

St Joseph's Catholic Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125726
Local Authority	Warwickshire
Inspection number	340828
Inspection dates	11–12 March 2010
Reporting inspector	Peter Kerr

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	271
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Jim Crawford
Headteacher	Mr Richard J Phillips
Date of previous school inspection	23 November 2006
School address	Riversley Park Coton Road Nuneaton
Telephone number	02476 383807
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The majority of time was spent looking at learning. All eight teachers were observed teaching and 12 lessons were seen. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, governors and staff. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at pupils' books, records of their progress, teachers' planning, school policies and 99 parental questionnaire returns.

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

- pupils' progress in mathematics compared to that in English
- the progress of more able pupils
- the school's evaluations of teaching and learning.

Information about the school

St Joseph's is a larger than average junior school. The large majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average, but, of these, a large number have statements of educational needs. A very few pupils are at the early stages of learning English. An equally small number of children come from Traveller backgrounds. The school holds the Activemark for its work in physical education and the Best School award from a local area arts festival.

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

The school has improved since the last inspection from satisfactory to good. Pupils achieve well and reach above average standards in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6. Traveller pupils, those at the early stages of learning English and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make good progress because of the individual support they receive. Boys and girls achieve equally well. Pupils' achievements are better in English than in mathematics because of the sustained measures taken to raise attainment in writing. The gap is narrowing, but more-able pupils still make slower progress in mathematics than in English. Teaching is good overall, with some outstanding practice in Years 5 and 6. Key features of the best lessons are very effective use of assessments to plan activities that challenge pupils of all abilities and excellent marking that shows all pupils how to improve. However, inadequate use of assessment stalls progress for some pupils lower down the school, especially in mathematics. Good care and guidance for pupils contributes to their feeling very safe in school and their exceptional understanding of how to lead healthy lives. Their excellent behaviour in lessons enables them to make the most of the learning opportunities on offer. A good curriculum provides interest in areas such as music and sport and helps to keep attendance above average.

A shared sense of educational purpose has been established by the current leadership team. They provide models of good practice and are increasingly spreading this across the school. They are aware of remaining weaknesses and show a determination to address them. Together with improvements secured over recent years, this gives the school a good capacity for sustained improvement. Governors are committed to the school, support it in practical ways and ensure that all required policies are in place. However, the procedures for reviewing and updating policies, and independently evaluating the effectiveness of the school, are in the early stages of development.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the consistency in pupils' progress across the school by:
 - ensuring that all teachers make similarly effective use of assessment in English and mathematics to move each pupil on at a challenging pace
 - providing greater challenge for more-able pupils to apply and extend their skills in mathematics.
- Improve the effectiveness of governance by:
 - introducing rigorous procedures for monitoring the implementation of policies

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and evaluating their impact

- undertaking a more thorough evaluation of pupils' progress and holding the school more closely to account for improving it.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils' attainment in English and mathematics is above average at the end of Year 6. Particularly good progress in English reflects a consistent approach to the teaching of writing that has been embedded in the school for a number of years. Pupils' progress in mathematics improved in 2009 from a satisfactory base because of the introduction of a new scheme of work throughout the school. The impact of this has been uneven, however, with much slower progress evident in Year 3 than higher up the school. Pupils make consistently good progress in Years 5 and 6, with outstanding progress in some classes. The remaining gap in pupils' achievements between mathematics and English is evident mainly among more-able pupils, who show themselves able to learn more quickly than some lessons allow them to. Girls and boys are equally confident in lessons and do equally well. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress, both within the class and when withdrawn individually or in small groups. Those pupils at the early stages of learning English integrate well in lessons and make good progress in learning English through specialist individual tuition. Children from Traveller families receive good support to attend as often as possible and to catch up with work missed.

