

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Park Lane, Bradford, West Yorkshire, BD5 0RB

Inspection dates 18–19 February 2014

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.

- Children settle quickly into the Early Years Foundation Stage. They make good progress in all areas of learning.
- Pupils from different groups, including disabled pupils, those with special educational needs, those eligible for the pupil premium and pupils who speak English as an additional language, make good progress.
- Pupils who remain at the school throughout Key Stage 2 attain average standards in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teaching is good and captures pupils' interests.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. They respect one another and get on well together. They have good attitudes to learning. This reflects the school's religious ethos, which underpins pupils' good spiritual, social, moral and cultural development.
- The headteacher provides effective leadership. She has developed a strong staff team, committed to improving the quality of teaching and raising attainment.
- Governors are keenly aware of the challenging circumstances of some pupils and are determined that the school should make a difference to the lives of all pupils.
- Parents are very supportive. They hold the school in high regard.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The quality of teaching is not of a sufficiently high standard to bring about outstanding achievement. Learning activities are not always challenging enough, particularly for the most able pupils.
- Teachers' marking does not regularly provide clear guidance on how pupils can improve their work.
- Attendance is below average.
- There are limited opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematical skills to real-life and meaningful problem-solving activities.
- The limited range and use of resources in the Early Years Foundation Stage outdoor learning area restrict children's opportunities to make even more rapid gains in their learning.
- The role of middle leaders is not fully developed.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 21 lessons, including five jointly with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. In addition, inspectors made a number of short visits to lessons and listened to pupils read.
- Meetings were held with pupils from Year 1 to Year 6, the Chair of the Governing Body and four other governors, senior leaders and middle leaders. Informal discussions were also held with pupils at break times and lunchtimes.
- Discussions were held with parents who brought their children to school and 10 parents who agreed to meet with the inspectors because the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) were too few to be meaningful.
- Inspectors also considered the views expressed in the 42 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors observed the school at work and scrutinised the work in pupils' books, the school's own data on pupils' current progress, the school's improvement plans, planning and monitoring information and minutes of governing body meetings. Records relating to behaviour and attendance, as well as documents relating to safeguarding and child protection, were also considered.

Inspection team

Anthony Kingston, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Derek Pattinson

