



St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Brighouse

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 107559
LEA Calderdale
Inspection number 277775
Inspection dates 9 November 2005 to 10 November 2005
Reporting inspector Mrs Elisabeth Linley HMI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Finkil Street
School category	Voluntary aided		Hove Edge
Age range of pupils	3 to 11		Brighouse, West Yorkshire HD6 2NT
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01484 713037
Number on roll	256	Fax number	01484 400496
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr D Godlington
Date of previous inspection	15 November 1999	Headteacher	Mr D Gott

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School is situated in the parish of Brighouse. It is similar in size to other primary schools. The school has a nursery that feeds into nine other local schools and about one third of children transfer to St Joseph's. When children start in the Nursery their skills are broadly what might be expected for their age, although many have underdeveloped personal and social skills. By the time they join the reception class most children have reached the levels expected for their age.

At the time of the inspection, 256 pupils are attending the school including 48 children in the nursery unit; a lower than average number of pupils are eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average, however, there is a higher than average proportion of pupils who have statements for their special educational needs. Almost all pupils are from white British backgrounds and none are in the early stages of learning English as a second language.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school with outstanding features and gives good value for money. Parents are rightly proud of their children's good achievement and of their behaviour, which is outstanding. Support, care and guidance for pupils' personal development are highly effective; pupils enjoy school very much.

Children make good progress in the Foundation Stage and during their time in school. As a result, they attain standards that are above average overall at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2. This is because the majority of teaching in school is good. Pupils say that learning is fun and they are keen to take part in the many activities that enrich the curriculum, which is broad and balanced and meets requirements. The school has worked hard to improve resources for information and communication technology (ICT). There is insufficient hardware, however, to ensure that all pupils can support their learning through ICT across the curriculum.

Leadership and management are good overall. The headteacher's leadership is highly effective and governance is outstanding. The headteacher, senior management team and governors have ensured that good progress has been made since the last inspection. Assessment data is generally used well to help set challenging targets for pupils in English and mathematics. This is not consistent across all subjects and classes, however, and so has rightly been identified for further development.

This is a school that knows itself exceptionally well and inspectors agree with their judgements. School leaders, ably supported by staff, governors and parents, demonstrate outstanding commitment to the school. They have received a number of national awards including Investors in People. They are ambitious for its success and, as a result, the school has good capacity to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

The school should:

- ensure that assessment information is used consistently across the curriculum and in all classes to guide pupils' learning and so aid their achievement
- increase ICT resources so that they are in line with those found in most other schools.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

The standards pupils reach by the ages of 7 and 11 are above those expected in English and science and average in mathematics. Children make good progress in the Foundation Stage and most enter Year 1 with standards that are in line for their age. Their personal, social and emotional development is very good. From this positive start, pupils make good progress by the end of Year 2. By the age of 7, most read and write better than other pupils of the same age.

Pupils continue to achieve well in Key Stage 2 and by the end of Year 6, most pupils do well in the national tests. The trend of improvement in results for English, mathematics and science from 2000 to 2004 was above the national average. In the 2005 national tests, however, results in mathematics and English dipped and this was because there was a smaller cohort than usual with a slightly higher proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Nonetheless, pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress. This is because of the effective and well planned support provided by the school.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils are extremely positive about their school. They learn in an outstandingly safe and supportive environment. Their enjoyment of school is excellent as reflected in their exemplary behaviour. As a result of the school's hard work, attendance has improved and is just above the national average; punctuality is good.

Pupils work very well together, for example, as seen in a Year 6 lesson, where pupils rehearsed their interpretation of the Hakka. Older pupils show a mature attitude when they take on responsibilities. Younger pupils also have their voice heard through the well organised school council. Pupils know their views are important and that they are taken into account.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is of a high quality. Pupils achieve a high level of spirituality as a result of excellent assemblies that promote Christian values. For example, Year 4 pupils presented a moving assembly for Remembrance Day. Pupils show respect and care for others, for example, by contributing Christmas gift boxes and by supporting the ' Make Poverty History' campaign.

