

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123208
Local Authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	340307
Inspection dates	9–10 November 2009
Reporting inspector	Keith Sadler

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	214
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs A Kalungu-Banda
Headteacher	Miss M Lewicki
Date of previous school inspection	6 April 2007
School address	Fiennes Road Banbury Oxfordshire OX16 0ET
Telephone number	01295 264284
Fax number	
Email address	head.3825@st-josephs-banbury.oxon.sch.uk

Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	9–10 November 2009
Inspection number	340307

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.

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

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2009

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 18 lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff, and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at a wide range of documentation, which included the school's analysis of pupils' progress, teachers' lesson plans, the school's improvement plan and pupils' work. In addition, the responses of 20 parents' questionnaires were analysed and their comments taken into account.

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

- the progress of pupils in Years 3'6
- what the school needs to do to lift the overall quality of teaching to 'good'
- the quality and use of assessment to support learning
- how well teachers with responsibilities support the school's monitoring and evaluation processes
- how well governors contribute to the school's leadership and management.

Information about the school

This average sized primary school serves the parish of St Joseph. In addition, a significant minority of non-Catholic pupils who attend the school live in the immediate neighbourhood. About half of the pupils are of White British heritage and others are from a wide range of other ethnic backgrounds. The largest of these are of European background. An increasing proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language. Currently this is about a fifth of the pupils and, of these, there are 40 who are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils that have special educational needs and/or disabilities is average. Most of these find learning difficult. The school has gained the Healthy Schools and Financial Management in Schools awards.

The Early Years Foundation Stage consists of a purpose-built unit that provides for the 34 part-time nursery children and a class of Reception-age children. There has been a substantial turnover of staff in the school since the previous 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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

St Joseph's provides a satisfactory quality of education. It has some strengths. Levels of care, guidance and support are good. This helps pupils to feel happy, safe and secure and to show positive attitudes towards everything they do. In addition, children get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage, where they learn well. With recent appointments to the senior leadership team and new staff, the governors, staff and parents are confident that they can move forward together. Parents and carers are almost unanimous in saying that they are happy with their children's experiences at school.

Children start school in the Nursery with skills that are much lower than those typically found. They make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage, although by Year 1, only a minority have reached average standards. Their communication, language and literacy skills in particular are below average. In the past, progress in Years 1 and 2 has been too slow and standards have been exceptionally low in reading, writing and mathematics. However, this weak attainment has been arrested and because provision, particularly in Year 2, is stronger, the 2009 results show that pupils attained standards that are now close to the national average. Pupils make steady progress in Years 3 to 6, and their attainment is broadly average at the end of Year 6, although the proportion of pupils that attain the expected level in writing is below that for reading. At both Year 2 and Year 6, the proportion of more able pupils gaining the higher levels has increased but the school is rightly determined to ensure that these numbers increase even further.

Pupils' personal development is good. Behaviour is good, pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They say that they feel safe in school and they are very committed to ensuring that they lead a healthy lifestyle. However, attendance is below average. Although a good range of measures have been implemented to boost attendance, and there are signs of improvement, the full impact of this has yet to be realised.

Although progress is satisfactory overall, there are indications that it is improving because the quality of teaching and learning is becoming more consistently good. Sometimes teachers spend too long introducing or explaining in lessons at the expense of pupils discussing their ideas or working together. However, senior staff are keenly aware of the need to strengthen pupils' speaking and listening skills and consistently to provide more opportunities for collaborative working and discussion. One key characteristic of the many good lessons seen was that pupils were encouraged to hold extended discussions about their work.

There are sound monitoring and evaluation strategies in place, although at present too

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

much of this work is accomplished by senior leaders. Subject leaders are not sufficiently involved in the checking of provision and standards in their areas of responsibility. Nonetheless, the resulting evaluation from monitoring has enabled senior staff to develop a good and accurate understanding of the school's strengths. Good changes have been made to improve provision and, as a result, the rate of progress is accelerating throughout the school. However, some of the changes that have been made are too recent to have had time to demonstrate their full impact. An example of this is the introduction of a new mathematics scheme, and a structured approach to teaching reading which complements the school's teaching of literacy. These changes demonstrate a satisfactory capacity to improve further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate pupils' progress by:
 - strengthening speaking and listening skills by providing more opportunities for collaborative working and extended discussions
 - ensuring that teachers do not spend extensive amounts of time introducing lessons
 - close the gap between pupils' attainment in reading and writing.
- Improve rates of attendance.
- Strengthen the monitoring and evaluation role of subject coordinators.