Additional Inspector

Carol Machell

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- St Joseph's Bradford is much larger than the average-sized primary school.
- Since the previous inspection, the school has experienced many changes in staffing.
- The large majority of pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils new to English or in the early stages of learning English as an additional language is well above average and has grown rapidly in recent times. This is because there has been an increase in pupils starting school at other than the usual times, often from Eastern European countries.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and supported through school action is average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium (additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and children looked after by the local authority) is above average.
- In 2013, the school did not meet the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The school holds the Investors in Pupils Award.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching to be outstanding in order to raise pupils' attainment higher, by:
 - ensuring that there is always sufficient challenge in the work provided in lessons, especially for the most able pupils
 - providing more well-planned opportunities for pupils to develop their mathematical skills with more suitable and purposeful problem-solving activities
 - ensuring that teachers' marking and feedback inform pupils on how they can improve their work and that time is given for them to respond to teachers' comments
 - developing a more exciting and lively learning environment both inside and out for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage
 - developing the skills and the roles of middle leaders so that they can bring about further improvements in the quality of teaching and learning in their subject areas.
- Further raise rates of attendance by promoting the importance of the link between good attendance and good achievement to pupils and families.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Most children start school with skills that are well below those typically expected for their age, especially in speaking, understanding, reading, writing and mathematics.
- Children get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They settle quickly and many now make rapid progress in all areas of learning. As a result, attainment as they start in Year 1 is rising, with many children now reaching standards which are in line with those expected for their age. They enjoy learning and become inquisitive learners; for example, children were enthralled when undertaking a rescue mission to release a plastic fish entombed in an ice block.
- The high proportion of pupils who start school in the very early stages of learning English as an additional language make rapid gains in their acquisition of the language because of the emphasis placed on speaking and listening and effective support.
- Pupils continue to make good progress throughout Key Stage 1. The large majority have closed the gaps in their skills from when they started school and, by the end of Year 2, reach broadly average standards in reading and writing. Standards in mathematics are below average despite progress being good. Results of national tests at the end of Year 2 in 2013 were, however, well below average because of the significant number of pupils who joined school at different times during Years 1 and 2, most of whom were new to English.
- Throughout Key Stage 2, progress is good. As a result, the majority of pupils reach average standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6. However, the results of Year 6 national tests in 2013 were adversely affected by the high proportion of pupils new to learning English who joined the school in Years 5 and 6. These pupils made good progress but did not reach the expected level by the end of Year 6 because they had gaps in their skills and still had limited spoken English.
- Standards in mathematics are not rising as quickly as in other subjects because pupils do not have enough opportunities to apply their mathematical skills to meaningful problem-solving activities.
- Reading is given a high priority throughout the school. Phonics (the sounds that letters make) is particularly well taught. Consequently, pupils make good progress and those who speak English as their first language attain broadly average standards.
- Throughout Year 2, pupils at an early stage of learning English continue to make good progress and, as a result, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected level was above average. This reflects the impact of the longer period of good teaching to which the pupils have been exposed.
- The school checks that all pupils have an equal opportunity to succeed. The needs of all groups of pupils are identified promptly and support is added where most needed. As a result, all groups of pupils, including disabled pupils, those with special educational needs, pupils from minority ethnic groups, those who speak English as an additional language and those who arrive later than at the usual times, make good progress.
- The most able pupils who remain at the school throughout Key Stage 2 benefit from good teaching and make good progress. This outcome is reflected in the gradual rise in the number of these pupils reaching Level 5 in reading, writing and mathematics. However, the changing composition of cohorts as they move through Key Stage 2 results in fewer pupils overall reaching Level 5 at the end of Key Stage 2 than is seen nationally. In mathematics, the progress of the most able is sometimes slowed because these pupils do not always move on quickly enough to challenging problem-solving activities.
- Funding to support pupils eligible for the pupil premium is spent judiciously, including on one-to-one tuition and employing additional teaching assistants. As a result, most pupils who benefit from this funding, including those known to be eligible for free school meals and who are on roll throughout Key Stage 2, make progress equal to that of their classmates. By the end of Year 6, they attain standards which are only half a term behind the achievement of their peers in English

and mathematics.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good across the school. It is not outstanding because work does not always provide the right level of challenge for some pupils, especially the most able.
- Recently appointed teachers and teaching assistants have brought new strengths that have added to the overall quality of teaching throughout the school.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are helped to settle into school life by staff who are sensitive to their needs. A particular strength is the focus staff place on developing pupils' social skills, as well as their speaking and listening skills. The use of space and resources in the indoor area supports children's learning well. However, the limited range and use of resources in the outdoor area do not provide well enough for children to make even more rapid gains in their learning.
- Lessons are well planned in all classes. They enable pupils to be fully engaged in their learning. This was demonstrated in a Year 1 and 2 class where pupils relished the opportunity to investigate the relationship between multiplication and division, devising and amending their own ways of recording their findings.
- Pupils are given purposeful opportunities to apply and develop their writing skills across a range of subjects other than English. However, they are not provided with enough opportunities to apply their mathematical skills to meaningful problem-solving activities across the curriculum.
- Mostly, teachers use assessment information well to ensure that work is well matched to pupils' varying levels of ability. However, pupils are not always offered hard-enough work. This limits the rate at which they make progress and the opportunity to reach the levels of attainment of which they are capable.
- The school has invested in deploying more teaching assistants to support pupils' learning inside and outside the classroom. They are skilled and highly effective at giving pupils a boost to their learning.
- Marking and feedback across the school are regular and positive. The most effective marking informs pupils of what they have done well and what they need to do to improve further; it also encourages pupils to correct their errors and respond to teachers' comments. This practice is, however, not seen in every classroom and some pupils are not always clear about how to improve.
- Parents and carers speak very positively about the way the school helps their children to learn.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- The school places the pupils at the centre of all it does. It provides an exceptionally caring and supportive environment in which all pupils are valued. Pupils are proud of their school and treat everyone with courtesy and respect.
- Expectations of pupils' behaviour are high throughout the school. Pupils respond immediately to the guidance and direction given by staff and, as a result, time for learning is rarely lost. However, occasionally, when the activities set are too easy for some or too difficult for others, pupils sometimes become a little restless. This is why behaviour is good rather than outstanding.
- Teachers are highly skilled in managing pupils' behaviour and resolve issues swiftly and quietly. Pupils are carefully nurtured as individuals and staff are very successful in bringing about marked improvements with pupils who have behavioural needs.
- Pupils appreciate all that adults do for them and willingly take on responsibilities. They take great pride in representing their fellow pupils on the school council and relish opportunities to act as ambassadors for the school when showing visitors around. The efforts of all pupils make a significant contribution to the harmonious learning community in which everyone is valued.

