



Droitwich, St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Inspection Report

Better
education
and care

Unique Reference Number 116876
Local Authority Worcestershire
Inspection number 290666
Inspection date 30 January 2007
Reporting inspector Hazel Callaghan

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	St Joseph's Close
School category	Voluntary aided		Ombersley Way
Age range of pupils	3-11		Droitwich WR9 0RY
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01905 773572
Number on roll (school)	239	Fax number	01905 773572
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Francis Pearson
		Headteacher	Kathryn Hill
Date of previous school inspection	1 July 2002		

Age group 3-11	Inspection date 30 January 2007	Inspection number 290666
--------------------------	---	------------------------------------

© Crown copyright 2007

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

St Joseph's Catholic Primary is an average-sized school that takes pupils from across the local parish. Most pupils are of White British heritage but there are also a number of pupils from other European countries and minority ethnic groups. The number of pupils who are in the early stages of learning English is increasing and is now above the national average. A smaller-than-average proportion of pupils has learning difficulties and disabilities but currently there is more than the national average proportion of children with statements of special educational need. Children start school with a wide range of abilities and many children have a greater number of skills and knowledge than is usual for their age. The school provides a breakfast club each morning and day care each afternoon for Nursery-aged children.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

St Joseph's School is constantly looking for ways to improve and is well on its way to excellence. It is a good school with many outstanding features. This is because the headteacher is a dynamic force in moving the school forward. Staff are well motivated and more than ready to take on new ideas. The strong Catholic ethos that pervades all sections of the school's work underpins the exemplary care, support and guidance provided for pupils and their outstanding personal development.

Standards at the end of Year 6 are high. The good teaching, which securely focuses on meeting the needs of each child, ensures that pupils of all abilities and ethnic groups achieve well. This good progress starts in the Nursery and Reception classes, especially in children's early language and communication skills, and continues through the school. An outstanding curriculum stimulates pupils' interest and enjoyment in learning. One boy expressed it well when he said, 'I like this school because there are always interesting things to do. Every day is different'. The variety of responsibilities, tasks and activities provided for pupils, especially those in Year 6, enables them to make an outstanding contribution to the school and to the wider community. Pupils respond very well to their activities, they want to do well, and they show very good collaborative skills and initiative. This, along with high academic standards, prepares them extremely well for the next stage of learning and for the world of work.

Leadership and management are good and there is a good track record of sustaining high standards and making improvements. The capacity for further improvement is good because the school has a good understanding of its strengths and successfully addresses its relative weaknesses. Standards in mathematics, for example, are now of the same high standard as in English. The school has no significant weaknesses; however, there are too many targets set in English and mathematics for the next stages of pupils' learning. These targets are reviewed each term but the checks to see if they are achieved are too infrequent to ensure pupils are fully engaged in their progress.

What the school should do to improve further

- Provide a more limited range of targets that identify clearly the pupils' next steps in English and mathematics and review them more frequently so a regular dialogue is maintained with pupils about how they can improve.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils achieve well and overall standards at the end of Year 6 are high. Standards in English have been significantly higher than average for many years. Standards in mathematics dipped a little over a couple of years, but this year they are once again much higher than the national average.

Children's good progress starts in the Nursery and Reception classes. By the time they move into Year 1, many children have exceeded the expected standards for their age,

particularly in the early stages of reading, writing and mathematics. Good progress continues in Key Stage 1 and by the end of Year 2, standards are above the national average. Pupils' skills have been successfully consolidated and they enjoy learning. An increasing number of pupils in the early stages of learning English are joining the school. They are well supported and progress well. Pupils of all abilities and ethnic groups achieve well. Their abilities and needs are identified correctly and positive strategies are used to move all pupils on in their learning. The higher-attaining pupils and those who are gifted or have special talents are given challenging activities that effectively extend their skills and knowledge. The number of pupils reaching the highest possible standards in Year 6 is consequently much higher than average.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development throughout the school is outstanding and this has a significant impact on their attitudes to life and to their work. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. Pupils are courteous and polite and have excellent relationships with each other and with the adults around them. They show care and consideration towards each other. They reflect on their own actions and discuss in a very adult way the actions of others. Behaviour is good and pupils have no concerns about bullying or racism. Pupils thoroughly enjoy school and most attend regularly. Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay healthy and safe and use their knowledge well to make positive decisions. Pupils make an outstanding contribution to their own school and to the wider community. Pupils of all ages enjoy taking responsibility and carry out tasks very reliably. They find a variety of ways to help others, including supporting local and worldwide charities. Pupils in Year 6 are very proud of their range of important responsibilities, for which they had to write an application. The 'Senators' in Year 6, for example, collect views about how the school can be improved and give an audiovisual presentation to the governors.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good throughout the school. In the Foundation Stage adult-led activities are well planned and many opportunities to learn through their self-chosen activities promote children's good progress. Teachers in all classes have a clear view of what is to be learnt in the lesson and pupils are encouraged to consider what they need to do to make their work successful. Teachers accurately evaluate pupils' knowledge and understanding and give them tasks that build on what they already know and can do. Marking is good and helps pupils understand how to improve. Targets in English and mathematics also help pupils recognise the next stages in learning but there are often too many and too broad a range of targets to be as effective as possible. Pupils' progress in reaching the targets is reviewed successfully

