

St Joseph's Catholic Primary

Chesterfield Road, Matlock, DE4 3FT

Inspection dates 3–4 June 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Inadequate	4
Leadership and management		Inadequate	4
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Inadequate	4
Achievement of pupils		Inadequate	4
Early years provision		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires special measures.

- Standards are below average by the end of Year 6. Pupils' achievement is inadequate in mathematics and writing. Weak teaching prevents pupils from developing their skills adequately in these subjects.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to develop their reasoning skills in mathematics.
- In common with other groups, the most-able pupils do not do as well as they should because teachers do not expect enough of them.
- The attainment of disadvantaged pupils varies too much. They are not taught well enough to help them catch up with other pupils nationally.
- The support the school provides for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is not consistently effective.
- Opportunities are sometimes missed in the Reception class to reinforce and extend children's skills in the outdoor area.
- Pupils do not develop their handwriting skills securely in Key Stage 1.
- Weaknesses in teachers' skills severely limit pupils' achievement. These include their knowledge of what pupils know and can do, the activities they choose to support pupils' learning, and the questions they ask to promote pupils' progress.
- Teaching does not ensure that pupils are consistently motivated to take a full part in lessons and to work hard.
- The school's information on pupils' performance is not accurate enough to enable staff to plan teaching purposefully for pupils in Years 1 to 6. Leaders do not carry out robust checks on pupils' progress.
- Leaders do not demonstrate the capacity to bring about sustained improvement. They do not check the school's work rigorously. Identified weaknesses are not followed up quickly enough.
- Governors have not ensured that standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. They do not ensure that the school's website contains all the required information for parents.

The school has the following strengths

- Good teaching in Year 4 is now enabling pupils in this year group to make accelerated progress.
- Pupils behave well in the school's public areas.
- Children in the Reception year behave well in lessons.
- Good relationships with staff ensure that pupils are safe and well cared for.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors made visits to all classrooms to check on pupils' learning. On three of these visits, they were accompanied by the headteacher. Inspectors heard some pupils in Year 2 reading. Together with the headteacher, they also looked in detail at samples of pupils' work in most year groups.
- Meetings were held with school staff, a group of pupils, five governors and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 22 responses to a questionnaire completed by staff and the 55 responses made by parents to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. They also analysed parents' responses to the school's recent surveys. An inspector spoke informally with some parents during the inspection.
- Inspectors checked a range of evidence including: monitoring records; consultants' reports; the school improvement plans; the school's own data on pupils' attainment and progress; and policies, procedures and practice relating to safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.

Inspection team

Derek Aitken, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Stephen Phillips

Additional Inspector

Full report

In accordance with the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

Information about this school

- This school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. There are no pupils at an early stage of learning English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium, which is additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those looked after by the local authority, is broadly average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is broadly average.
- Until recently, the school has received support from selected schools in the local cluster network to improve teaching and learning.
- The school does not meet the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, and thereby improve progress and attainment, by ensuring that all teachers:
 - plan lessons based on accurate assessment information about what pupils know and can do
 - set activities for pupils that consistently challenge them so that they can develop their writing and mathematical skills quickly
 - have high expectations for the progress of all pupils, including the most able
 - use questions skilfully to improve the range and quality of pupils' spoken responses, extend their learning and encourage all pupils to participate fully in lessons
 - provide good opportunities for Reception children to reinforce and extend their skills in the outdoor area.
- Raise pupils' achievement, especially in writing and mathematics, by ensuring that all teachers:
 - develop pupils' handwriting skills well
 - provide pupils with more practice to develop their reasoning skills in mathematics.
- Improve leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - procedures for collecting, organising and sharing data about pupils' performance are effective, and assessment information is used well to improve pupils' achievement
 - middle leadership skills are improved to enable the progress of vulnerable groups to be checked robustly, and for these pupils to receive the good teaching and support they need to make good progress
 - leaders, including governors, check all aspects of the school's work rigorously and follow up identified priorities and weaknesses swiftly
 - governors strengthen their capacity to hold leaders firmly to account
 - the school's website contains all the required information for parents.