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Pupils speak confidently about how the school deals with their worries and concerns, saying that their teachers listen to them and help to resolve any issues.
- Pupils are aware of all the different forms of bullying and say that incidents of this type are extremely rare because they are taught to reflect on the impact of their actions on others and to take full responsibility for their personal conduct. The overwhelming majority of parents who spoke to inspectors agreed with these views. One parent reflected the views of many saying, 'Despite the different faiths, colours and languages, we are one big family.'
- The headteacher works hard to resolve any difficulties for those parents whose circumstances could adversely affect their children's performance at school. As a result, attendance has improved and continues to do so. However, despite the school's best endeavours, there are still some parents who do not recognise the importance of regular school attendance and, as a consequence, it remains below average.

The leadership and management are good

- Following a period of changes in staffing, the headteacher has successfully developed a whole-school team which promotes a shared ambition and determination for pupils to gain maximum benefit from their time at school.
- Leaders and managers know the school well. Their rigorous checks on teaching and learning give staff clear guidance on how to improve. Teachers feel supported by the headteacher and welcome the sharp and focused feedback about their performance in lessons. This feedback contains clear advice and results in training. Although middle leaders are responsible for checking teachers' planning and monitoring the progress of pupils, their roles in checking the quality of teaching and how it affects pupils' learning are not yet fully developed.
- Teachers' performance is managed well. All teachers and teaching assistants have targets linked to priorities for school improvement and the progress pupils make. There are secure links between performance and pay awards.
- The curriculum captures pupils' imaginations. Together with the musical and sporting activities and clubs, the curriculum makes a very positive contribution to pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Reading and mathematics are threaded successfully throughout the curriculum but the opportunities for pupils to apply and develop their mathematical skills in challenging problem-solving activities are not so evident or as well structured.
- The pupil premium is allocated judiciously to ensure that pupils eligible for this funding receive extra support through one-to-one tuition and small-group work by skilled teaching assistants.
- The primary school sport funding is being spent on employing a coach to extend the range of sporting activities available to pupils and to provide training for teachers and teaching assistants in sport and physical education to improve their skills.
- The school is supported extremely well by the local authority. It has been a critical friend, providing helpful guidance to move the school on since its last inspection.
- Parents are supportive of the school and speak highly of its work. The overwhelming majority said that they would recommend the school to other parents.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body has a clear knowledge of the school's strengths and what it needs to do to keep improving. Through frequent visits, governors have become increasingly aware of the quality of teaching and how it relates to pupils' progress. They check that the information they are given fits well with their own evidence about the school's performance. Governors engage in a wide range of training, including the analysis of performance data. As a result, they have a clear understanding of how well the school is performing in relation to schools nationally and are able to offer challenge to leaders. They have a good understanding of teachers' performance management, how it is used to develop teaching further and the links between pay progression and pupils' achievement. Governors have a clear understanding of spending to support pupils who benefit from the pupil premium and what difference this is making to

their progress. Similarly, they have been careful in allocating the extra government funds for sport and physical education. Safeguarding is a priority and governors ensure that statutory requirements are met.

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	107327
Local authority	Bradford
Inspection number	431754

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	399
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Peter Farley
Headteacher	Catherine Markham
Date of previous school inspection	2 February 2011
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