each term. The teaching of pupils in the early stages of learning English is good. A successful approach to developing their vocabulary and understanding is in place that enables them to take a full part in lessons.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum throughout the school is extremely well adapted to meet the wide range of pupils' abilities and learning needs. It is carefully planned so that activities are lively, interesting and meaningful. One teacher said, 'I aim to give the children great memories'. The curriculum is extremely successful in promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, and cultural development. Positive links are made between subjects and information and communication technology (ICT) is used very well to support pupils' learning. ICT has become a useful tool for pupils to research and present information. The personal, social and health education programme gives pupils a good understanding of how to develop healthy lifestyles and how to make positive choices. The curriculum is enriched by many additional activities visits and visitors to school that extend pupils' understanding, knowledge and skills. Sports coaches and links with other schools and colleges are used very well to further extend the curriculum and to provide a wide range of after-school clubs. A recent initiative, for example, is giving every pupil in Year 4 an opportunity to learn three different instruments at no charge.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school provides outstanding care, guidance and support. Pupils are highly valued as individuals and so feel safe, secure and well cared for. There are strong links with the parish and local church that supports pupils' personal and spiritual well-being. Effective systems and strong relationships ensure pupils feel confident to talk about any difficulties or worries. Procedures to ensure every child is safeguarded are good. There are good links with outside agencies, which are drawn on as required. Attendance is monitored effectively and any absence or persistent lateness is quickly followed up.

Despite the fact that there are sometimes too many targets for pupils' future learning, academic support and guidance is excellent. The attainment of all pupils is reviewed regularly and additional activities are introduced to ensure the pupils' success. Pupils are encouraged to evaluate their own work and progress and are given a good understanding of how they can improve. Additional support and challenge is given to pupils of all abilities in small-group sessions. The activities are shaped by the specific needs of the group and are consequently very effective in moving pupils on in their learning.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher provides outstanding leadership based on her clear vision for what the school needs to do to improve. The ethos of the school is strong and there is a clear focus on raising achievement and on preparing the pupils for their future lives. Comprehensive systems for checking the progress of pupils and for monitoring the effectiveness of the school are used well by the headteacher, deputy and assistant head. The priorities for improvement are well founded and based on this accurate evaluation. There have been several recent changes in the management structure of the school and all teaching staff, including support assistants, are now working in well-focused teams that review and further develop the curriculum. Well-established management systems have ensured that there has been no pause in school improvement and this new way of working has forged a strong sense of teamwork and commitment. Expectations are high and consequently the capacity for further improvement is good. The school is effectively supported by governors who are successfully involved in evaluating the strengths and weaknesses in the school and in planning for the future. The school regularly seeks the views of parents and has built a good partnership with them and a wide range of outside agencies to support pupils' learning.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	-----------------------

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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

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

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

I am writing to say thank you for making me feel welcome in your school and for helping me with my questions. I really enjoyed chatting to you and found everything you said very interesting. I thought you would like to know what I found out about you and the school.

What we found out about your school:

- St Joseph's is a good school that is always looking for ways to improve.
- You make good progress in your work and reach high standards.
- You are taught well and teachers make your lessons interesting. They help you to understand how to make your work better.
- You are very happy at school. You enjoy your lessons and try hard to do your best.
- You get on very well with each other and the adults in the school.
- You behave sensibly and are kind to each other. You think a lot about others less well off than yourselves and do a lot to help them.
- All the adults look after you extremely well and you are good at making sensible choices about keeping healthy and safe.
- You have lots of extra activities and clubs that make learning fun and give you many new skills and experiences.
- You have many opportunities to take responsibility and you take them extremely seriously, so helping to make the school a better place.
- The school is led and managed extremely well by Mrs Hill, and the other teachers help her a lot.

What we have asked the school to do now:

- For teachers to reduce the number of targets you have in English and mathematics and to see how you are getting on more frequently so that your progress gets even faster.

Thank you again for helping me.