

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Norfolk Road, Dorking, Surrey, RH4 3JA

Inspection dates 15–16 October 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils achieve well. They make good progress across many subjects. When they leave at the end of Year 6 their attainment is well above average in English and mathematics.
- Good teaching ensures that pupils are taught the necessary key skills to help them to become successful learners.
- Pupils make good progress in developing personal skills because spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is taught well.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is good and there are excellent relationships in all areas. Pupils feel safe and enjoy coming to school.
- Pupils are proud of their work and talk confidently about what they have achieved. Displays around the school are a celebration of pupils' good quality work.
- Governors and other leaders work well as a team. They have established a system of regular checks and performance monitoring to make sure teachers receive suitable training and development. This has resulted in pupils continuing to make good progress.
- Parents and carers provide good support by working well with the school to ensure pupils arrive on time and ready to learn. Pupils' attendance is above average.

It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- Pupils do not make outstanding progress in enough lessons. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to extend their thinking skills in order to fully develop their knowledge and understanding.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 16 lessons, some of which were joint observations with the headteacher. In addition, inspectors made a number of additional short visits to lessons to look at the quality of teaching and behaviour, and listened to pupils read.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, other members of the senior leadership team, the special educational needs coordinator and subject leaders for English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology and religious education, members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the school's own surveys, 55 responses to the online questionnaire Parent View and 14 questionnaires from members of staff.
- A range of documentation was reviewed. This included: the school's checks on how well it is doing and the improvement plan; the school's data for tracking of pupils' progress; the work pupils were doing in their books; and the school's documentation relating to safeguarding.
- Inspectors met with parents and carers at the start of the school day.

Inspection team

Neil McDonough, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Narinder Dohel	Additional Inspector
Peter Thrussell	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a smaller than average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium, the additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, looked after children and service children, is lower than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils identified with special educational needs requiring school action is much lower than in other schools.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is similar to that found in other schools.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage there is one Reception class.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so that more pupils make outstanding progress by providing
 - more opportunities for pupils to deepen their thinking through activities which help them to develop their ability to evaluate, analyse and be creative in order to extend their knowledge and understanding.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children join the school in the Early Years Foundation Stage with knowledge, skills and abilities at different starting points. They build on these skills and make good progress so that when they move into Key Stage 1 they exceed the achievement levels normally found in other schools. The rate of learning steadily increases as pupils progress through the school so that by the time they leave in Year 6 they have reached levels of attainment that are much higher than in most other schools.
- Good progress in Key Stage 1 results in above average attainment in reading, writing and mathematics. During this time pupils also make good progress in developing good personal and social skills which ensures they are confident, resilient learners. This prepares them well for further developing their learning in Key Stage 2 where progress in each year group is good across all subjects.
- Pupils are proud of the writing that is in their books and on display around the school. The content and presentation of their work shows that they are proficient writers who have made good progress in using grammar, punctuation and spelling. In mathematics they develop good skills in problem solving and reasoning and make progress which is faster than often found in most other similar schools.
- Pupils establish good skills in the Early Years Foundation Stage in recognising the sounds made by letters, how these blend together to make words and how these skills help improve confidence in reading. As pupils move through the school these early skills are further developed so that by the time they leave Key Stage 1 pupils read well and use many good strategies to read unfamiliar words and understand the story.
- Disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and pupils who struggle with learning make similar progress to other pupils because they have individual learning plans and are supported by additional adults. Pupils who did not make the same progress as others in the Year 1 phonics check (letters and the sounds they make), were given extra teaching and have now reached the same standard as others in their class.
- Pupils who are supported through pupil premium funding receive extra attention to make sure that any gaps in their learning are tackled. By the end of Year 6 there is no significant difference between the achievement of this group of pupils and that of their classmates in English and mathematics.

The quality of teaching is good

- Typically in lessons there are excellent relationships between pupils and teachers where pupils learn well from each other when working in pairs or in groups. Teachers have high expectations for pupils and are successful in developing their competency as writers.
- Teachers' good questioning strengthens pupils' understanding by challenging them to think carefully about their answers. Pupils' communication skills are developed well because they are challenged to use a range of interesting vocabulary in their answers.
- The quality of work in pupils' books and regular assessments show that pupils have made good progress. Teachers mark work regularly using a system fully understood by pupils which provides clear guidance about the quality of the work and gives detailed steps about how to improve.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, teachers provide pupils with a good, wide range of activities inside and outside the classroom which develop social, physical and communication skills well. The teaching of letters and the sounds they make is helping pupils to recognise words as part of their early reading development.
- Teaching assistants are effective in helping different pupils make good progress with their

learning by either working individually with a pupil or through assisting with a small group.

