

St Josephs Roman Catholic Primary School Aided

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108617
Local Authority	North Tyneside
Inspection number	356394
Inspection dates	14–15 March 2011
Reporting inspector	Gordon Potter

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	322
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Miss Margaret Nagle
Headteacher	Mrs Carol Jewitt
Date of previous school inspection	29 April 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 28 lessons, saw 13 different teachers and held meetings with members of the governing body, staff, parents and carers and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at a range of school policies and documentation relating to safeguarding and strategic planning, examples of pupils' work, assessment data and monitoring records. They also scrutinised the 74 questionnaires returned by parents and carers as well as 89 questionnaires from pupils.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Whether teaching is consistently good across school and whether lessons have appropriate pace and challenge so that all groups of pupils, particularly boys in Key Stage 1 and girls in Key Stage 2, can make good progress.
- Whether the curriculum provides sufficient opportunities for pupils to explore together so that they can enjoy their learning and make good progress.
- Whether pupils have a clear understanding of other faiths and cultures and the multicultural make-up of society in the United Kingdom.

Information about the school

This school is much larger than others of the same type. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds, although the school caters for increasing proportions of pupils from many different ethnic backgrounds, many of whom speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is slightly above average. The proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is below average. The school has achieved the Artsmark and Basic Skills Award.

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

This is a good school. All staff provide exceptional care and support, in accordance with its values, which ensure that pupils are happy and feel extremely safe, behave well and show a strong awareness of how to stay fit and healthy. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make outstanding progress because there are exceptional strategies, allied to excellent teaching, to support and enhance their learning. Well-judged initiatives ensure that overall good teaching engages pupils and helps all groups to make good progress. In some lessons, teachers offer too much help, consequently, the pace of learning drops and progress slows. The curriculum provides a range of memorable experiences and has a strong emphasis on developing pupils' basic skills in English and mathematics. However, there are too few opportunities for pupils to work together, solve problems and apply their skills in writing and mathematics. The school has striven to improve attendance. Despite its wide range of well-judged strategies, which have significantly reduced rates of persistent absence, attendance remains average because a few families do not see the benefits of ensuring their children attend regularly and too many families take holidays during term time.

Teachers use assessment consistently well in lessons, constantly checking pupils' understanding and helping the pupils recognise how well they are doing. Effective use of targets and marking accurately tell pupils how well they have done but marking does not consistently tell them how to improve. Robust tracking gathers accurate information about pupils' abilities and this valuable information is used highly effectively to ensure that the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well met. However, such information is not always used to ensure that work in lessons constantly matches the needs of all pupils.

Pupils contribute strongly to developments in school through the school council and their newspaper and say that 'playground friends' help them play together and behave well. They have a strong sense of right and wrong and how to help others. As a result parents and carers are extremely supportive of the school and how it encourages pupils' social and moral development. Pupils have a good understanding of different faiths and cultures because the school celebrates the growing ethnic diversity of its pupils alongside its local heritage and distinctive ethos. Good partnerships with outside agencies encourage enterprise skills and support pupils with a range of complex needs. The school's accurate self-evaluation and its success in raising attainment demonstrate its good capacity to improve. It provides good value for money.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- By the end of the current school year, further increase the rates at which pupils make progress, and by the summer of 2012, raise pupils' attainment to higher levels, by:
 - ensuring that all lessons have a brisk pace and pupils have sufficient opportunities to work together, solve problems and apply their skills across a wider range of subjects, especially in writing and mathematics
 - ensuring that data are well used so that work is well matched to the needs of individual pupils
 - using marking more effectively to help pupils know exactly how to improve their work.
- Improve attendance by:
 - ensuring rigorous strategies are in place to effectively monitor and address pupils' absence
 - working closely with families to help them ensure their children come to school regularly.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

The extent to which pupils achieve and enjoy their work is good. Pupils are courteous, have good attitudes, form positive relationships and show great keenness to do well in their work. In lessons, they especially enjoy challenging and lively activities, such as analysing and creating advertisements or being involved in role play activities to learn about life as a coal miner.