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

Attainment is improving, particularly in the Early Years Foundation Stage and at the end of Year 2. A whole-school focus on developing speaking and listening skills is starting to have an impact and to raise pupils' confidence. Although many pupils read well and can explain their thoughts in discussions, the spoken language of other pupils remains limited. The large majority of pupils make satisfactory progress, particularly in reading and mathematics. Although for some, progress is good, this is not consistent across the school. There are many more pupils who speak English as an additional language than at the time of the previous inspection. Because support for these pupils is good, they make good progress in learning English. This is particularly the case for the many Polish pupils because they benefit from good first-language support and they are taught well by the specialist teaching assistant. Provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is good. These pupils receive good support particularly from teaching assistants, and make good progress towards their targets in their individual learning plans.

Pupils enjoy school and this is clearly evident in their smiling faces and their written comments. As one Year 6 pupil wrote, 'This school is fantastic. I think my Mum and Dad made a good choice putting me in this school. I will have a lot of memories here when I leave St Joseph's Catholic Primary School.' Pupils are proud of their uniform and are unfailingly polite and friendly to adults and visitors. Good behaviour adds to the calm

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

atmosphere seen in lessons and around the school. Pupils clearly know the difference between right and wrong and, by the time that they reach Year 6, they have developed into secure and confident young people. They can be trusted to act sensibly and willingly take on responsibilities such as school councillors or 'buddies'. However, these positive attitudes are not reflected in levels of attendance, which are below average.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
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	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	4
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory and there is a growing proportion that is better. Where teaching is most effective, staff make good use of assessment information to ensure that the work set matches the pupils' abilities, creating good challenge for all groups. These lessons are based on clear plans, with pupils being told what they are expected to learn, and a good pace is maintained. Well targeted open questions keep pupils of all abilities on their toes and fully involved and, critically, many opportunities are provided for them to discuss their tasks as they learn together. This was evident in a good Year 6 lesson where the pupils were successfully identifying the key characteristics of autobiographical writing, which they then used as the success

¹ 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

criteria for their own biographical writing. The teacher very cleverly integrated these criteria into her teaching. In lessons which are only satisfactory, pupils are required to sit for too long. This affects their concentration and because time is then limited, they are not given enough opportunity to produce the work that might be expected. Pupils are consistently managed well and they receive good quality support from the teaching assistants. Relationships are positive, and in all classrooms there is a calm and purposeful atmosphere in which pupils enjoy lessons.

The curriculum is satisfactory and improving. There is a focus to strengthen the links between subjects to interest and motivate the pupils and this is benefitting learning. There has been a significant improvement in the curriculum for information and communication technology since the previous inspection, and pupils now benefit from a wide range of computer facilities that are used well to enhance learning across the curriculum. Additional activities are good. The pupils say that they enjoy the good range of clubs available to them, particularly in sport and music, and for some the residential visits available for pupils in Years 4 to 6 is the highlight of the year.

The staff look after the pupils well. Well organised care, support and guidance arrangements make an effective contribution to pupils' well-being, sense of security and their learning. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, vulnerable pupils and those at an early stage of learning English receive particularly good care and support. The family support worker provides valuable help to families and her work is beginning to have a positive impact on pupils' attendance.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The senior leadership team has been established for the past year and, working together, the headteacher and two assistant headteachers play a key role in leading the school forward. Evaluations of the effectiveness of teaching and learning are accurate and are starting to have an impact on the quality of lessons. However, at present, the monitoring procedures, as well as being limited in the main to senior leaders, are not sufficiently embedded as part of a regular and ongoing process. At present, a period for monitoring is put aside on a termly basis and whilst these events are helpful, particularly as governors are also involved, their effectiveness is limited because they are not regular enough. Governance is satisfactory. Governors are supportive of the school and share a determination with senior leadership to drive improvement. They are keenly

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

aware of the need to ensure that the new members of staff become securely established and that the new team work together for the benefit of pupils. At present, although they ensure that all statutory regulations are met, they are not in a position to provide the challenge that the staff deserve because they are not systematically involved in the work of the school. Whilst some teachers with responsibilities, especially the coordinator for special educational needs, provide clear and high quality leadership, the leadership role of curriculum coordinators is under developed.