The pupils said emphatically that they felt safe in school and they showed an excellent understanding of how to stay safe and healthy. Their knowledge of the deleterious effects of tobacco and alcohol, for example, was exceptional. A large majority of pupil questionnaire returns reflected these views. There is a high level of enthusiasm for physical education and also take up of sports opportunities. Pupils' behaviour was of a consistently high standard throughout the inspection and this contributed to them getting the most out of lessons.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	2
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

¹ 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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Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms	
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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 Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

The great majority of the teaching seen during the inspection was good or better. It was consistently at least good in Years 5 and 6, and some was outstanding. Most lessons follow a good plan that is based on accurate assessments of what the pupils already know. Planning for the weakest lessons is not based on good assessments, particularly lower down the school, where books show a lack of challenge for more-able pupils. As the best lessons progress, teachers ask probing questions of pupils to make them think and then adapt the content in the light of the pupils' responses. The work in the pupils' books shows some excellent marking and support for individual pupils to move forward at their own pace, especially in writing. This is also happening with increasing effect in mathematics in some classes, but, in others, marking is much less helpful in mathematics than in English.

The pupils' all-round development and enjoyment of school is enhanced by the good range of opportunities provided within and beyond lessons. In music and sport, creative partnerships with secondary schools boost the expertise available and extend opportunities considerably. This contributes to high levels of participation and success in local arts and sport events. Arrangements for care and guidance are good. Pupils feel well looked after and their targets in English and mathematics support their progress well. Pupils at risk of underachieving are given whatever support they need to participate in and enjoy lessons and other activities, even if this requires constant individual attention. The continuous efforts made to encourage good attendance among all groups encourage frequent absentees to greater efforts and keep overall attendance above average.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

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The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2
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How effective are leadership and management?

The current leadership structure is working well to provide clear priorities for continuing improvement. Senior leaders make good use of the information they gain from tracking pupils' progress and evaluating teaching to identify weaknesses and set clear improvement goals. For example, they have raised standards in English and mathematics by introducing school-wide initiatives and monitoring their implementation. Areas of current weak practice in the use of assessment have been rightly targeted and expectations for improvements made clear. The governing body is aware that it does not have a sufficiently informed view of these variations in performance or plays an active enough role in ensuring that expectations for good teaching and learning are met evenly throughout the school.

All statutory requirements are met and policies are in place for the safeguarding of pupils, equality of opportunity, combating discrimination and promoting community cohesion. These policies operate satisfactorily, but are not sufficiently grounded in a thorough analysis of the school's circumstances. The monitoring and evaluation of their implementation and impact are not robust enough. This has led to occasional lapses in observance of some rules and a lack of clarity about the implementation of some policies. Community cohesion operates well at the school and parish level, for example, but progress is slow in exploring and promoting understanding of diversity within the wider society.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
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	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
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	2

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Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers have largely positive views of the school. Some think that the school does not deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour. Inspectors found no evidence to support this view. They saw no examples of poor behaviour and judged the behaviour they did see as exceptionally good. Some parents and carers are not happy with the progress their children are making. Inspectors found that, although progress was good overall, it was not as good in some classes as in others, and not as good in mathematics as in English. Fewer than one in ten parents expressed any other concerns.

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 Junior 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 72 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 272 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	34	51	30	45	1	1	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	37	55	28	42	2	3	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	27	40	36	54	3	4	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	32	48	28	42	5	7	2	3
The teaching is good at this school	31	46	34	51	0	0	2	3
The school helps me to support my child's learning	28	42	34	51	4	6	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	31	46	35	52	1	1	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)	29	43	32	48	3	4	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	31	46	31	46	3	4	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	21	31	35	52	9	13	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	23	34	38	57	4	6	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	33	49	28	42	4	6	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	34	51	29	43	2	3	1	1

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 pupil's 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.



15 March 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Joseph's Catholic Junior School, Nuneaton, CV11 5TY

My colleagues and I appreciated the warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school. We found you engaging to talk to, good mannered and hard-working. These are the things we were particularly impressed with:

- your excellent behaviour, which helped you to learn in lessons and made the school feel a nice place to be
- your exceptionally detailed knowledge of how to keep safe and healthy
- the good standards you achieve in English and the improvements you are making in mathematics
- the excellent lessons we saw in Years 5 and 6
- the opportunities you have to do extra music and sports.

We have asked the staff to do a few things to help you achieve even higher standards.

These are:

- make sure you do equally well no matter which class you are in
- set more challenging work for those of you who find that what you are doing in mathematics is too easy.

We have also asked the governors to work more closely with the teachers to make sure these things happen. You can also help by trying your hardest at all times and making sure that you do what is asked of you to improve your work.

We wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Peter Kerr

Lead inspector

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