

**Inspection under Section 28 of the
Education Act 2005**

A Report on the Quality of Education in

**St Joseph's RC Primary School
204 North Road
Gabalfa
Cardiff
CF14 3BL**

School Number: 6813328

Date of Inspection: 12/05/09

by

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St Joseph's RC Primary School was inspected as part of a national programme of school inspection. The purpose of inspection is to identify good features and shortcomings in schools in order that they may improve the quality of education offered and raise the standards achieved by their pupils. The inspection of all schools within a six-year cycle is also designed to give parents information about the performance of their child's school.

The inspection of St Joseph's RC Primary School took place between 12/05/09 and 14/05/09. An independent team of inspectors, led by Stephen Dennett, undertook the inspection. Estyn, a statutory body independent of, but funded by, the National Assembly for Wales, commissioned the inspection.

The team was required to report on the standards achieved by pupils, the quality of education provided by the school, the quality of leadership and management and the contribution made by the school to its pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The five-point scale used to represent all inspection judgements in this report is as follows:

Grade 1	good with outstanding features
Grade 2	good features and no important shortcomings
Grade 3	good features outweigh shortcomings
Grade 4	some good features, but shortcomings in important areas
Grade 5	many important shortcomings

There are three types of inspection.

For **all** inspections, there is a written report on seven key questions.

For **short** inspections, there are no subject reports.

For **standard** inspections, there are also reports on six subjects.

For **full** inspections, there are also reports on all subjects.

Estyn decides the kind of inspection that a school receives, mainly on the basis of its past performance. Most schools receive a standard inspection. All nursery schools, special schools, pupil referral units and any new or amalgamated schools receive a full inspection.

This school received a **short** inspection.

Year groups and key stages

Schools use a common system of numbering year groups from the start of compulsory schooling to 18 years of age. This system emphasises the importance of continuity and eases communication among schools, governing bodies, parents and LEAs.

The term 'Reception' (R) refers to the year group of pupils in a primary school who reach the age of 5 during the academic year. Year 1 refers to the year group of pupils who reach the age of 6 during the academic year and so on. Year 13 is the year group of students who reach the age of 18 during the academic year.

Primary phase:

Year	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6
Ages	4-5	5-6	6-7	7-8	8-9	9-10	10-11

Secondary phase:

Year	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13
Ages	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18

The National Curriculum covers four key stages as follows:

Key stage 1	Year 1 and Year 2
Key stage 2	Year 3 to Year 6
Key stage 3	Year 7 to Year 9
Key stage 4	Year 10 and Year 11

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Context

The nature of the provider

- 1 St Joseph's Roman Catholic Primary School is a city school situated in the suburb of Gabalfa in Cardiff. The social and economic backgrounds of pupils are neither advantaged nor disadvantaged. Around 11% of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is below the local education authority (LEA) and national averages. The school provides education for pupils aged four to eleven. A proportion of children enter the school from Allensbank Nursery each year.
- 2 Around 12% of the pupils have been identified as having special educational needs (SEN), which is below average, and 1.5% of pupils have statements of SEN. About 20% of pupils speak English as an additional language (EAL) mainly Tagalog and Malayalam. About 25% of pupils are from ethnic minorities, mainly Asian. No pupils speak Welsh as a first language. No pupils are 'looked after' by the local authority. At the time of the inspection, there were 198 pupils on the school's roll. The number of pupils on roll has fallen by a quarter since the school was last inspected in July 2003. The present headteacher took up his post in September 1987.

The school's priorities and targets

- 3 The school's mission statement strongly emphasises the education of pupils in the principles of the Catholic Church. The school has set a number of targets in its current school improvement plan (SIP), which include to:
 - continue to improve standards in the Foundation Phase;
 - monitor standards in reading and writing;
 - improve standards in information and communication technology (ICT) throughout the curriculum;
 - continue to monitor standards in key skills;
 - further improve assessment, by involving pupils in their own assessment;
 - review the effectiveness of the emotional literacy programme;
 - continue to monitor the difference in the performance of boys and girls;
 - further develop the outdoor environment to enhance teaching and learning;
 - further develop self-evaluation procedures, including the involvement of the governing body;
 - further develop outdoor provision; and
 - develop transition and inclusion.