Pupils are well aware of healthy lifestyles because the school places high emphasis on their health and well-being. They participate enthusiastically in the many opportunities for physical exercise. They understand very well the dangers of drugs and why it is important to keep fit and healthy. Pupils understand the importance of healthy eating and drinking as reflected in the school receiving a Healthy Schools Award.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching is good. This represents significant improvement since the previous inspection when several weaknesses were identified in lessons for pupils in Years 1 and 2.

Excellent relationships between staff and pupils contribute much to the school's extremely positive climate for learning. Most teachers successfully meet the full range of individual needs by setting work at the right level, particularly in literacy and numeracy. In these subjects, teachers' marking of pupils' written work is thorough,

supportive and makes clear what pupils need to do to improve their work. Outstanding teaching was seen across the Foundation Stage and in a Year 1 science lesson. In these lessons, learning was fun and pupils progressed, particularly in their personal development, which was very good.

Teachers make good use of interactive whiteboards to develop pupils' learning. They ask searching questions to promote pupils' thinking and involve them well in discussions. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are given clear guidance and effective support to help them achieve their individual targets.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum provided for pupils is good. All the required subjects are taught. Planning ensures that all the National Curriculum subjects are covered in full. The Foundation Stage curriculum is much improved since the last inspection. There is good liaison between the Nursery and Reception that now ensures continuity in practice between the classes.

The school is committed to pupils' enjoyment of learning. For example, all pupils in Years 3 to 6 benefit from learning to play the violin. There is a very good variety of opportunities outside of lessons for pupils to pursue their interests and develop their talents, especially through clubs and a residential visit for Year 6 pupils. Such opportunities enhance pupils' personal development and contribute significantly to achievement in physical education and music.

The ICT curriculum is fully in place, but the school identifies rightly the need for further resources, such as laptop computers, as a priority for development. There is insufficient ICT hardware to allow pupils enough opportunities to use computers to enhance learning in other subjects.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school takes very good care of its pupils. Pupils report that there is always someone to talk to if they have a problem. They feel valued and special because they are praised and rewarded for their achievements. The school's strong Catholic ethos supports pastoral provision very well and underpins pupils' outstanding personal development.

Pupils are guided well in their learning in English and mathematics and they have clear targets to help them improve. In other subjects, assessment information is not used consistently through school to guide their learning. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, however, are well supported. All staff members are sensitive to their needs and meet them well.

Child protection and health and safety procedures are effective. The awareness of safety issues is taught well. For example, after visits from the Fire Service, Year 5 pupils produced a fire safety plan for their own home. Similarly, the misuse of drugs, keeping

fit and healthy, and eating a well balanced diet is strongly promoted through the curriculum.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school is correct in its judgement that leadership and management are good. The headteacher provides highly effective leadership and is ably supported by the deputy headteacher and other members of the senior management team. As a team they have a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and are taking the necessary steps to bring about improvement.

The Foundation Stage coordinator has enabled significant progress to be made to provision. The coordinator for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities enables other staff to provide good support for pupils in their classes. Managers at all levels understand their roles, and are committed to school improvement. A number are benefiting from middle management training and this is strengthening the capacity of this group.

All members of the school community are valued. Parents play a crucial part in their children's education and they know that their views are important. The school also develops excellent partnerships with external agencies and pupils clearly benefit from the support they provide.

Governors make a significant contribution to the school in their role as critical friends. They challenge and support in equal measure. The school is highly effective in how it evaluates its work. Finances are managed carefully and additional funds are sought and used wisely. Good improvement has been made since the last inspection and the school has good capacity to improve further. The school provides good value for money.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for contributing to the inspection when inspectors visited your school recently. You were very helpful in telling us what you liked about school and talking about your work.

We found out lots of things that we would like to share with you:

- you know that your school is a good school and you enjoy the many good things that you are able to do, like learning the violin and lots of sporting activities
- you try really hard with your work and you all do well, particularly in reading and writing
- you are very caring of others and your behaviour is excellent
- your teachers and all the other people in school who work with you, teach you well and take very good care of you
- your headteacher and governors do a really good job in leading the school.

There are a few things that we think could be even better:

- your teachers will make sure you have the right work so that everyone can do really well in all subjects as well as reading and writing
- your headteacher and governors will plan to increase the number of computers you have in school to help you with your work.

Thank you very much for making us so welcome when we visited you. We wish you all the best for the future.