



St Joseph and St Theresa Catholic Primary

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 124351
LEA Staffordshire
Inspection number 281699
Inspection dates 1 February 2006 to 2 February 2006
Reporting inspector David Driscoll AI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	High Street
School category	Voluntary aided		Burntwood
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Staffordshire WS7 3XL
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01543 510 485
Number on roll	225	Fax number	01543 510 485
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Father Steven Squires
Date of previous inspection	31 October 2000	Headteacher	Mrs Pat Davies

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

St Joseph and St Theresa Catholic Primary is an average sized school. Very few pupils come from minority ethnic groups. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is below the national average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The school provides a good education. Attention to the individual pupils' needs ensures they make good academic progress, while their personal development is excellent. Teaching and learning are good overall. The quality of provision in the Reception class is satisfactory. Standards are above average by the time pupils leave school, because they make good progress in Years 3 to 6, exceptionally so in mathematics and science. Their progress in the Reception class and in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory, because the teaching is not as good as in other years.

The school's view of its performance is accurate in most respects and agrees with the view of the inspectors, although the school judges its performance in Years 1 and 2, and hence its overall performance, a little too generously. The school has excellent information on individual pupils, but does not collate this centrally to give a clear picture of what is happening in Years 1 and 2. Leadership and management are good. Managers have shown they have the skills to move the school forward. They have had a good impact on improving pupils' progress in Years 3 to 6, but much less so in Years 1 and 2. Their commitment to exceptionally high standards of behaviour and personal development is clear in the way the school puts the teachings of the Catholic faith into practice in all it does. The school provides good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the progress of pupils in Years 1 and 2 by speeding up the pace of teaching and making sure that all pupils are challenged from the very beginning of the lesson.
- Gain a clearer picture of strengths and weaknesses in performance in Years 1 and 2, by bringing together all the data held on individuals.
- Improve provision for pupils in the Reception class by checking progress more frequently and taking action to speed up learning where needed.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils make good progress and leave with standards that are above average.

Children join the Reception class with standards that are similar to those usually found. By the time they have finished their first year at school, pupils have made satisfactory progress and their standards remain average. Their personal development is particularly good. Their creative development is hindered by the relatively poor outdoor facilities. Despite a decline in results in 2005, the school has a good track record of pupils attaining higher than average results in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2. Currently, pupils in Years 1 and 2 are making steady progress. Pupils currently in Year 3 started the year with average standards in English and mathematics.

Pupils make good progress in Years 3 to 6. Results at the end of Year 6 are consistently above the national average. The school's 2005 results show progress was exceptionally good in mathematics and science. In science, the progress made by pupils was equal

to the top 5 % of all schools. The school was particularly successful at helping lower attaining pupils to achieve well and often reaching better than expected standards. In English, pupils did not do as well as the school expected in the writing tests, because they had not studied enough work on writing play scripts, so the more able pupils did not reach the higher levels. With this exception, pupils met or exceeded the challenging targets set for them. Boys overall make more progress than girls. This is because there are more boys in the lower ability groups who benefit from the extra help from teaching assistants.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is outstanding. They are exceptionally good at understanding how their faith helps them to develop social and moral values. Children get off to a successful start in the Reception class where they are well settled, happy and independent. Throughout the school, pupils behave extremely well. Their attentiveness and strong work ethic are further factors in ensuring that pupils achieve well. Attendance is good. Pupils love coming to school and enjoy nothing better than getting to grips with solving tricky problems on computers. They are extremely capable of working together and sharing ideas and resources. Bullying is exceptionally rare.

Relationships are excellent at all levels. Pupils like and respect all staff and this ensures that learning is conducted in a very constructive atmosphere. Pupils say that the school has helped them become 'more grown-up'. They develop an excellent understanding of other faiths, and enjoy discovering how people from other cultures live.

Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay healthy. They gain a very good awareness of the importance of exercise, but there remains more to do to ensure that pupils who eat school lunches more often choose the healthy options. Pupils' good levels of basic skills prepare them well for when they grow up. They are confident and like having their achievements recognised. Pupils understand how to stay safe. Older pupils in particular are keenly aware of their responsibility for the safety of younger ones in the playground, so constantly look out for them. Pupils enjoy being members of the school council, which enables them to make a positive contribution to their school community. Pupils support both local and international charities and many play an active part within their church communities.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The school's good teaching is based firmly on an understanding of how well each pupil is progressing and what each needs to do to improve. Teaching is better in Years 3 to 6 than in Years 1 and 2, because there is a more consistent focus on putting such understanding into practice. In Years 3 to 6, lessons tend to be faster, so pupils cover

more work. Starter activities are relatively brief, but are still set at different levels of difficulty so all pupils receive work that is at the right level. In lower years, lesson introductions can last much too long, with all pupils doing the same tasks, such as spelling the same words.

