

# St Joseph's Roman Catholic Primary School, Rochdale

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	105833
<b>Local Authority</b>	Rochdale
<b>Inspection number</b>	336566
<b>Inspection dates</b>	18–19 May 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Yvonne Mills-Clare

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

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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 of pupils on the school roll</b>	296
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Rev P Daly
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Anthony Gleeson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	12 October 2006
<b>School address</b>	Pot Hall Wilton Grove Heywood OL10 2AA
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They observed 10 teachers and visited 15 lessons. They held meetings with groups of pupils, governors and staff. They observed the school's work and learning environment, looked at the school development plan, assessment information, lesson plans and school policies. Questionnaires from 52 parents, 26 staff and 100 pupils were analysed.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- whether information provided by the school's tracking system is analysed and used effectively to provide challenging learning opportunities for all pupils
- whether teaching consistently enthuses and engages pupils and delivers a curriculum that is broad and relevant to the needs of all pupils
- whether the outdoor environment in Early Years Foundation Stage promotes physical development and offers meaningful learning experiences.

## Information about the school

This is a larger than average primary school. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds. Few speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for a free school meal is average as is the proportion with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The school has achieved Healthy and Eco School Status and gained the awards of Quality Mark, Basic Skills and Investors in People. The headteacher took up his post in the school in September 2009. The school is currently without a deputy headteacher.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**3**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**3**

## Main findings

St Joseph's Roman Catholic Primary school provides a satisfactory standard of education. Warm and caring relationships in the school and a bright learning environment mean that pupils are very happy to come to school. Parents and carers appreciate the school's commitment to the well-being and personal development of its pupils. Consequently, pupils feel very safe and have positive attitudes to learning. They have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles. The school works effectively with outside agencies to ensure that all pupils, especially the most vulnerable, are well cared for. Pupils are proud of the good contribution that they make within their own and the local community. However, while activities such as 'World Religions Week' extend pupils' awareness of the wider world, opportunities to engage with more diverse communities and cultures in the United Kingdom and beyond are more limited. Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good overall.

Although pupils' attainment by the end of Year 6 is above average overall, their progress throughout the school is inconsistent. It is satisfactory in most years and better towards the end of Key Stage 2. Effective support and guidance in some year groups and classes in the school help ensure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make similar progress to their peers. Most pupils attend regularly, behave well and are eager to learn. On the occasions when lessons fail to hold pupils' interest or there is too much teacher direction, a small number of pupils become restless and disengaged.

Teachers share with pupils what they are expected to learn, and often visual and practical aids to learning are available to help their learning. Small steps to achieve success are often evident and in the best practice seen, pupils contribute to their formulation. Although there is some good teaching, too much is only satisfactory. In these lessons, planning for the different abilities and age groups often does not translate into activities that consistently challenge and enthuse pupils. Evaluation of learning outcomes is not always used effectively enough to adapt tasks and take learning forward. Opportunities for pupils to work and learn on their own are few because of too much teacher direction. Teachers' expectations of pupils are often too low and the work given to some pupils is too easy. The curriculum is enriched well through a wide range of visits and visitors.

Relatively new to his post, the headteacher is committed to eradicating the inconsistencies that currently exist. Senior leaders, together with members of the governing body, recognise the need to focus on improving progress for the majority of pupils in the school. There is a satisfactory capacity to improve. Recently introduced assessment systems are extending the range and accuracy of information available to assist staff, and regular meetings to discuss progress between leaders and class

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teachers is encouraging its use. The school's self-evaluation is, on occasions, generous. Leaders do not always check rigorously enough to ensure that all practice consistently matches that found in the good lessons.

The Early Years Foundation Stage provides a sound start to children's education. Work with parents is good and ensures that children settle readily into the school. A range of activities offer children a variety of indoor experiences. However, outdoors these are mainly limited to physical development. Children work hard on tasks with the adults around them, but find it more difficult to make purposeful choices themselves. The Early Years Foundation Stage leader has some contact with the setting, although based in another area of school. This limits the influence she can have over day-to-day activities.

