

# St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Harrogate

## Inspection report

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	121643
<b>Local Authority</b>	North Yorkshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	339986
<b>Inspection dates</b>	23–24 November 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Lesley Clark

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

---

<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>	184
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Miss Patsy Rochester
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Julie Muddiman
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	8 January 2007
<b>School address</b>	Coppice Rise Harrogate North Yorkshire HG1 2DP
<b>Telephone number</b>	01423 562650
<b>Fax number</b>	01423 567545
<b>Email address</b>	headteacher@stjosephs.n-yorks.sch.uk

---

<b>Age group</b>	4–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	23–24 November 2009
<b>Inspection number</b>	339986

---

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It rates council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 08456 404045, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

Royal Exchange Buildings  
St Ann's Square  
Manchester M2 7LA

T: 08456 404045

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)

W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2009

## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited nine lessons and held meetings with the chair of governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation, including safeguarding policies, special educational needs and inclusion documentation, the school improvement plan, and questionnaires completed by pupils, staff and parents.

- why standards in English are higher than those in mathematics
- how well pupils develop life skills, use their initiative and are involved in assessing their own learning
- how well children in the Early Years Foundation Stage progress, especially in problem solving, reasoning and number skills.

## Information about the school

This popular, smaller-than-average Catholic Primary school is increasing rapidly in size. It serves the parish of St Joseph's on the northern outskirts of Harrogate. A smaller-than-average proportion of pupils is eligible for free school meals. Eighty per cent of pupils are White British. Twenty per cent of pupils come from a wide range of other ethnic White, Mixed White and Black backgrounds. Seven per cent are new learners of English as an additional language with the most common home languages being Italian, Portuguese, Polish and Tagalog. A smaller-than-average proportion of pupils has special educational needs and/or disabilities or a statement of special educational needs. Early Years Foundation Stage provision consists of a Reception class. The school holds the Investors in Pupils Award, the Inclusion Quality Mark, the Healthy Schools Award and the Sports Mark.

The externally managed before- and after-school clubs operate in the school's dining room. These are not included in this inspection.

**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?**

**1**

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

**1**

## Main findings

This school makes learning exciting. Pupils hunger to learn and want to achieve as well as they can. From broadly average starting points in Reception they make outstanding progress in all areas of learning to reach very high standards by the end of Year 6, especially in English. Pupils write exceptionally well. They have a rich vocabulary, stimulated by the wealth of enrichment activities the school provides. The outstanding curriculum offers pupils unique opportunities to immerse themselves in role play and to use research and presentation skills in many different contexts. Teaching quality is outstanding and involves pupils fully in assessing their own learning so they know how to improve their work.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a hallmark of the school. Pupils learn to appreciate the rights and responsibilities of people within a global social setting because of the school's excellent local, national, and international community links. The highly creative curriculum enables pupils to make connections between aspects of their learning and to use their literacy skills extensively. Pupils have fewer opportunities to use and apply their numeracy skills in other subjects, which is largely why standards are less strong in mathematics overall. The school successfully promotes racial, religious and other forms of equality through a strong, moral code and a safe learning environment. It takes excellent care of all pupils. As a result they all make outstanding progress and develop personal qualities which are valued in society. Pupils' actions exemplify the school's mission statement: 'Loving, caring, kind and sharing.'

The school has made outstanding progress since the last inspection in all aspects of its work. This is because the excellent senior leadership team has a relentless drive and ambition underpinned by a belief that all learning should be enjoyable. Governors are loyal and supportive but are not sufficiently rigorous in ensuring that all policies and procedures are fully up to date. All staff fully support the drive towards improvement. In this outward looking school adults and pupils alike have 'the learning bug', which is why the school exceeds its very challenging targets each year. The school's self-evaluation is 'spot on', acknowledging strengths but very clear about areas to develop further. These factors demonstrate the school's outstanding capacity to continue to improve.

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

- Further raise standards in mathematics by:
- - giving pupils more opportunities to use and apply numeracy skills in other subjects
- - finding ways to celebrate and share mathematical achievements so pupils learn it is important to do well in this subject.