- Teachers know pupils extremely well and ensure that lessons are planned to cater for individual needs and they provide clear guidance about the steps pupils will need to take to be successful. Teachers check on pupils' knowledge and understanding regularly during lessons and, when necessary, adapt the learning to offer greater challenge or make it slightly easier for pupils to understand.
- In some classes teachers are highly proficient at providing stimuli for pupils to deepen their thinking. For example, in a mathematics lesson the teacher posed highly challenging questions which allowed for the use of evaluative, analytical and creative thinking skills, but this is not consistent across the school.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils are friendly, polite, courteous and respectful at all times. They move around the school in a calm but purposeful manner being acutely aware of their responsibility to be of help to others and in particular, to younger pupils. Their behaviour and kindness to each other in and around school and their happy demeanour in lessons, during playtime and lunchtime show the school to be a caring community.
- Behaviour is good because governors, school leaders and staff have high expectations at all times. As a parent commented, 'Not only are pupils taught well in lessons, they are taught to have good manners.'
- Pupils feel safe and well cared for by staff. Pupils know about different types of bullying, including cyber bullying. Instances of any kind of bullying are extremely rare.
- Pupils have good attitudes to learning and this is demonstrated in the improvement in the quality of work in their books, on display in classrooms and in other areas as they move through the school.
- Pupils enjoy all aspects of school. They attend regularly, on time and are eager to learn.
- Pupils are well looked after and they are safe at school. The overwhelming majority of parents and carers that responded to the online questionnaire Parent View agreed that the school makes sure its pupils are well behaved.

The leadership and management are good

- Leaders and managers have high expectations for pupils' achievement in all areas of school life which is reflected in the very strong sense of community, consistently good teaching and pupils' good progress. A robust system for checking the progress of pupils ensures they keep on track to reach their targets. Swift action is taken where pupils are identified as needing a boost to keep them on the right course.
- Established subject leaders have expertise in monitoring learning and those new to the role are developing their skills. All have received a good level of training and have developed close partnerships with other schools to share good practice. They review teachers' planning, check on the quality of pupils' work in their books and visit classrooms to see how well key skills are taught and how well pupils are progressing. This has resulted in overall attainment remaining above average at Key Stage 1 and well above average at Key Stage 2.
- The local authority provides an external view about how well the school is doing. This good level of support and challenge is used alongside the school's own systems for checking the quality of education to make informed and accurate decisions about future improvements. The performance management procedures ensure teachers are held to account for the achievement of their pupils and this has resulted in pupils making good progress. Performance management is linked to teachers' pay.

- The special educational needs coordinator ensures that pupils who require assistance with their learning are identified as soon as they start school. This early action and a carefully planned programme of work make sure these pupils make similar progress to others. This provides evidence for the school's good processes for equality of opportunity.
- The school uses the pupil premium well to train additional adults to work with pupils who are eligible for free school meals, either individually or in small teaching groups and this has resulted in these pupils making similar progress to others.
- The additional funding that the school receives for developing physical education is being used to improve teaching skills. The number of pupils involved in a range of sporting activities has increased and is contributing to their well-being.
- The school's programme for learning is well planned and effective in ensuring pupils make good progress and it supports their social, moral, spiritual and cultural education well. In Reception there is a good balance of adult-led activities and those that children choose for themselves. Regular visits to places of interest help pupils make connections between different subjects and develop their creative writing and thinking skills, but fully extending pupils' deeper thinking skills is not yet a common feature across the school.
- The school helps pupils to understand how to keep themselves safe. All of the parents and carers who responded to the online survey Parent View state that their children are well looked after and that they feel safe at school. Statutory requirements relating to safeguarding are effectively met.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have a clear and unambiguous view about the school and a determination for the school to become outstanding. They have a good understanding of the quality of teaching and recognise what needs to be done to improve pupils' progress.
 - The governing body is involved in the school's robust appraisal systems that are used effectively to ensure teachers are suitably equipped to improve the quality of learning.
 - The governors understand the school's method for tracking the progress of pupils and they are confident in asking leaders challenging questions about pupils' achievement and teachers' performance. They contribute to the school's checks on its performance through regular visits and are prominent in working with the headteacher to prepare an action plan focused on improving teaching and learning.
 - Governors are acutely aware of the need to have a range of skills within the governing body and have recruited governors who have experience in dealing with personnel and finance. They have undertaken appropriate training in child protection and make sure all appropriate arrangements are in place to safeguard pupils. They keep parents and carers aware of their work through a governors' newsletter.
 - Governors know how the additional pupil premium funding is being used and the difference it is making to pupils. They also know that the new funding for physical education is being used to improve teachers' skills and increase the participation of pupils in sporting activities.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	125204
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	426621

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	188
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Simon Bullen
Headteacher	Carolyn Scrutton
Date of previous school inspection	23–24 October 2008
Telephone number	01306 883 934
Fax number	01306 500 286
Email address	office@stjosephs-dorking.surrey.sch.uk

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