An external review of governance, including the use of the pupil premium, should be undertaken in order to assess how these aspects of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are inadequate

- The school's systems for collecting, recording and sharing information about pupils' attainment and progress are weak. This undermines leaders' and the efforts of other staff to raise pupils' achievement and to improve teaching.
- Assessment data do not provide a coherent picture of how different groups of pupils achieve across Years 1 to 6. This is partly because teachers' assessments of pupils' attainment in Years 1 and 2 last year were not checked closely by senior and middle leaders. Consequently, leaders are unable to identify variations in pupils' performance to enable them to take quick, effective action to help pupils who are in danger of falling behind.
- Senior leaders' evaluations of the school's effectiveness are generous. They are overly focused on the small improvements that have been made this year and do not make sufficient allowance for pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching over time. Too much time elapses before the impact of actions taken is measured. Identified weaknesses – for example, those revealed through scrutiny of pupils' work – are not tackled swiftly enough.
- Until recently, training needs have not been identified precisely to help staff to develop their teaching expertise, to hold them accountable for pupils' progress, and to develop their leadership skills. The headteacher has taken some useful preparatory steps to tackle staff underperformance by taking account of the *Teachers' Standards* when he carries out checks on colleagues' work. He has introduced a target system for staff, linked to the school improvement plan. However, these actions have not yet shown sustained impact on pupils' attainment, nor have they achieved consistency in the performance of staff.
- Newly qualified teachers should not be appointed.
- Underdeveloped assessment procedures have meant that staff have not tracked pupils' progress closely or used information well to plan teaching. The school is in the early stages of working towards full implementation of its preferred approach to assessment following removal of National Curriculum levels.
- Most leaders who have responsibility for key aspects of the school's work do not show the capacity to ensure that the school recovers quickly from its sharp decline in performance and to help staff make best use of recent support from its partner schools. The early years, however, is led effectively. The teacher in charge has acted swiftly on external advice to provide a wider range of stimulating resources for children.
- The needs of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are not assessed well enough to ensure that resources are carefully allocated or to direct teaching for these pupils.
- Although there has been a recent, small improvement in arrangements for checking the performance of different groups, the pupil premium funding is not being used well enough to close gaps in attainment, especially in mathematics and writing.
- The school ensures that there is no discrimination; for example, by welcoming pupils who have experienced difficulties in their previous schools and by running small groups to help pupils develop their self-esteem and social skills. It does not, however, promote equal opportunities for all groups of pupils. Weaknesses in pupils' achievement in mathematics and writing show that the school's curriculum (the subjects taught) does not prepare pupils adequately for the next stage in their education.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral and social development effectively. Pupils demonstrate through their behaviour around school that they follow the direction of the school's 'live like Jesus' motto. They show their empathy for other people through their weekly Fair Trade stall for charity. Hospice visitors and others from the care professions provide pupils with evidence of how their actions have a positive impact on improving lives in the local and wider communities.
- Pupils are taught well about some essential British values. Assemblies are used well to instil in pupils mutual tolerance and respect and an understanding of different religions. The school is in the early stages

of developing a link with an ethnically diverse, urban school to strengthen pupils' preparation for life in modern Britain.

- The school has spent the additional sports funding appropriately; for example, by taking out a subscription to a local schools' sports partnership. This has provided opportunities for more pupils to take part in a wider range of sporting activities. However, leaders have not analysed the impact of this expenditure on pupils' sporting skills, or their health and well-being.
- The local authority has provided the school with useful help and guidance in brokering support from consultants and a neighbouring school. The impact of its work is most noticeable in recent improvements to provision in the early years.
- Safeguarding procedures are implemented effectively and current government requirements are fully met. Leaders carry out the required checks when recruiting staff.