**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

- Ensure that governors are more rigorous in checking that policies and procedures are fully up to date.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****1**

Pupils behave extremely well. The quality of learning is exceptional. Younger pupils gain a very sound basis in basic skills so they are ready to take off when they move into Key Stage 2. Gifted and talented pupils make outstanding progress. Pupils concentrate well, striving to complete tasks so they can move on to the 'weekly challenges' in English and mathematics awaiting them on the 'working wall'. This is an area of each classroom used by both pupils and teachers to pin up work and information to promote learning and challenge pupils to think for themselves. Pupils have ample opportunities to use their initiative and to work independently. Younger pupils work very well together in groups. Older pupils have some control over what they do and when they do it. These factors help them to be self-reliant. Pupils' writing is exceptionally good because pupils are constructively self-critical.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 are very high with most reaching the higher Level 5. Standards in mathematics are well above average, though pupils are a little less confident in using and applying their skills, tending to see mathematics as a subject separate from everything else. It is a different picture in science. 'Science is fun,' declare Year 6. Pupils enjoy finding the answers to questions they pose at the start of a new science topic such as, 'Does your brain translate the sounds it hears into words?' Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make outstanding progress, outperforming similar groups of pupils in national tests, because they are given extra support when they need it but are also fully included in lessons. New learners of English as an additional language make extremely rapid gains, reaching nationally expected levels within three years and doing much better than similar groups in national tests. Pupils care for each other. They are good listeners and are patient and supportive to those who have problems. They see themselves as, 'one big friendship group'. Year 6 buddies look after Reception children, promoting the school's family atmosphere. Pupils say, 'We never get bullied.' and they are confident in the school's capacity to deal with any concerns. Pupils consider they are, 'One hundred per cent safe in school.' Years 5 and 6's posters give very practical guidance on how to combat cyber bullying. Pupils advocate exercise and healthy eating claiming, 'Sport helps you keep fit when your heart beats faster and then you lose calories.' 'Play leaders' and 'buddies' ensure that playtimes are energetic and happy occasions. The school council represents the school at civic level and organises questionnaires to decide on fund-raising activities. It is a measure of the school's highly successful outcomes that Year 6 pupils see themselves as, 'ambassadors for the school' and say, 'It gets better and better as you get older.' Almost all pupils have very good attendance. Overall attendance averages out at satisfactory because a few families take holidays in term time.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

**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

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

## How effective is the provision?

A notable feature of the outstanding teaching is the meticulous planning which involves pupils. Pupils make excellent progress because teachers encourage them to say when they do not understand and the staff use this information to help them plan the next lesson. Teachers value pupils' questions and give them space for their own thoughts, ideas and concerns. Assessment is used extremely effectively to ensure that pupils are given work that matches their needs yet challenges them. Marking celebrates pupils' successes but makes very clear what needs to be improved. Pupils are fully involved in this process and, as a result, become keen critics, for example, by devising sensible success criteria by which to measure the quality of a piece of work. Pupils relished underlining 'banned words' such as 'said' and 'then' in a published extract! Teachers use up-to-date interactive technology very well indeed to promote learning, to make teaching points clear and to give the most able pupils opportunities for wide-ranging research.

The curriculum is highly creative and inspires pupils' writing skills and those who have special gifts and talents. As well as learning French, pupils learn words from a different language each month, drawing on the skills of pupils who are learning English as an additional language and their families. Through philosophy in education lessons, pupils learn to probe their own cultural assumptions and values and, in their words, 'Look deeper into things.' This is why pupils read with exceptional understanding and have an

---

<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.

**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

excellent grasp of scientific concepts. The curriculum invites active learning. A 'Viking Raid' by Year 3 pupils to seize a chalice from the church and capture a 'monk' gave a strong moral message as well as bringing history alive. Older pupils, the victims of the raid, played along with the enactment with relish, gladly succumbing to the sword. A very broad range of educational visits, visitors to school and many different extra-curricular activities add enrichment.

Pupils are extremely well cared for as individuals. Those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities or who are new learners of English as an additional language receive specific support, which is extremely well tailored to their needs. Similarly, specialist provision is made available for gifted and talented pupils. The care given to individual pupils, and their families, facing challenging circumstances is exemplary and makes a major contribution to these pupils' progress. Transition arrangements between different year groups and schools are very good. The result is happy, confident, ambitious pupils, capable of making well-informed choices about their future lives.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	1
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The senior leadership team very successfully transmits its strong sense of purpose. The trend in the school's results is upwards because of the highly effective leadership of teaching and learning. Scrupulous lesson observations with excellent pointers for improvement ensure that teachers are increasingly effective. The school knows itself well and is well aware what it needs to do to improve the quality of its work. Governors have the school's best interests at heart. They are in danger of getting too involved in what goes on in school rather than fully meeting their statutory duties, including receiving the necessary training. This is why safeguarding is good rather than outstanding, because some policies and procedures have yet to be fully updated. All staff have been suitably trained and issues relating to safety and safeguarding are fully integrated into the curriculum so pupils have an excellent understanding of how to keep themselves safe. Governors are visible in the school community but do not have clear systems for engaging with parents except when there are specific concerns. The school has excellent partnerships with parents and carers. It uses external services very well indeed to promote pupils' health, safety and welfare. A major strength is the school's outstanding promotion of community cohesion. Excellent local, national and global community links encompass Reception children learning in a special school each week

