations of lessons and the school's more recent data show that standards are now also rising in Key Stage 2. This is a consequence of changes made by the recently formed senior leadership team. Teaching is satisfactory with some being good; although improving, it is not yet of a consistently good quality to promote higher standards and achievement.

The headteacher was appointed in January 2008, and she created a new senior leadership team in September 2008. The new team includes some existing senior staff and two newly appointed members with teaching and learning responsibilities. The headteacher carried out an effective analysis of provision and outcomes and, as a consequence, set a clear direction for the school. This touched on several key areas: the curriculum, teaching and learning, particularly assessment and marking to provide pupils with guidance on how to improve, and a more rigorous tracking and monitoring system. All staff interviewed clearly understood the priorities for the school and spoke positively of the significant amount of professional development they are receiving to make these changes possible. Significant work has been done to enrich and co-ordinate the curriculum. The school has an extensive and varied programme of extra-curricular activity that a large proportion of pupils attends and thoroughly enjoys. A key area in the school development plan is to raise standards and achievement across the full age range in the school.

The school has taken effective steps to improve since the last inspection. The school leadership has the capacity to make necessary improvements. The completed parental questionnaires show very strong support for the leadership and management of the school.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 3

The effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage is satisfactory, but with many recent improvements. The quality of the work is adversely affected by the cramped classroom, inadequate outdoor play area and resources that need renewing and extending. The imminent refurbishment of the Early Years Foundation Stage will provide high quality indoor and outdoor space, some covered, for the Reception children.

Children settle quickly and happily into the daily routines of the Reception class. 'My child is confident and happy, going into that warm and welcoming atmosphere,' is a typical parental comment. Children enter with skills in line with those seen nationally. They make satisfactory progress overall and enter Key Stage 1 with average skills. They make good progress in their personal development and also in reading due to the strong emphasis on teaching letters and sounds.

Children enjoy good relationships with adults and each other. They behave and cooperate well in a safe and secure environment that promotes their welfare effectively. The well respected teacher is effectively supported by the two enthusiastic teaching assistants. The tracking of children's progress has improved and so the adults now have a clearer understanding of the children's needs. Planning has improved with a better balance than previously between activities directed by the adults and those selected by the children.

The leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is satisfactory. The school is aware of the need to identify the 'key person' role so that each of the adults has an oversight of the needs and development of a group of children.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that assessment practice, particularly the marking of pupils' work and use of targets for individuals, is carried out consistently across the school.
- Improve the teaching and learning to a consistently good level, thus promoting higher standards and achievement of pupils.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

Standards and achievement have shown a decline over the last four academic years in Key Stage 2 to significantly below average in 2008. However, the decline in the standards in Key Stage 1 was halted in 2008 and improvements were seen with standards rising to be around the national average. This was so for reading and mathematics but not for writing which, while improved, remained below average.

The school is now tracking the performance of pupils in a more thorough and systematic way. They are targeting support and intervention at individuals and groups that are underperforming and can demonstrate the progress made. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are making satisfactory progress in line with the whole school. Scrutiny of pupils' work and observations of lessons support the view that standards and achievement have now risen to around the national average. This agrees with the self-evaluation of the school and can be seen

in the performance data now being collected by the school. The school is not content with the improvements made so far but has clearly identified raising standards across both Key Stages, in particular in Key Stage 2, as a key priority.

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

### **Grade: 2**

The personal development and well-being of pupils are good. This aspect of pupils' education is part of the caring culture of the school. Pupils show they understand the factors involved in keeping healthy and a large proportion benefit from extra-curricular sporting activities. Some innovative work such as the SPICED project involved police, parents and the school's staff in a programme of work with pupils that helps raise awareness of the risks involved in the use of drugs.

Spiritual, moral, cultural and social development is good. There are frequent opportunities for collective worship and wall displays show the importance the school gives to the sacraments of the Catholic faith. The school ensures that pupils study an additional faith in each term. There are activities to involve parents of different faiths, such as the Eid Mubarak celebration organised by Muslim families in the school. The pupils experience a rich multicultural environment. Moral development is effectively promoted in a range of ways including the weekly ethos statement that is seen in classrooms and referred to by teachers. The ethos assembly each week and house meetings picks up and exemplifies the theme. The house meetings bring together pupils of different ages and are effective at promoting cultural cohesion and social development. The wide range of extra-curricular activity and high levels of involvement also contribute to pupils' social development.

Pupils say that they enjoy school and their attendance is at the national average. Around school they behave responsibly and demonstrate good regard for safety. Pupils behave well both in lessons and during lunch and play times. Good attitudes and behaviours are rewarded, for example, through the weekly awards for kindness and politeness in addition to the celebration of effort and academic success.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

All teaching observed was at least satisfactory with some being good. Although there are signs that the quality of teaching and learning is improving, there are differences in quality from class to class. Not enough is yet of a consistently good quality. As a consequence progress is uneven across the school. Teaching is more effective at Key Stage 2 than at Key Stage 1. In many lessons, teachers make effective use of the interactive whiteboards and make the learning objectives clear to the pupils. In some lessons pupils are very passive and, in contrast in others, very involved and enthusiastic about their learning. In some lessons and in some pupils' books progress is limited because expectation is not high enough or insufficient work is done. Where this happens the more able pupils are insufficiently challenged.