■ The governance of the school:

- Governors recognise that, over time, members of the governing body have had little input into checking the school's performance and influencing its direction. In particular, they have not taken swift enough action to arrest the decline in pupils' performance. They have not ensured that the school's website contains the required information for parents and they are not well informed over the full range of the school's policies and procedures.
- Under new leadership, governors are starting to take suitable steps to improve their effectiveness. Recent appointments to the governing body and bespoke training are strengthening its capacity to hold leaders to account for pupils' achievement. Governors now know how well most groups of pupils are doing across the school. They are aware of some of the uses the school makes of the pupil premium funding but cannot identify precisely the impact of that expenditure on the achievement of eligible pupils.
- Governors have reorganised their committee structures recently to enable them to become better informed about the quality of teaching. They are establishing links between individual governors and subjects, and between governors and year groups, to help them gain first-hand knowledge of how well pupils are learning. They have planned a suitable calendar of activities to check the effectiveness of the school's work in the next school year.
- Governors are developing their understanding of where the strengths and weaknesses in teaching lie. Over the past year, they have mostly ensured that arrangements for managing the performance of staff have been effective, by withholding pay rises when targets have not been met.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. In lessons, there are rarely any disruptions to learning and pupils can be relied upon to work unaided without needing undue adult intervention to modify their behaviour. In too many lessons, however, teachers do not capitalise on pupils' willingness to learn. Weaknesses in teaching result in groups of pupils not being fully engaged in learning for significant periods of time or wasting time on unproductive tasks which do not inspire them to work hard.
- Leaders recognise that not enough has been done to develop the 'pupil voice' to enable pupils to participate more fully in the school's work and to develop their spirit of independence.
- In public areas of the school, pupils behave well. They are well mannered, polite and friendly, and show consideration for each other. They organise play activities themselves and cooperate well with other pupils who take the lead in directing their games. They quickly obey teachers' instructions and requests. They respond well to opportunities to consider concepts of caring for others and observe moments of reflection impeccably.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Inspectors agree with the vast majority of parents who believe that their children are safe and well looked after in school. Staff supervise pupils

closely at break and lunchtimes as they cross the hilly slope between the school and their playground.

- Pupils report that they feel extremely safe in school. They say that adults respect and value them, and comfort and encourage them when they feel troubled. Discussions with pupils and the school's records indicate that bullying incidents are rare and that they are quickly sorted out by staff. There have been very few exclusions this year.
- Pupils are taught in lessons and by visitors, including representatives from the fire service, how to stay safe in potentially dangerous situations; for example, near busy roads or when using social media. They report that this information has prompted them to reflect more widely on the implications of staying safe at all times.
- Attendance is broadly average. The school works closely with the local attendance officer to track attendance and check the impact of actions taken to reduce the persistent absence of pupils who have joined the school from other schools. This approach is well coordinated and has resulted in improved attendance for individual pupils.
- The school makes expert use of 'positive play' therapy and nurture group lessons to develop vulnerable pupils' social skills.

The quality of teaching

is inadequate

- While teaching in Reception requires improvement, too much teaching in the other year groups requires improvement or is inadequate.
- Pupils do not learn well because teachers, especially in Years 1 to 3, do not have an accurate picture of what pupils can already do and what they are capable of. This is reflected in their planning and expectations for pupils' progress over time. Teachers do not always select activities carefully enough to enable pupils to learn at a swift pace and pupils, including the most able, often spend too long on mundane tasks.
- In most year groups, speaking skills are not practised well. Teachers do not routinely ask questions that require thoughtful or extended answers. They do not adapt their questioning to pupils' responses. Often, they only check the understanding of pupils who put their hands up to answer questions. Consequently, less confident or quieter pupils 'switch off' from learning and take little part in lessons for considerable periods of time.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are not consistently taught well. Due to inaccuracy in the data kept by the school, staff have only a vague understanding of how to help these pupils. While these pupils sometimes make useful gains when they are taught in small groups, they are not consistently well supported in lessons.
- Pupils are not routinely taught accurate, consistent handwriting habits, especially in Key Stage 1. In the older year groups, discussions with pupils on how to improve aspects of their writing are not always sharply focused, which slows pupils' progress.
- Most mathematical skills are not taught well. Pupils often spend too long working on repetitive tasks on worksheets and teachers do not check their work in a timely way to move them on to more challenging work. Not enough opportunities are taken to develop pupils' reasoning and estimating skills.
- Reading skills are taught adequately in Key Stage 2 and this enables pupils to make plausible inferences from fiction and instructional texts.
- A recent focus on improving pupils' calculation skills in mathematics is working well. Most pupils now have a secure understanding of number bonds and place value, and this helps them to recognise patterns when they work out addition and subtraction questions.