**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

and older pupils in schools with more ethnically and socially diverse populations, as well as corresponding with those in India and Africa. The impact of this work is seen in pupils' openness to new ideas, their tolerance, their responsiveness to different religions and their capacity to get on with pupils from widely different backgrounds and life experiences.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
<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>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>1</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make outstanding progress because they have ample opportunities to learn through discovery. Most of their learning is self-initiated. The setting abounds with bustling, chatting, lively children who cannot wait to get started because there is so much to do. Children move freely from indoors to outdoors, making porridge outside, splashing in muddy puddles or creating birthday cakes in the sand using conkers and straws. They freely access all resources, taking paper plates, for example, to write on or to form into triangles, trying to recreate for themselves the new shapes they have just learnt about. From broadly as expected starting points, almost all learners are comfortably within the level expected at the end of the Reception Year with a good proportion well ahead, especially in communication, language and literacy and in their dispositions and attitudes to learning. Children learn a great deal in a short time because they have lots of problems to solve and are expected to reason things out for themselves. This is why they turn into inquisitive, independent learners. Teaching quality is outstanding because it is based on very accurate, daily assessments which are then used to plan the next steps in each child's learning. Parents and carers are kept



**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

fully up to date through the 'Learning Journey' which children take home at weekends and to which parents contribute too. The setting is outstandingly well led and managed. All children are very well cared for and while they are kept very safe they are also encouraged to be physically adventurous and to go outside in all weathers.

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

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

**Views of parents and carers**

Most parents think this is a very good school and many wrote to say so. A very small minority felt that they do not receive enough information about their children's progress and that the school does not promote healthy lifestyles. Inspectors do not agree. The school provides half-termly progress reports; two parents' evenings and an optional open evening each year; detailed curriculum information each term; fortnightly newsletters; a website; homework and reading diaries which parents sign; and staff are available either briefly at the start or end of the day or by appointment if parents have concerns. While it is true that during the winter pupils cannot play football at playtimes and lunchtimes because the field is too wet and the playground too crowded, there are lots of different playground games to encourage physical exertion as well as extra-curricular sports and regular physical education lessons.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Harrogate 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 81 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 184 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	52	64	28	35	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	60	74	20	25	1	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	44	54	29	36	7	9	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	42	52	34	42	3	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	47	58	32	40	2	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	44	54	31	38	3	4	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	42	52	33	41	4	5	1	1
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)	40	49	36	44	2	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	40	49	37	46	3	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	44	54	32	40	3	4	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	39	48	37	46	4	5	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	46	57	31	38	3	4	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	47	58	30	37	3	4	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 inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

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 were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

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.**



25 November 2009

Dear pupils

Inspection of St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Harrogate HG1 2DP

Thank you for your very friendly welcome. My colleagues and I really enjoyed meeting so many of you and watching you work and play. It is easy to see why you enjoy school so much. Your school gives you an outstanding education. You reach extremely high standards, especially in English. Your writing is really top quality for your age. You are very well taught and we could see why most of you say that learning is fun. The Viking raid was very successful and rather alarming too! What a lively and interesting curriculum you have! We were also impressed by the different links you have with other schools and communities both locally and abroad. This is why you turn into such tolerant, caring people who respect and help each other. Your teachers and other adults take very great care of you. This is why you feel so safe and behave and learn so well. You certainly get on very well together. You make outstanding progress, helped by the 'challenges' and 'learning walls' but also because you are not afraid to say when you find something hard to understand. I like the fact that your teachers consult you when they start a new topic and I thought some of the questions you wanted to find answers to were very mature.

I have asked your school to do two things to make it even better. I want you to have more opportunities to use and apply numeracy skills in other subjects so you become as good mathematicians as you are writers. I have also asked your school to find ways to celebrate and share mathematical achievements so that you learn that it is important to do well in this subject. I have also asked the school governors to make sure that all the policies and procedures they are responsible for are fully up to date. This is important because it is an extra safety check to make sure you are all kept safe.

I look forward to hearing about some great mathematicians in the future!

Yours sincerely

Mrs Lesley Clark

Lead Inspector

**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 08456 404045, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).**