**What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning, in order to accelerate progress for all pupils, so that achievement is good, by:
  - ensuring tasks and activities inspire and challenge pupils
  - making more effective use of assessment information when matching work to the needs of all pupils
  - ensuring more effective use of lesson evaluations in informing day-to-day activities to take learning forward
  - providing more opportunities for pupils to work and learn on their own
  - more rigorous and regular monitoring of teaching by senior leaders.
- Improve the effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
  - more regular and rigorous monitoring and evaluation of outcomes by the Early Years Foundation Stage leader
  - providing stimulating, child-initiated and purposeful activities
  - developing the outdoor area to encompass tasks that promote learning across all areas.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****3**

Pupils work hard and behave well when teachers have high expectations and keep them actively engaged in their learning. While some lessons are teacher led and lack urgency, restricting the quality of learning, others have a brisk pace, provide good challenge and result in good learning. Where teaching assistants are effectively deployed to support the learning of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, pupils thrive. By the end of Year 2, pupils' standards of attainment are usually average in reading, writing and mathematics. There is no notable difference between the achievement of boys and girls. Progress, for the majority of pupils across the school, is satisfactory, accelerating

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only in the later stages of Key Stage 2. Over the last two years, test results in English have improved and are better than those in mathematics and science; as a consequence, standards of attainment overall have been generally above average.

The school's calm, positive ethos promotes a strong sense of belonging. Older pupils take on responsibilities. 'Playground Pals' and support for younger children in assemblies and at lunchtimes reflects the school's values of tolerance and respect. Pupils really enjoy school and their good behaviour and attitudes to work, pay testament to this. The school council provides a good forum for pupils' views. Pupils demonstrate good social skills and are happy to accept responsibility. In these important respects they are developing skills which prepare them well for later life.

Children develop a good knowledge of how to eat healthily and keep themselves fit. The school serves good, healthy meals and fruit is enjoyed by pupils.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective is the provision?

Relationships between teachers and pupils are respectful and caring, and help to provide a positive climate for learning. Some good teaching was observed. In the good lessons,

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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teachers plan activities that challenge and motivate. They focus on, and evaluate, learning outcomes and adapt future tasks so that pupils' skills and knowledge are built upon well. Pupils are given guidance on how to improve their work, and targets are meaningful and well used. However, this is not the case in all year groups and across all classes, and the quality of experiences the pupils receive is inconsistent. Because teachers' expectations are sometimes insufficiently high, work given to pupils can fail to provide enough challenge. In some lessons, teachers talk for too long and do not provide enough time for pupils to engage in practical activities.

The curriculum satisfactorily supports the development of pupils' numeracy and literacy skills and prepares pupils for the next stage of learning. This is particularly true in literacy where a school focus has been successful in raising standards. The school is part of the 'Wider Opportunities' music programme and pupils enjoy learning Spanish. Foundation subjects in Key Stage 2 are taught in blocks of time, which often makes them appear disjointed and does not lend itself readily to cross-curricular links and the use of information and communication technology. A good range of well-supported after school activities, visits and visitors, enhance the curriculum and are appreciated by the pupils.

Pupils feel they are very well looked after and place great trust in the staff in school. Individual pupils are well supported and very good systems are in place for the most vulnerable pupils, providing access to the 'THINC' (Therapeutic Inclusion) room if they are particularly troubled. Parents say that the staff work effectively with outside agencies to support those pupils who are potentially vulnerable. Parents are increasingly involved through workshops and the school's open door policy, and speak highly of the school. All pupils are treated in a respectful manner and included in all that the school has to offer. Good induction arrangements, home visits and 'All about me' booklets help Reception children to quickly settle into their new community.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The headteacher of the school is relatively new in post, but has correctly diagnosed the school's strengths and weaknesses. As a result of new systems put in place by the headteacher, the collection and analysis of data are now stronger, and inform the monitoring of pupils' progress,. The school's self-evaluation is satisfactory enough to keep it informed about its performance. Observation of teaching is not always as regular

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and robust as it needs to be, particularly in evaluating the impact of teaching on learning. There is satisfactory promotion of equality of opportunity, with strengths in the way the school includes all pupils. However, variations in the level of challenge mean there are inconsistencies in the rate of pupils' progress. Safeguarding arrangements are robust and effective in ensuring that pupils' well-being is paramount. The school promotes links with the local community through the church and through its 'Friends of St Joseph's', and opportunities to learn about other faiths are satisfactorily developed in lessons. However, provision is much less well developed in relation to giving pupils experience of other areas of the United Kingdom and the wider world.