The achievement of pupils is inadequate

- Standards at the end of Year 6 in 2013 and 2014 declined to below average. In 2014, attainment was well below average in mathematics. Only half the boys gained the nationally expected Level 4 in writing, and very few girls achieved the higher Level 5 in mathematics. Pupils made inadequate progress from their starting points in writing and mathematics. The school's information on pupils' attainment and progress shows that underachievement was widespread across other year groups last year.
- In 2014, disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 were working about two and a half terms behind their classmates in mathematics and reading, and six terms behind them in writing. Compared to other pupils nationally, disadvantaged pupils were two terms behind in reading, four and a half terms behind in mathematics, and six and a half terms behind in writing. Across the school, the achievement of disadvantaged pupils varies but, overall, these pupils make inadequate progress.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs underachieve. Weak arrangements for collecting and analysing information on their progress mean that they do not get the right support quickly enough to enable them to do well.
- The most-able pupils do not do as well as they should. They are not given consistently good opportunities to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding over a sustained period of time. Too few pupils achieve the higher levels in writing and mathematics because teachers do not make them work hard enough.
- Standards in Year 2 declined to average in 2013 and 2014. Weaknesses in teaching and tracking procedures, and occasional inaccuracies in the judgements teachers make about the standards of pupils' work, hold back pupils' progress in Key Stage 1.
- Pupils' attainment when they join Year 1 is broadly average. Results in the Year 1 screening check for phonics (the sounds that letters make) matched the national averages in 2013 and 2014. Less-able pupils in Year 2 mostly demonstrate an adequate range of strategies to split up and blend words, but texts they read are not always closely matched to their abilities. However, by the end of Year 6, standards in reading are in line with the national average. Most pupils make the progress expected of them in this skill, but too few make better than expected progress.
- Actions taken to improve teaching have improved progress for some pupils. This is most noticeable in Year 4, where pupils now benefit from good teaching. In Year 6, additional staffing and support programmes have helped some pupils to work closer to nationally expected levels. However, targets for Year 6 pupils lack sufficient challenge and many pupils in other year groups continue to underachieve.

The early years provision requires improvement

- The knowledge and skills of children when they join Reception are broadly typical for their age in most areas of learning, except writing and number, where they are a little below. The proportion of children who reached a good level of development in 2014 increased from the previous year and was just below the national average. This means that just over half the children were fully prepared for learning in Year 1.
- The early years' leader has shown effective leadership by acting swiftly this year on recommendations from an external consultant to increase the quality of resources and learning experiences for children, especially in the outdoor area. These gains have enabled staff to design more stimulating activities which have improved children's attitudes to learning and their conversational skills.
- Staff do not always plan tightly together to ensure children can quickly and purposefully reinforce the skills which they have learned indoors in the outdoor area. They are not always vigilant enough to recognise when children have exhausted the possibilities of one activity and need to be moved on to another. Additional adults do not routinely challenge children's thinking when they question them about their experiences.

- Children behave well, both indoors and outdoors, when working individually, or in pairs. Relationships with adults are positive. On a few occasions, children fail to sustain their concentration fully; for example, when they are learning new sounds.

- Staff ensure that welfare requirements are met and that the indoor and outdoor areas are secure and safe for children to use.

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	112929
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	455987

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	180
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rebecca Willsher
Headteacher	Paul Scully
Date of previous school inspection	26 June 2012
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