

# St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	124360
<b>Local Authority</b>	Staffordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	340552
<b>Inspection dates</b>	4–5 May 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Gerald Griffin

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>	141
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Kay Rimmer
<b>Headteacher</b>	Kathleen McNally
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	5 March 2007
<b>School address</b>	Newman Grove Rugeley WS15 1BN
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<b>Email address</b>	headteacher@st-josephs-rugeley.staffs.sch.uk

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 12 lessons taught by six teachers. They observed break times, and held meetings with governors, staff, groups of pupils, parents and carers. Inspectors scrutinised pupils' work, progress records, teachers' lesson plans, school improvement plans, policies and reports. They analysed 51 pupils' questionnaires and 31 parents' and carers' questionnaires.

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

- the progress made by pupils, especially the boys at Key Stage 2 and in writing across the school.
- the quality of the challenge that teachers provide to secure better progress at Key Stage 1.
- the effectiveness of improvement planning to accelerate progress across the school.

## Information about the school

St Joseph's is a smaller than average size primary school. Nearly all of the pupils come from White British families. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. Most of these have behavioural, emotional and social difficulties or moderate learning or speech and language difficulties. The Early Years Foundation Stage provision comprises a Reception class. The school has recently gained a number of awards including active mark gold and dyslexia friendly status. The St Joseph's Extra club and St Joseph's Nursery on the site are managed privately and inspected separately.

**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?**

**2**

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

**2**

## Main findings

St Joseph's Catholic Primary is a good school. It provides a very safe, caring and happy atmosphere in which pupils grow into mature young people. Parents and carers are very pleased with the standard of education the school provides. Typically, one parent told an inspector at the school gate, 'My child loves coming to school and is making excellent progress. The standard of care is fantastic and the head and teachers are very approachable and quickly resolve any difficulties'.

Children get off to a good start in the Reception class, where they progress well because their teaching is good. Good progress continues in Years 1 to 6. While attainment is average overall, it is rising and is above average in reading. Since the last inspection, pupils' achievement, teaching, the curriculum and most aspects of leadership and management have all improved, and are good. The school's very well targeted support for all its pupils means that care, guidance and support are outstanding. The school has experienced some staffing difficulties recently during which progress at Key Stage 1 slowed. Now that staffing is stable, the school has successfully tackled this problem through effective improvement plans. Progress at Key Stage 1 is good and pupils have caught up on missed work. The staff enthusiastically embrace the headteacher's clearly articulated and determined drive to improve the school. This leadership record, together with its largely accurate self-evaluation, shows the school's good capacity for continued improvement.

Pupils are very polite to adults and to each other and behave well. Their above average attendance reflects their thorough enjoyment of all that the school has to offer. Pupils feel extremely safe in school and have an excellent understanding of how to keep themselves and others free from harm. They do their best to maintain a healthy lifestyle, which is reflected in the school's active mark award. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. However, their understanding of the diversity of British culture is a relative weakness because they do not all have enough opportunities to learn and communicate with their peers from backgrounds different from their own.

Pupils really enjoy lessons because teachers plan interesting and relevant tasks for them to do. As a result, pupils have positive attitudes to learning and work hard. Teachers provide work that challenges pupils well, which means they make good progress. Occasionally, learning slows during a lesson when work does not match precisely the needs of each pupil. Typically, this happens when teachers do not make the best use of their assessments to plan challenging next steps for every member of the class. The lively curriculum broadens pupils' horizons and adds to their enjoyment of school.

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

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

- Sustain a good pace to learning throughout lessons by consistently making good use of assessment information to plan work that matches closely the needs of each pupil so that they are fully stretched.
  - Improve pupils' understanding of the diversity of British culture by providing more opportunities for them to work and talk with their peers from a range of backgrounds different to their own.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

All groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, enjoy learning and their achievement is good. The learning observed in lessons was good throughout the school. For example, Year 5/6 pupils were gaining a good degree of independence by planning their own science experiments to test their understanding of forces. They thoroughly enjoyed using forcemeters to test the ideas that they had been investigating on how the size of the force on an object is affected by the object being in water. Pupils honed their measurement skills, using Newton Meters, to measure accurately the up thrust on a mass when it is placed in a bowl of water. Pupils discussed their experiment results with partners, which helped them clarify their ideas and explanations.

Boys' progress at Key Stage 2, which has been slower than the girls' in the past, has accelerated because teachers provide resources and work that especially appeals to them, such as a topic on playgrounds. Progress in writing has improved because pupils use a wide range of vocabulary well to express their ideas. Spelling and punctuation are largely accurate. Individual programmes that challenge pupils well have raised attainment in reading. These gains are the result of successful training that has sharpened staff skills in planning of English lessons.

Pupils' good spiritual development is shown by their mature reflection on their feelings and those of others. Their strong moral code supports their good behaviour. Occasionally, pupils lose concentration and fidget when they find work does not especially challenge them. Pupils co-operate well in teams and are supportive of each other. While they have a deep respect for people who come from background different to their own, their understanding of diversity is underdeveloped.