The governing body is becoming increasingly involved. Governors understand the school's strengths and have a satisfactory involvement in shaping its future. The governing body ensures that legal requirements are met. Roles and responsibilities in relation to safeguarding are clearly defined and acted upon. A high priority is given to pupils' safety and well-being. Members of the governing body are increasingly encouraged to focus particularly upon key priorities for improvement. They have planned a restructure of committees to reduce non-essential items of business that diverts attention at meetings away from discussing pupils' progress and the impact of provision on their attainment.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

**Early Years Foundation Stage**

Children make satisfactory progress from their starting points on entry to Reception, which are generally in line with those expected for their age. By the time they enter



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Year 1, the majority of children are working within the Early Learning Goals. Most of them show interest and are content with the activities routinely planned for them, although opportunities to initiate ideas of their own are limited. Progress is more marked when activities are teacher led. The outdoor environment promotes physical development well, but there are limited tasks available across other areas of learning. The teaching of phonics, (the sounds that letters make), is satisfactory and helps children link sounds to letters. Some of them are successfully using these skills in their writing. Relationships at all levels are good and children know and trust the adults around them. They are very well cared for and adults interact with children well. This warm, nurturing atmosphere produces confident children whose personal development is good. Adults make observations of children at work and play, but these assessments do not always result in exciting, stimulating activities that appropriately challenge children's achievement or inform the next steps in their learning. The leader of the Early Years Foundation Stage is based in another area of the school and this has limited the effectiveness of her role, in that the regular and rigorous monitoring of the setting, needed to ensure that learning moves on swiftly, has not always been possible. The school has clearly identified this need and they are tackling it through expert support from the local authority. Adults work well with parents and local pre-school providers.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

**Views of parents and carers**

A very large majority of parents who responded to the parents' and carers' questionnaires were positive about the school. Responses were most positive about the school's teaching and leadership and about the help they receive in supporting their child's learning. All those who responded indicated that their children enjoyed being at school and that safety in school was effective. The inspection findings support the majority of these views. However, the inspection findings also indicate that pupils' progress and the quality of teaching could be better.

### Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Joseph's Roman Catholic Primary School, Rochdale to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 52 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 296 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	35	67	17	33	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	36	69	16	31	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	29	56	20	38	2	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	30	58	19	37	2	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	30	58	21	40	1	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	28	54	22	42	2	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	26	50	22	42	4	8	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	25	48	26	50	1	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	30	58	20	38	1	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	25	48	24	46	2	4	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	17	33	32	62	3	6	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	31	60	19	37	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	37	71	13	25	1	2	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



20 May 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Joseph's Roman Catholic Primary School, Rochdale, Heywood, OL10 2AA

I am writing on behalf of the inspection team to thank you for making us welcome when we visited your school. We enjoyed our time with you, talking to you and hearing what you had to say. You enjoy coming to school and make the most of it. The school provides you with a satisfactory education. First of all, here are some of the good things about your school. You feel very safe at school and say how well you all get on together. Your behaviour is good and you look after each other. You take plenty of exercise and know all about keeping healthy. The school takes good care of you.

To improve your school further we have asked your teachers to use what they know about how well you work to give you activities in lessons that are exciting, and tasks that always make you think. You told us you like lessons best when the teacher lets you get on with your work yourselves. We agree that you should get more chances to work this way. We feel that the younger children need to work outdoors more and so we have asked that they are provided with lots of different activities. We have also asked that senior staff in school check that these things are happening.

You can help by thinking about what you are doing so that you make faster progress, and by telling your teachers how you think you are doing.

Thank you once again for your help. Best wishes for your future success.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Yvonne Mills-Clare

Lead inspector

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