Summary

- 4 St Joseph's is a good school with no important shortcomings and some notable strengths. Because of good, and sometimes outstanding teaching, pupils achieve standards which are generally above average. Their personal development and behaviour are outstanding. The school's ethos is communicated clearly in all it does, and it provides a caring, secure environment for all its pupils. The school's promotion of racial harmony and equal opportunities is outstanding.

Table of grades awarded

Key Question	Inspection grade
1 How well do learners achieve?	2
2 How effective are teaching, training and assessment?	2
3 How well do the learning experiences meet the needs and interests of learners and the wider community?	2
4 How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2
5 How effective are leadership and strategic management?	2
6 How well do leaders and managers evaluate and improve quality and standards?	2
7 How efficient are leaders and managers in using resources?	2

- 5 The inspection team did not agree with the grades the school awarded itself in any of the key questions.
- 6 The school is successful in enabling pupils to attain agreed learning goals. In the 2008 teacher assessments in key stage 1, the percentage of pupils attaining at least level 2 in English, mathematics and science (the core subject indicator) was in the top 50% nationally and compared with schools with a similar number of pupils eligible for free school meals. Pupils are making good progress and they attain standards that are above average by the end of Year 2.
- 7 In key stage 2 in the 2008 teacher assessments, pupils' attainment in the core subject indicator was in the top 50% in comparison to similar schools and in the top 25% nationally. Pupils make good progress and their standards of attainment are generally above average by the end of Year 6. The trends in pupils' performance shows that standards have been maintained at a high level since 2006 at key stage 1. However, standards at key stage 2 have declined over the last three years, although they are still above average. There are no significant differences in the performance of boys and girls at either key stage.
- 8 The overall quality of the educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and the pupils are making good progress towards the desirable

learning outcomes for children aged five. Pupils with ALN¹ make good and sometimes very good progress. However, more able pupils do not always achieve the standards of which they are capable, especially in key stage 1.

- 9 Pupils' achievement in the key skills of thinking, communication, number and ICT are good. Pupils' bilingual skills are developing very well where they regularly use Welsh words and phrases in their work in subjects across the curriculum. Pupils have a good understanding of how they are progressing and know what they need to do to improve their work. Most pupils are making good progress towards fulfilling their potential and are ready for the next phase of their education.
- 10 Pupils' personal, social and learning skills are very good. Nearly all pupils behave very responsibly. This is an outstanding feature and contributes to their very good progress and development. Pupils achieve good levels of attendance and punctuality. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good and their spiritual development is particularly outstanding. Pupils have a good understanding of their own Welsh culture and are developing an outstanding understanding of equality of opportunity and cultural diversity.
- 11 Pupils are beginning to develop a good understanding of the workplace through their involvement in 'Fair Trade'. However, their entrepreneurial skills are not sufficiently well developed. Pupils are developing a good understanding of issues such as sustainability and global citizenship.

The quality of education and training

Grades for teaching

12 The quality of teaching observed in 16 lessons was judged as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
25%	56%	19%	0%	0%

- 13 The quality of teaching is good. The good and outstanding features of teaching in key stages 1 and 2 include good planning for lessons, very good teaching skills, an outstanding commitment to equal opportunity for all pupils, high quality team work between teachers and teaching assistants (TAs), outstanding relationship between teachers, TAs and pupils and very effective development of the Welsh language. Occasionally, pupils are over-directed by the teacher, which inhibits the development of pupils' independent learning skills and, in some lessons, work is not sufficiently challenging for more able pupils and tasks are not well matched to the needs of less able pupils.
- 14 The quality of assessment is good and meets all statutory requirements. Assessments are regularly undertaken to track pupils' progress and to inform the planning of teaching and learning. The quality of the annual reports to parents is good and they meet all statutory requirements.

¹ Additional learning needs (ALN) covers: pupils with special educational needs (SEN), pupils who speak English as additional language (EAL), more able and talented pupils, pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties (EBD) and pupils with physical impairments or disabilities.