Teaching assistants including those with high level accreditation are well deployed and provide good support to pupils, although occasionally they are not as fully involved as they could be, for example, in time pupils sit on the carpet at the start of lessons. In the best teaching, the pupils are well managed, work hard to do their best and make good progress.

The quality of marking is variable across the school and within each class. Although it sometimes uses praise to boost confidence, often it is not sufficiently helpful in guiding improvement or making reference to pupils' targets.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

In the recent past the curriculum has been insufficiently effective in promoting good achievement. As the curriculum improves, so does the progress that pupils make. The provision for literacy and numeracy is improving. The school recognises the need to further develop pupils' information and communication technology (ICT) skills and improve the use of ICT to support all the areas of the curriculum. Education for health, safety and well-being are good. The school has made a good start in developing new curriculum themes that link subjects together, making learning more meaningful. The new topics are engaging pupils well adding to their enjoyment of school. For example, at Key Stage 2 a study of 'Tudors' brought history to life, culminating in a very successful 'Tudor Evening' for parents and children.

Increasingly the school is giving pupils opportunities to practise their writing skills across the various areas of the curriculum. Enrichment of the curriculum is improving all the time, as seen in the recent 'Science Week' and the planned 'Health Week'. Pupils' learning is enhanced through the good range of visitors and visits, such as the very successful residential one to Cliffe House.

The range of out-of-school and lunchtime clubs, some of which give very good opportunities for sport and exercise has grown. Activities are popular and well attended by pupils. All these activities impact positively on the pupils' personal development and their enjoyment of school.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The school has a caring ethos where every child is valued. The large majority of parents believe the care of their children by the school is good or better. 'They treat the children as individuals, meeting their needs and treating them with respect' is a typical comment which reflects the positive views of parents. Supportive relationships mean that pupils trust and respect the staff. Pupils say they feel safe and are confident that rare instances of bullying are dealt with effectively. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported by the school, partly through the effective links with support agencies. This support enables these pupils to make similar progress to their classmates. The growing numbers of pupils learning English as an additional language, including those who are new to learning English, receive good support from the school, as do their parents.

The school does all it can to ensure the health, safety, well-being and protection of the pupils. Safeguarding and child protection measures fully meet requirements. Increasingly, teachers are becoming skilful in assessing work to identify the progress the pupils are making. Although pupils have individual targets for improvement, the way they are used varies across the school. As a consequence, their usefulness in helping pupils to improve their learning is inconsistent.



## Leadership and management

### Grade: 3

The senior leadership team have been in post for less than a year. The headteacher, who was appointed in January 2008, has set a clear direction for the school which is understood by staff at all levels. The strategies for improvement are appropriately focused on ensuring assessment and tracking of pupils' progress are both robust and accurate and improving the quality of teaching and learning.

Teachers and teaching and learning assistants speak positively of the support they receive from the school's management. They describe how the frequent professional development sessions have helped them. Teachers are becoming more skilled at using assessment data to inform target setting and the planning. The school has introduced challenging targets based on national data and is using them well to raise expectations of teachers.

Governors have now taken on the role of support and challenge effectively. Encouraged by the headteacher they are fulfilling this role well. Individual governors have links to specific classes and take part in a range of events in the school. The governors have signed up for governor training and have endorsed the significant continuing professional development of both teachers and teaching assistants. For example several staff have completed the 'leading from the middle' training and four teaching assistants have received training for high level teaching assistant qualification.

The governing body has been reorganised to focus its efforts better. Procedures and administration of governing body activities are secure and systematic. They look at standards in the school in a more analytical and critical way, receiving reports from key people from the senior leadership team. Their oversight of financial matters is also secure and documentation shows the school to be running a sound budget. The school is providing satisfactory value for money.

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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?	3
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	3

### Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	3
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	3
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?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	3

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	3

<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	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which 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	3

## 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>	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 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	3
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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	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**

Thank you for the way you welcomed the inspection team to your school and thank you for the help you gave us. We enjoyed seeing you at work and play. We noticed how well-behaved you are and how you show respect for each other and your teachers. You are happy at school and enjoy a good range of activities including trips and visitors coming to your school. You also have so much to join in with outside school time. We are pleased that so many of you join in the clubs and sports and would encourage all of you to join in as fully as possible.

Your school is a very caring place and encourages your own faith and respect for others well. The school provides you with a satisfactory education and things are getting better. We think that standards are rising and you are becoming more successful. Teachers are working hard to make this possible, and we hope you will do your part by trying your hardest all the time. The teachers are making sure you have a good range of subjects and ways of learning. The headteacher and her team are making good improvements in the school and they clearly want you to do as well as possible.

The headteacher and other teachers are working well together for your benefit and have planned to raise standards and achievement. We think that they could improve the school by:

- marking your work and setting targets in consistent ways in all the classes
- improving the teaching and learning so that it is good all the time in every class to help you do better.

All the inspection team wish you well for your future and the future of the school.