Throughout the school, when pupils move into groups they are given work that is a good match to their ability. The real strength of these sessions is the way that teaching assistants are used. Not only do they support those who are struggling, but they also teach higher level work to those who are racing ahead.

In all year groups teachers are very good at setting enjoyable and interesting tasks. Pupils in the Reception class love learning through play, although the teacher does not always get around all of the groups quickly enough to make sure they are making the best progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. English lessons have been adapted this year to ensure pupils in Year 6 do enough work on plays, which was a weakness in their understanding last year. Personal, social and health education supports pupils' personal development exceedingly well. The school has been awarded the 'Inclusion Quality Mark' in recognition of the quality of its curriculum provision for all pupils. Pupils with learning difficulties achieve well because work is planned and adapted to meet their needs. Pupils thoroughly enjoy the 'Real Time' projects, which take place every term. These projects provide pupils with stimulating activities such as how to mend a puncture in a bicycle tyre or how to cook. Pupils are extremely knowledgeable about environmental issues and other cultures, because of the many opportunities that pupils have to research topics using computers. Extra-curricular provision is satisfactory and well supported by visits from professional sports coaches and musicians.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The care, guidance and support for pupils are outstanding. All pupils are cared for exceptionally well within the supportive Catholic ethos of the school. Procedures for child protection are established well and understood by all staff. Careful recording of concerns and good links with support services ensure the well-being of all pupils. Recent improvements to the school's buildings have greatly improved security.

When problems occur, pupils are confident that they will be dealt with quickly and fairly. Pupils say that they like receiving 'star awards' for doing good work and any sanctions are fair.

Children in the Reception class settle quickly at school because they are well supported and cared for. From Reception class onwards, pupils are expected to be independent and manage their own routines. Parents are kept well informed of their child's progress. All pupils are set individual targets for improvement and the 'profile books' are an excellent way of keeping parents, pupils and teachers fully informed of how well a

child is doing. Parents know the school supports the pupils well and speak very highly of the headteacher and her staff. They feel communication with them is very good.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good, because there is a firm focus on understanding the academic and personal needs of individual pupils. The school's managers have shown they have the skills to bring about beneficial changes. For example, there have been significant improvements recently in the progress made by pupils in Years 3 to 6, which have led to exceptionally high standards in mathematics and science. However, similar improvements are less evident in Years 1 and 2.

The school's managers have many ways of checking the quality of what it is doing, such as the weekly analysis of pupils' books. This gives an exceptionally clear picture of an individual pupil's progress. However, in Years 1 and 2, this information is not collated. Consequently there is no clear overview of how the different year groups are doing as a whole, or where specific improvements might be needed. In turn, this leads to insufficiently precise targets for improvement in the school's development plan for these years. This means that governors, although very supportive, are not able to check the school's performance in complete detail.

Parents and pupils play a full role in the school's evaluation of its own work, through regular questionnaires, the results of which are very well analysed and show a very high level of support for the school's work. Managers act on parents' concerns exceptionally well. Past concerns about bullying, for example, have been completely eradicated.

The strongest areas of leadership are seen in the role models provided by staff and their expectations of how pupils will behave towards one another and live out the teachings of the Catholic faith. In this respect the school has exceptionally high expectations, recognised and supported by parents, which the pupils willingly fulfil.

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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?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	3	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	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	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	2	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	1	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?	1	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	2	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	2	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

As you know, we visited your school recently to check on how well it was doing.

Thank you very much for being so welcoming, and a special thank you to all those who told us about their life at school. We think you are very polite to grown ups and extremely well behaved. We were very impressed by the way Year 5 pupils had taken over the jobs usually done by Year 6, especially the way they made sure younger children were safe and happy in the playground.

We are pleased that you really enjoy coming to school. Your teachers take very good care of you and make sure your lessons are fun. What the teachers and other grown ups are really good at is helping you to understand the right and wrong things to do so you learn how to get on well with other children and grown ups.

We have made some suggestions to help the school get even better. We have asked the teachers in Years 1 and 2 to help you learn a bit faster. The teachers know you all very well, and have a really good idea of how much you are learning, but we have asked the people who run the school to find out if there are any differences in the amount learnt by different classes.

Thank you again for helping us with our work.