- 15 The curriculum meets the range and abilities of all pupils well. The introduction of the skills-based curriculum and the Foundation Phase is progressing well. The school's provision for the development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. The school is an extremely happy environment and pupils are very well mannered and confident when speaking to visitors. The pupils take their roles in the school council, the eco and 'Fair Trade' committees very seriously. They are heavily involved in environmental issues and their concerns are carefully considered by staff.
- 16 The school has a few visits to places of work and some visitors who talk about their jobs. However, the provision for work-related education is at an early stage of development. There is very good provision for the development of pupils' Welsh language skills, and pupils have a good understanding of Welsh culture and heritage.
- 17 The way in which the school addresses social disadvantage and stereotyped behaviour is an outstanding feature. Staff develop a deep understanding of every pupil's background and this enables them to treat their individual needs appropriately.
- 18 The personal support and guidance provided for pupils is a key element of the overall school ethos. The school makes a very good contribution to pupils' well-being. Parents confirm how well the school works with them in ensuring an effective level of support and guidance for their children. There is a good system for ensuring pupils joining the school settle in quickly. The school is developing good systems for monitoring and addressing the poor punctuality and attendance of a very few pupils.
- 19 Provision for pupils with ALN is good overall. Pupils with SEN are given a good range of supporting activities, including specialist lessons in groups. Provision for pupils with EAL is good. Pupils whose behaviour may impede their own or others' work are managed well. The school's provision for talented pupils is good but provision for more able pupils is in an early stage of development.

Leadership and management

- 20 The headteacher provides very good pastoral leadership for the school. He is generally well supported by senior leaders, but there are some inconsistencies in the management structure. Although senior managers and governors have worked hard to overcome these shortcomings, they still impede the efficiency of the senior management team. Effective performance management procedures for teachers are in place, and teachers' targets reflect both personal and whole-school objectives. However the performance management process does not yet fully involve support staff and this aspect of the school's management is in its initial stages.
- 21 The governing body meets its responsibilities appropriately and is supportive of the headteacher and the school. However, the governing body's contribution to the strategic direction of the school is underdeveloped as there is an over-reliance on the professional leadership of the school. In addition, the school does not meet the statutory requirement to publish information about its access plan in the school prospectus.

- 22 The school has established good procedures for evaluating its performance and provision. Managers and subject leaders are well informed about performance in the areas for which they are responsible. Leaders have taken suitable steps to involve staff, governors and, to a lesser extent, parents in the self-evaluation process, but the involvement of pupils and the wider community is less well developed. The school has a good improvement plan, which clearly sets out the priorities to bring about improvements. The school can demonstrate that its actions have brought about measurable improvement. The school has successfully addressed the key issues raised in the last inspection report.
- 23 The school has an appropriate number of qualified and experienced teachers who cover the curriculum effectively. The teachers are ably supported by teaching assistants (TA) who work closely and efficiently with teachers on both planning and assessment tasks. All pupils have easy access to high quality learning resources which, through careful planning, are well matched to their educational needs. The accommodation is fit for purpose, but there is no access to some parts of the school for wheelchair users. This is a shortcoming. The governors' finance sub-committee closely monitors the school's budget and works closely with the LEA finance officer to ensure that financial resources are used effectively. The school provides good value for money.

Recommendations

- 24 In order to further raise standards and improve the quality of education, the school should:
- R1 raise standards for more able pupils, particularly in key stage 1;
 - R2 ensure that the school's prospectus meets statutory requirements by including the school's access plan;
 - R3 take effective steps to ensure that pupils and all interested parties are fully involved in the school's self-evaluation process*; and
 - R4 continue to develop the role of the governing body in helping set the strategic direction of the school.*

** The school has already identified aspects of this recommendation in its improvement plan.*

The governing body is responsible for amending its current development plan to incorporate action in response to the recommendations within 45 working days of receiving the report, showing what the school is going to do about the recommendations. This plan, or a summary of it, will be circulated to all parents at the school.

Standards

Key Question 1: How well do learners achieve?

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings.