Pupils report that bullying is almost unheard of. However, they feel confident that the school would quickly resolve any incidences. They know precisely how to keep themselves safe. For example, Year 6 pupils have a very clear understanding of how to protect their identity on the internet. They are extremely careful to keep others free from harm around the school. Pupils have a well-developed understanding of healthy lifestyles. Older pupils would like more information about the changes that happen to them as they grow up. Pupils are keen to take responsibility as playground buddies and as members of the school council. They collect generously for charity. Pupils' good use of basic skills, their positive attitudes towards education, above average attendance and

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good punctuality mean that they are well prepared for secondary school and future employment.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>1</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>	2
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

### How effective is the provision?

In lessons relationships are very positive and pupils are keen to learn. Teachers use resources, such as electronic whiteboards, imaginatively to engage and develop learning. Teachers' challenging questions make pupils really think. For the most part, teachers use assessments well to plan each pupil's next steps so that they make good progress. Occasionally, learning slows during lessons because some work that teachers plan does not match pupils' needs sufficiently to sustain good progress. Marking provides pupils with a clear understanding of what they need to do next to improve their work. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to learning, especially for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The curriculum supports aspects of personal development well. For example, swimming lessons promote pupils' healthy lifestyles. Specialist teaching in music and physical education help to develop real interest and ambition in these subjects. There is a good

<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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range of well attended sports and other clubs and educational visits that support learning well and add to pupils' enjoyment of school.

Teachers use their detailed knowledge of each child expertly to provide a high standard of pastoral care. Pupils readily turn to an adult with a worry knowing their concerns will be quickly and sympathetically resolved. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well cared for and their learning programmes meet their needs well. The school liaises closely with a very wide range of external agencies and schools to support pupils' learning and welfare. For example, together with the education welfare officer, it is providing first class support for families in challenging circumstances that secures their children's good attendance. Vulnerable pupils are especially well cared for. One carer could not speak highly enough about the support the school provided for her and the child, who is very happy at school and making excellent progress.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

Leaders articulate clearly to staff their ambitious targets and their plans to make the school better. Leaders' checks on pupils' progress towards their challenging targets are effective. This means any slowing of progress is quickly spotted and remedied. In its quest to make the school outstanding, leaders are correctly working hard to fine tune this aspect of its work to make its judgements on where further improvements can be made even better. Leaders have provided successful training that has sharpened teachers' lesson planning; for example, to improve the learning of pupils with dyslexia and this is recognised in the school's national award.

The governors work hard on behalf of the school and challenge it robustly over its performance. The school puts its commitment to equal opportunities at the centre of its ethos and the success of its plans to remedy previous gender differences shows that its policies are effective. The school places a high priority on safety and safeguarding. Child protection procedures are robust, regularly updated and fully meet current safeguarding requirements. The checks that the school makes on the suitability of adults to work with children and pupils are rigorous. The school has evaluated its religious, ethnic and socio-economic context thoroughly, and the school is a happy harmonious society. The school arranges a joint residential visit with a school from Nottingham, which is starting to provide pupils with an insight into people's backgrounds that are different to their own. Links to communities abroad are developing.

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*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<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>2</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>2</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>2</b>

## **Early Years Foundation Stage**

Most children enter the school with levels of attainment below those expected for their age and many of them reach average levels by the time they start Year 1. Boys and girls make similar progress overall. Progress is good across all the areas of learning save creative development, where it is satisfactory. The school recognises this and has introduced more dance, drama and music lessons to tackle this relative weakness. Children are well behaved and are polite to each other and adults and their personal development is good. Children are very well cared for well. Parents feel well informed about their child's progress.

Children really enjoy their learning. In a lesson seen children were enthusiastically learning letters and the sounds they make through drama, games and puzzles. This accelerated their reading skills. Occasionally learning slows for some children at the end of a lesson while they wait for others to finish their work. The stimulating outdoor learning area is used well to develop learning. There is an appropriate balance of adult-led and child-initiated learning.

Leaders plan regular assessments of each child's gains that are used well by adults to plan challenging next steps in children's learning. They also provide valuable training that for adults that is promoting their early years teaching skills well.



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

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
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**

About one fifth of parents returned a questionnaire. Many added positive comments about how much their children enjoyed school, the very good care their children receive, the good teaching and their good progress. Inspectors agree with these positive views. There were very few negative comments. One parent wrote about her concerns over staff absence, which has slowed her child's progress. Inspectors recognise that the school has been through a difficult period of staff changes and absence. They found that currently staffing is stable and the progress of pupils across the school is good.

## 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 31 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 141 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	22	71	9	29	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	23	74	8	26	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	17	55	11	35	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	15	48	12	39	1	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	16	52	14	45	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	14	45	15	48	1	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	17	55	13	42	1	3	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)	13	42	14	45	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	13	42	15	48	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	12	39	16	52	2	6	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	13	42	13	42	2	6	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	16	52	12	39	1	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	15	48	16	52	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

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.**



6 May 2010

Dear pupils

Inspection of St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Rugeley, WS15 1BN

Thank you for being so polite and friendly when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed our visit and seeing you in lessons and at play. I especially enjoyed talking to you in lessons and hearing how enthusiastic you are about your learning. You are rightly proud of the school's happy atmosphere in which you all get on so well together. St Joseph's Catholic Primary is a good school. Here are some of the things we found out,

Your teachers ensure that you make good progress in all classes.

You enjoy school and feel extremely safe and secure.

You try your very best to eat a healthy diet and take plenty of exercise.

Your behaviour is good.

You have good relationships with your teachers and you try hard for them.

The curriculum provides you with exciting clubs and visits, which you enjoy.

Adults look after you very well and are always ready to help you.

The headteacher and staff are working hard to make the school get better.

We have asked the school to do two things to help you do even better in your learning by:

- making sure teachers always provide work for you that is neither too hard nor too easy so you make better progress
- helping you to meet and work with boys and girls from areas that are different from Rugeley so that you have a better understanding of people from these backgrounds.

You can help the school by continuing to try your best in lessons, behaving well and attending regularly.

Yours sincerely

Gerald Griffin

Lead inspector

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