



# St Joseph's Roman Catholic Primary School

Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 124763  
**LEA** SUFFOLK LEA  
**Inspection number** 281799  
**Inspection dates** 28 February 2006 to 1 March 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Ms. Ruth Frith LI

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Beaconsfield Road CO10 6JP
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided		
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 9		
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01787 373365
<b>Number on roll</b>	105	<b>Fax number</b>	01787 882195
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr. Peter Taylor
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	25 September 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs. Janet Beswick

<b>Age group</b> 4 to 9	<b>Inspection dates</b> 28 February 2006 - 1 March 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 281799
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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

## **Description of the school**

This is a smaller than average size primary school where pupils come from the socially mixed area of Sudbury and surrounding villages. Many non-Catholic parents express a wish for their children to receive a Christian education and currently 40% of the children are non-Catholic. The percentage of pupils receiving free school meals is well below the national average. Children's attainment on entry covers a wide range but overall is similar to that usually seen in children of this age. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is below average. These pupils have a wide range of learning difficulties and disabilities. Most children come from White British backgrounds. Seven pupils speak English as an additional language and a couple are at the early stages of learning English.

## **Key for inspection grades**

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

## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

### **Grade: 2**

The inspectors agree with the school's own evaluation that St Joseph's is a good school. There are several outstanding features such as pupils' personal development and well-being. The pupils flourish because they enter a nurturing environment where their pastoral care is paramount. Behaviour is outstanding and this, together with their exceptional attitudes, aids their learning. Particularly good links between staff and parents ensure that children are well prepared and make a good start in the Reception Year. These children are keen to learn and generally achieve well but their curriculum experiences are restricted by weaknesses in the outdoor provision and resources. Staff work hard to compensate for this, so that by the time children enter Year 1 they at least reach the standard expected for their age and sometimes achieve beyond that. Pupils generally reach standards that are above the national average in the Year 2 national tests and continue to do well in Years 3 and 4. Standards overall are improving but there are some weaknesses in spelling, punctuation and handwriting. Teaching and learning are good throughout the school because pupils find the lessons interesting and work is well matched to their abilities. Sometimes, the marking of children's work and the setting of targets is not clear enough for pupils to understand what they should do next. The quality of leadership and management is good. The headteacher shows exceptional commitment to the school and a clear vision. She is well supported by staff and governors. Areas of strength are highlighted and points for development are clear. These reflect the evidence gained through inspection and indicate a good system of school self-evaluation. Good improvements have been made since the last inspection and the school has the capacity to improve further. St Joseph's plays a central role in the local Catholic community and makes an outstanding contribution locally and beyond. The school provides good value for money.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Continue to improve pupils' spelling, handwriting and punctuation to raise the overall standards in writing.
- Review the marking of pupils' work and the setting of targets so that pupils have a clearer idea of how well they are doing and how they can improve.
- Continue to develop the accommodation and resources for the Foundation Stage, particularly outside.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

From broadly average starting points, children generally make good progress and achieve well. Children are keen to learn when they start in the reception class. The very good links between home and school and good quality teaching result in them quickly settling to the school routines and doing well. By the time they reach the end of Year 2, standards are generally above the national average, particularly in reading. Many show a particular interest in reading which is developed both in school and at home. Standards in writing have been slightly below average for the last two years

but are beginning to improve. Staff are effective in encouraging pupils to write and consequently, the content and vocabulary used is frequently good. However, some pupils need to improve their spelling, handwriting and use of punctuation. Last year, pupils in Year 2 did significantly better in the national mathematics tests. A higher percentage than average gained a level above that expected for their age which shows good challenge for the more able pupils. Pupils continue to make good progress in Years 3 and 4 as staff teach well and have adapted the curriculum. Following careful monitoring and evaluation of pupils' test results, a wider range of strategies has been successfully used to improve writing, particularly that of boys. This was seen in Year 4 when pupils enthusiastically wrote about the adventures of a pirate. In mathematics, a greater focus has been placed on developing pupils' problem-solving skills which is beginning to impact positively in mathematics and science. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities achieve well because their needs are quickly identified and good support given. Similarly, those learning English as an additional language achieve well.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. The strong school ethos, together with support from families and the Catholic community, create an environment where the pupils feel happy and do well. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is also of an exceptionally high standard. A key feature of the school is the respect shown for pupils and respect between adults. Pupils are not just told what is expected of them but have it demonstrated to them through the daily interaction between the members of the school community. This results in a body of pupils who behave exceptionally well and develop very good relationships. Older pupils do not need encouragement to look after those that are younger as they readily offer, and see this as part of their role in the school. Pupils are encouraged to respond assertively if an incident occurs, for example, by stating, 'Please do not do that, I don't like it'. This helps them to develop ways of keeping themselves safe and happy. They follow the school routines well and act sensibly and safely when at work and play. Pupils have a good understanding of how to adopt a healthy lifestyle through regular exercise and eating a range of good food. Exceptional links with the local community have a very good impact on pupils' personal development because it means they have plenty of opportunities to face new challenges and work with a range of people. They develop literacy, numeracy and information and communication skills that contribute positively to their future economic well-being. They become aware of the needs of others when raising money for charities. Links with a school in Kenya and multi-cultural assemblies help pupils to discover ways of life and beliefs different from their own. Pupils thoroughly enjoy school and quickly develop very positive attitudes to learning which form a strong foundation for their future development. They arrive in the morning keen to start the day and attendance is above average.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good and helps to ensure that pupils progress well throughout the school. Staff are particularly effective at encouraging independence in pupils and developing enjoyment and excitement in their learning. Pupils are frequently keen to continue with their work, as was seen in a Year 2 geography lesson when they were searching for countries using globes and atlases. Teachers make skilled use of questioning and discussion to develop pupils' self-confidence, widen their understanding and develop their thinking skills. This results in pupils who are eager to explain what they are doing. One of the younger children was keen to share his ideas about spirals, circles and semi-circles during an art lesson. Close collaboration between teachers and the teaching assistants allows pupils' needs to be met well so they make good progress. Some significant developments have been made through the introduction of interactive whiteboards. Pupils in Year 3 were seen responding very enthusiastically to an extract as they were asked to guess which adjectives would be revealed and why they were appropriate. The slight competitive edge to this activity maintained interest throughout. Staff have high expectations of pupils, and this, together with the effective assessment and recording procedures, ensures that work is well matched to the needs of individual pupils. Teachers' marking and target-setting is not always as effective as it might be. There is still confusion amongst some pupils about what their targets mean and how they can improve their work.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 2