The skills and abilities with which pupils enter school are typically well below those expected for their age. Pupils, including those known to be eligible for free school meals, make good progress to attain standards which are broadly average at the end of Year 6. Well-targeted initiatives have led to increased progress and raised attainment in mathematics and English. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are exceptionally well cared for and supported in their learning and they make outstanding progress because their work offers highly-appropriate challenge and interest.

Pupils care for one another very well, have great respect for each other and for the adults in the school, and say they feel exceptionally safe. They are confident that they know exactly what to do in the event of a concern. Pupils are well aware of the importance of a healthy diet and of taking plenty of exercise. This is reflected in their enthusiastic involvement in physical education and the high take-up of healthy school meals.

Pupils make a very positive contribution to the school community through the elected school council which meets regularly and listens to pupils' concerns and ideas. They willingly take on roles, such as running the tuck shop and as playground friends, helping everyone to eat healthily, behave well and feel extremely safe. They support a range of charities and participate in competitions with other local schools and in activities with the local church and council. Average attendance rates, strong understanding of the issues related to the world of work and confident use of skills in information and communication technology, mean that pupils are well equipped for their future economic well-being.

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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	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	1
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
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	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

Teachers make learning fun, make it clear to pupils what they will learn and how they will know if they have succeeded. They employ interactive whiteboard technology well to engage pupils, and to plan effective opportunities for pupils to learn through practical activities, including experiments, games and using information and communication technology. Teachers use questions well to ascertain what pupils already know and check that they have made progress. There are very strong relationships and teachers and teaching assistants interact extremely well with pupils to support them in their learning. Occasionally, the pace of learning drops because introductory activities go on too long, teachers offer too much information and pupils are prevented from getting on with tasks or exploring together, especially in writing and mathematics.

The curriculum contributes to pupils' good progress by offering a range of stimulating activities which are increasingly helping them to see the links between subjects and to develop and apply important skills. For example, work on the River Tyne and the Robert Westall Trail successfully develops imagination, creativity and research skills. There are good procedures to promote spelling and reading and there are many opportunities for pupils to write in religious education lessons. Well-planned enrichment activities, including visits to places of worship and Robinwood Residential Centre, and opportunities to work with sports coaches, writers and artists, help to develop pupils' skills in sport and art and

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their understanding of environmental issues and other faiths and cultures. There are many popular extra-curricular clubs which promote learning and enjoyment in sporting, arts and environmental activities, including choir, rugby and Saturday Club for those pupils who are gifted and talented.

Staff's extremely detailed knowledge of the personal and emotional needs of individual pupils is put to excellent use. Pupils are cared for exceptionally well, their varied learning needs are met and they develop self-esteem, respect and a sense of responsibility. There are extremely successful strategies to help those pupils who may be falling behind in their learning and for those pupils who have a range of complex social, emotional and behavioural needs. The school has worked closely with parents and carers and significantly reduced the number of pupils who are persistently absent. Well-established and highly-effective practices involve parents and carers when their children enter school, move from class-to-class and transfer to secondary school.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The highly experienced and well-respected headteacher has rigorously and skilfully pursued and implemented strategies that have brought about an improvement in school effectiveness. Very ably supported by the deputy headteacher, she has established effective systems for tracking progress and monitoring the effectiveness of teaching, that have helped to raise attainment. Her view of shared and collaborative leadership ensures that all staff have clearly-defined roles and responsibilities and are enthusiastic about their contribution to the development of key areas of the curriculum. They welcome these opportunities to contribute to decision-making and the very detailed school improvement plan, and to advance their own professional development. The governing body offers good support and challenge to the school and has developed effective procedures to monitor learning.