There are appropriate procedures in place to ensure that pupils' well-being is safeguarded, which ensure that pupils are cared for and kept safe. Links with parents are satisfactory. The school promotes suitably equality of opportunity. There is a deep commitment to securing community cohesion and there are good links with the church. Local community links are expanding and the school is working to broaden pupils' awareness of the world beyond their local environment.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

There has been a marked improvement in provision and children's progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage since the previous inspection. The children are eager to learn and they make good progress in most areas of learning because they are taught well. Even the many children who enter the Nursery speaking little English settle quickly and become confident and secure. This is due to the warm, welcoming and secure environment which gives the children the confidence to leave their parents and carers. As one parent commented, 'My son has done exceptionally well. He can use his jolly

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

phonics and put letters together to sound a word out then read it. My child has had the opportunity to grow and develop in his own speed and be an individual. He's now a confident boy.'

Adults support the children well and encourage them to make choices about their learning. They make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development and form good relationships with adults and with each other. They are motivated and interested in their learning and they behave well. There are good opportunities to solve problems and learn and play together. For example, children were building a wall with bricks and had to work out how to lift the bricks to where they needed them. This they did with some ingenuity and were very proud of their achievement. Adults are careful to ensure that there is a good balance between activities that are directed by them and those that the children choose for themselves. One particularly strong feature is the way the unit is organised to provide many opportunities for the children in both Reception and the Nursery to mix together and learn from each other. There are excellent resources to support their learning, and the outdoor learning area is particularly well resourced. Staff ensure that all the areas of learning are provided for both indoors and outside.

The new leader has had a good impact on children's progress and has made changes so that boys make more progress in developing their literacy skills. She has also strengthened and developed the assessment arrangements. Activities are now invariably planned to meet children's needs because they are based on good assessment of children's learning which is observed carefully so that they move on in their learning.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

A small proportion of parents and carers responded by completing the questionnaire. However, parents are unanimous in their support of the school. A small minority of the parents said that the school does not deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour. Inspection evidence does not confirm these views. In lessons, pupils are managed well by all teaching staff. Around the school, although behaviour is consistently good, there are very few instances of poor behaviour. Those seen were managed sensitively and well by staff.

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 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 20 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 214 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	17	85	3	15	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	12	60	8	40	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	10	50	10	50	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	11	55	9	45	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	12	60	8	40	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	8	40	12	60	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	6	30	12	60	1	5	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)	8	40	12	60	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	9	45	10	50	1	5	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	2	10	13	65	4	20	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	4	20	11	55	3	15	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	6	30	10	50	0	0	2	10
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	10	50	10	50	0	0	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">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.



12 November 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Banbury OX16 0ET

Thank you for helping us when we visited your school to see you at work. You were very polite and we enjoyed talking with those of you whom we met. We were very impressed with your singing in assembly and pleased to see how much you enjoyed it. We were also very pleased to hear about how you enjoy the residential visits that the teachers organise for you.

Your school gives you a satisfactory education. All the adults look after you very well and help you to feel safe and happy. Your school is welcoming to you, your parents and also to visitors like us. Your teachers are working hard to make sure that the lessons that they plan for you are interesting and enjoyable, though sometimes you are asked to sit and listen for too long. Your behaviour is good, and you enjoy school and playing with your friends. We know that you are particularly pleased with all the opportunities provided for you to attend after-school clubs.

In order to help your school continue to improve, we have asked your headteacher, governors and staff to make sure that the following things are done:

- for your teachers to make sure that you make more progress by giving you more chances to develop your speaking and listening skills, by making sure that all your lessons are as good as the best and helping you to do as well in writing as you do in reading
- to improve your attendance
- for teachers with responsibilities to be more involved in checking how well you are taught and how much progress you make.

You can continue to help by working hard and making sure that you attend school every day. We hope that you enjoy your future learning.

Yours sincerely

Keith Sadler

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. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 08456 404045, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.