The curriculum is good because it meets statutory requirements and the needs of pupils. Activities are interesting and most pupils really enjoy their work. Frequently, there is a buzz of excitement as they set about their tasks. Throughout the school, good links are made between subjects, for example, extending writing skills in history. Art has a high profile and is evident in many subjects. Display is effective in enlivening the environment and raising pupils' self-esteem. There is outstanding provision in music. Pupils are rightly proud of what they achieve and their singing and instrumental work is of a high standard. Many pupils can be heard singing around the school, for example as they leave assembly or go out to play. Over half of the pupils play the guitar and a significant number are also learning to play other instruments. The impact of the music curriculum can be seen in the outstanding contributions made to the community when they perform locally and further afield. The Foundation Stage curriculum has been satisfactorily developed since the last inspection, but more still needs to be done. Despite staff doing the best they can, the children's curriculum experiences are restricted by the accommodation and lack of resources. Throughout the school, the curriculum is enriched with a good range of educational visits, knowledgeable visitors and a few clubs. These help pupils gain a much better appreciation of the arts and environmental issues and improve their skills.

## Care, guidance and support

### Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good overall but the quality of pastoral care provided by the school is outstanding. The ethos of the school is very supportive and focuses on developing pupils into confident, respectful and responsible citizens. Pupils feel safe and well supported and say that they are treated fairly. Aspects of pupils' care and links with outside agencies are well managed to ensure that vulnerable pupils and their families are well supported. Parents are pleased with the work of the school and feel that they are consulted, and their views are valued. The needs of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are quickly identified and appropriate support provided to improve their learning. Staff are aware of the procedures for the protection of children and to ensure their health and safety. Pupils' academic guidance is generally effective.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher shows outstanding commitment to the school and provides a good lead to colleagues. This is evident in the way staff work as a team, sharing her sense of purpose and the desire to do the best they can for the pupils and their families. Morale is high. The headteacher and assistant headteacher form a strong team and successfully take on several of the responsibilities for curriculum leadership which, in larger schools, is usually shared amongst staff. This has resulted in a stimulating curriculum and rising standards. There are effective systems for checking how well the school is doing and identifying what it could do better. The views of all members of the school community are taken into consideration and parents feel that their views and ideas will be listened to and acted upon. Staff work hard to ensure that pupils are treated fairly and their needs met. The way the school includes all pupils is well established and it is clear that pupils and staff enjoy being part of the school community. Financial management and planning are effective and ensure that school developments are adequately financed. However, the school has been unable to fully develop the Foundation Stage area as they would wish, due to financial constraints. Overall, the school provides good value for money. Governors have a clear understanding of the school's effectiveness and support staff well. Governance is good. The school has dealt with the issues from the previous inspection successfully within the resources available. Because of the good work of the headteacher, assistant headteacher, staff and governors, and the continuing trend of improvement, the school's capacity for further improvement is good.

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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>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	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	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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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	2	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

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

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
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**

I am writing to say how much I enjoyed visiting St Joseph's. Thank you for making me feel so welcome and for talking about your school and the work you have done. I particularly liked the following: - all the staff work very well together as a team to make sure that you learn a lot. They enjoy teaching you and the teaching is good - you enjoy school very much and are keen to do good work - you behave exceptionally well, are kind to each other and work and play together very well - you do well in school, particularly in reading and mathematics, and I like your stories - your singing is of a very high quality and I was very pleased to see how many of you play a musical instrument - The curriculum is good which helps to make lessons interesting - you do lots of things in the community and I really enjoyed watching the pancake races and - staff look after you well and you feel safe in school. Mrs Beswick manages the school well and is particularly good in leading the staff so that the school continues to improve and you receive a good education. We have agreed that the school will get even better if you all work together on the following: - teachers will help you to make sure that you check your spellings, punctuation and handwriting so your work is the best it can be - all teachers will ensure that they mark your work and set targets so that you are clear about what you have achieved and what you have to do next to improve and - staff and governors will try to improve the area for those children in the Reception Class, particularly outside, and provide more resources. Thank you once again and good luck in the future.