The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils are outstanding, as all aspects meet government requirements and are rigorously monitored and reviewed to ensure pupils' safety. The success of these arrangements is reflected in how exceptionally safe pupils feel and in their keen awareness of potential risks to their well-being. The school has effective links with outside agencies to support the pupils' wide ranging needs and to develop learning opportunities. For example, the Every Child Counts initiative with the university has had a positive impact on raising attainment in calculation. There is a clear commitment to promoting equal opportunities and to ensuring that discrimination against any group is avoided at all times. Careful analysis of assessment information means that

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any variations in performance are identified and resolved quickly and parents and carers are kept well-informed of pupils' progress. The school is proud of its inclusive nature and makes a good contribution to community cohesion. The sense of community in the school is extremely strong and there are good links with the local community. Pupils have a developing understanding of Great Britain as a diverse, multicultural society, and of life in other countries.

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	2
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	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make good progress from their starting points and enter Year 1 with below average skills overall. Children thrive on creative activities, such as craft, painting, writing and imaginative play and develop as confident and caring individuals. They particularly enjoy construction, singing, discovering about people who help us and doing role-play activities, for example, re-telling the story of the Three Billy Goats Gruff. There is a strong commitment to outdoor learning and children enjoy climbing and exploring together. There are particularly effective procedures to encourage boys' writing. All children enjoy lively and effective interventions by their teachers, although these are inconsistent, for example, when they learn to link sounds and letters. Children develop independence and a good understanding of how to stay healthy, through accessing healthy snacks and drinks. Staff ensure that requirements regarding children's safety are rigorously met. They encourage children to share, to take turns and to behave well. The Early Years Foundation Stage leader has a very clear understanding of how children learn and stimulates their enthusiasm. She is well supported by the Reception class teachers so that work is well planned and based on observations of children's learning. However, the good assessment practice that exists in linking work to early learning goals is inconsistently applied. Extremely positive partnerships with parents and carers enable children to settle quickly into the Early Years Foundation Stage classes and excellent arrangements exist for

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transition into Year 1. The learning journals, in particular, help parents and carers to understand how well their children are progressing.

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

The proportion of parents and carers responding to the questionnaire was below average for a school of this type. The respondents strongly support the school and its leaders and how they meet their child's needs, ensuring their child enjoys school, is healthy and safe. The inspection findings reflect these very positive views.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Josephs Roman Catholic Primary School Aided 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 74 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 322 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	47	64	26	35	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	44	59	29	39	1	1	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	50	68	20	27	2	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	42	57	30	41	2	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	48	65	24	32	0	0	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	48	65	25	34	0	0	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	34	46	34	46	3	4	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)	46	62	23	31	2	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	48	65	22	30	2	3	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	44	59	26	35	1	1	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	44	59	28	38	1	1	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	42	57	31	42	1	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	51	69	22	30	0	0	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 all 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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2009/10 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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.



16 March 2011

Dear Pupils,

Inspection of St Josephs Roman Catholic Primary School Aided, North Shields, NE29 7BT

On behalf of the inspection team, thank you for making us so welcome when we inspected your school.

You go to a good school and your teachers know how to make it even better. The team was impressed by the work of the school council and enjoyed reading your newspaper. Your behaviour, politeness and the great care and respect you have for one another are admirable. Your teachers take exceptional care of you and try hard to make your lessons fun and help you to work hard. You told us that you look forward to coming to school because you like your teachers and appreciate the activities the school provides for you, such as visits and clubs. Your parents and carers like the school very much. Your teachers have agreed with me that they should do the following things to help your school to improve even more.

- Help you reach higher standards at the end of Year 6, by providing more opportunities for you to investigate together, solve problems and apply your skills in exciting activities, especially in mathematics and in writing.
- Make sure that marking tells you clearly how to improve your work.
- Make sure that all the information that teachers have about how well you are doing is used to plan work that is at the right level of challenge for all of you.
- Work with your parents and carers to make sure that more of you attend school more regularly.

You can help by continuing to do your best and attending regularly. We wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Gordon Potter
Lead inspector

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