

# St Joseph's Roman Catholic Primary School, Ramsbottom

## Inspection report

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	105343
<b>Local Authority</b>	Bury
<b>Inspection number</b>	324206
<b>Inspection date</b>	11 November 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Michael Onyon

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

---

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	200
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr W Mc Sorley
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs P Leatherbarrow
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	26 September 2005
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Queen Street Ramsbottom Bury Lancashire BL0 9JJ

---

<b>Age group</b>	3–11
<b>Inspection date</b>	11 November 2008
<b>Inspection number</b>	324206

**Telephone number**  
**Fax number**

01706 823645  
01706 823964

<b>Age group</b>	3-11
<b>Inspection date</b>	11 November 2008
<b>Inspection number</b>	324206

---

© Crown copyright 2008

Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://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 two Additional Inspectors.

The inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: whether all pupils are achieving as well as they can; whether they use their literacy and numeracy skills well in other subjects; the impact on learning of the quality of pupils' personal development and the use of assessment information to plan learning activities. Other aspects of the school's work were not inspected in detail, but the inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

## Description of the school

This is an average sized primary school. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. Pupils are predominantly from White British families. The school has a below average number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school has achieved a number of awards including Healthy School and Activemark. It provides education for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school which, in their words, pupils are 'proud to attend' and they cooperate very effectively as one happy family. Parents' comments include 'St Joseph's is an excellent school' and 'I couldn't imagine sending our children anywhere else.'

The school's outstanding leadership and management, recognised at the time of the previous inspection, continues to provide an environment focused on continuous improvement, where staff and pupils are determined to do as well as they can. As a result, pupils achieve outstandingly well. The excellent leadership of the headteacher ensured that the school established challenging targets to maintain and raise further the excellent achievements of pupils over the past few years. Other major strengths of the school are the outstanding personal development of pupils and the excellent provision for pupils' care, support and guidance. The academic guidance given to all pupils is exemplary. The school's assessment system offers all pupils a personal 'tracking book' that ensures records are accurate and this is used exceptionally well to identify what each pupil needs to learn next. Pupils experience very well planned opportunities to understand how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve. The pastoral guidance given to all pupils is especially strong. As a result of the high expectations of all staff, pupils have excellent attitudes towards their work and say, 'We always try to do our very best'. As a result, achievements are celebrated, work is presented very well and pupils take great pride in what they do.

Outstanding progress in the EYFS leads to pupils entering Year 1 with skills that are beyond those expected for their age. They continue to make outstanding progress and achieve exceptionally well by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils reach well above average standards in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6. Pupils currently in the school are again on track to reach the challenging targets set for them. A significant reason for this is the excellent use teachers make of assessment information to ensure pupils make as much progress as possible. Pupils of all levels of ability receive appropriate support and challenge to foster higher levels of achievement.

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Staff have very clear and high expectations about pupil learning, with excellent use made of the outcomes of assessments to plan and present activities relevant to the needs of pupils of differing abilities. Pupils are given plenty of opportunities to use their literacy and numeracy skills effectively in subjects across the whole curriculum. Staff have excellent relationships with pupils and pupils feel confident about tackling their challenging work. The school has reviewed the curriculum, taking account of the needs and interests of the pupils. It is very well planned and excellent use is made of links between subjects. For example, displays around the school illustrate a range of activities which ensures learning is always challenging and fun! These activities enable pupils to develop the skills necessary for their future economic well-being exceptionally well.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. There is a clear emphasis on pupils helping others and respecting each other's views which adds breadth to their education. Their behaviour and their relationship with others are exemplary and the school provides excellent support for the most vulnerable pupils. They make a very good contribution to the school community through the many responsibilities they undertake, for example, responding to telephone enquiries during lunchtime. Pupils on the school council take their responsibilities very seriously, contributing to decisions made, for example, about seating arrangements at

lunchtime. Pupils know how to stay healthy. They participate eagerly in sport and have a very good understanding of how to stay fit and what types of food and drink are good for you. Classrooms are attractive and welcoming places where pupils' work is valued. There is an excellent range of extra-curricular activities which are well attended and enjoyed by the pupils. For example, 'Rugby Ron' visits school regularly to lead the coaching of rugby skills. Attendance is excellent.

Leadership and management are outstanding. The enthusiasm of the leadership and management team and the willingness of all the staff to listen to others' views are hallmarks of a commitment to make the school even better. The school has highly effective procedures for evaluating itself and has accurately identified what works well and what needs to improve. Members of the leadership team play a key part in ensuring changes are made that enable the school to continue being highly successful. Parents and carers are not sufficiently involved in expressing their views about how the school should develop. Governors hold the school to account very well. The school provides excellent value for money and has an outstanding capacity for further improvement.

## **Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 1**

The EYFS is exceptionally well led and managed and provides children with an outstanding start to their school life. On entry to the Nursery, children have skills which are slightly above those expected for their age. They make very good progress overall towards their early learning goals. In their personal, social and emotional development children's achievement is excellent. Their achievement overall is outstanding. When they enter Year 1, most children exceed national expectations for their age. Children's behaviour and enjoyment of learning are excellent because staff offer them exciting and stimulating activities. For example, in the Reception class, children were engrossed in building a bear cave using natural materials which they had collected themselves. Classrooms and outdoor areas are well laid out and safe and very good quality resources are used most effectively to promote learning. Teaching is outstanding and teachers' imaginatively plan learning activities around the required six areas of learning. In the Reception class, children receive their entitlement to a daily phonics session. Assessments are used particularly well by teachers to plan step-by-step learning and to ensure that children's needs and interests are very well catered for. Parents are welcomed into school and are given good opportunities to share information about their children's progress. Arrangements for starting in the Nursery are excellent and there is smooth transition into Year 1.

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

- Implement the school's plan to introduce a Parents' Council, offering a voice to all parents and carers in the future of the school.

**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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).**

**Annex A**

**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?	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

**Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	1
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	1

**Achievement and standards**

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

---

<sup>1</sup>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.



## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	1
The behaviour of learners	1
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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	1
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

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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

## Annex B

### **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Inspection of St Joseph's Roman Catholic Primary School, Ramsbottom, Bury, BL0 9JJ

What a marvellous school you attend!

Thank you for helping us when we visited your school. We enjoyed meeting you and finding out about your school. We found that your school provides you with an outstanding education and that you do some very exciting things. I particularly enjoyed watching you in lessons where you work extremely hard and have excellent attitudes to your work. Your parents agree with me that your school is a very happy place.

These are the things that are particularly strong in your school.

- Throughout the school, your teachers have high expectations and very clear ideas of how to bring about improvements.
- You make excellent progress and your work is well above average by the end of Year 6.
- You are extremely polite and your behaviour is exemplary.
- All members of staff look after and care for you exceptionally well.
- Your headteacher provides outstanding leadership and management.

Your school is always trying to be even better and I have asked your teachers to put their plans for a Parents Council in place, so that all your parents and carers can contribute to decisions about the future of your school. I am sure that your school council will be able to offer them lots of support.