- 25 The inspection team did not agree with the grade the school gave itself in its self-evaluation report. Evidence shows that pupils' achievement is above, but not well above expectations at both key stages and that they make good progress overall. As a result, the inspection team judged this key question grade 2.
- 26 The school is successful in enabling pupils to attain agreed learning goals. In the 2008 teacher assessments in key stage 1, the percentage of pupils attaining at least level 2 in English, mathematics and science (the core subject indicator) was in the top 50% nationally and compared with schools with a similar number of pupils eligible for free school meals. In English and mathematics, 90% of pupils attaining at least level 2, which is in the lower 50% compared with similar schools but in the upper 50% compared with all primary schools in Wales. In science, 90% of pupils attaining at least level 2, which places the school in the lowest 25% compared with similar schools and in the lower 50% compared with all primary schools in Wales. The percentage of pupils attaining the higher level 3 is below the national average in all three core subjects.
- 27 In key stage 2 in the 2008 teacher assessments, pupils' attainment in the core subject indicator was in the top 50% in comparison to similar schools and in the top 25% nationally. In English, 91% of pupils attained at least level 4, which places the school in the top 50% compared with similar school and in the top 25% compared with all primary schools in Wales. However, standards in mathematics were in the lower 50% in comparison with similar schools, but in the upper 50% compared with all schools in Wales. Standards in science were also in the upper 50% compared with similar schools and all primary schools in Wales. The proportion of pupils attaining the higher level 5 is above average in English and mathematics, but below average in science.
- 28 The trends in pupils' performance shows that standards have been maintained at a high level since 2006 in key stage 1. However, standards in key stage 2 have declined over the last three years, although still above average. There are no significant differences in the performance of boys and girls at either key stage.
- 29 The overall quality of the educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and the pupils are making good progress towards the desirable learning outcomes for children aged five.
- 30 In key stage 1, pupils are making good progress and they achieve standards that are above average by the end of Year 2. In key stage 2, pupils continue to make good progress and their standards of achievement are generally above average by the end of Year 6. Pupils consistently achieve challenging targets in their work, especially in key stage 2. Pupils with SEN make good and sometimes very good progress, as do pupils with EAL. However, more able pupils do not always achieve the standards of which they are capable, especially in key stage 1, where the proportion of pupils achieving the higher level 3 is below the national average in mathematics and science and at the national average in English. The

proportion of pupils achieving the higher level 5 in science in Year 6 is also below the national average.

- 31 Pupils' achievement in the key skills of thinking, communication, number and ICT are good overall, but pupils' achievement in reading is not as high as it is in other aspects of communication. Pupils' achievement in some aspects of ICT, notably data handling and text and graphics, is very good. Pupils succeed in their learning regardless of their background. Pupils' bilingual skills are developing very well when they regularly use Welsh words and phrases in their work in subjects across the curriculum. This is an outstanding feature.
- 32 Pupils have a good understanding of how they are progressing and know what they need to do to improve their work. Most pupils are making good progress towards fulfilling their potential and are ready for the next phase of their education.
- 33 Pupils' personal, social and learning skills are very good. They are well motivated in all classes and work productively. Nearly all pupils behave very responsibly. This is an outstanding feature and contributes to their very good progress and development. There is great respect shown by pupils for their peers and all other age groups. Throughout the school, pupils are developing their capacity to work independently well and they are able to improve their own learning
- 34 Pupils achieve good levels of attendance. For the three terms prior to the inspection the average for attendance was 94%, which is above the average for similar schools and all primary schools in Wales. While nearly all pupils arrive promptly at the beginning of the school day, a very few have poor punctuality records.
- 35 Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good and their spiritual development is particularly outstanding. Pupils have a good understanding of their own Welsh culture and are developing an excellent understanding of equality of opportunity and cultural diversity.
- 36 Pupils are beginning to develop a good understanding of the workplace through their involvement in 'Fair Trade'. However, their entrepreneurial skills are at an early stage of development. Pupils are developing a good understanding of issues such as sustainability and global citizenship.

The quality of education and training

Key Question 2: How effective are teaching, training and assessment?

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

- 37 The inspection team did not agree with the grade the school gave itself in its self-evaluation report. Evidence shows that although there are areas of strength, 19% of teaching was judged to be grade 3, which indicates a some shortcomings. As a result, the inspection team judged this key question grade 2.

38 The quality of teaching observed in 16 lessons was judged as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
25%	56%	19%	0%	0%

- 39 The quality of teaching in the lessons observed is lower than the average reported in HMCI's report for 2007/08 which is that teaching is good or better (grade 1 or 2) in 83% of lessons. However, it is above the percentage of lessons (16%) where teaching was graded 1.
- 40 The quality of teaching for the under-fives is good. Staff provide interesting and enjoyable learning experiences for children, especially outstanding provision for 'forest school' in the school's wooded area. There is very good teamwork between teachers and TAs and activities are well matched to children's needs. Good progress has been made in introducing the Foundation Phase.
- 41 The good and outstanding features of teaching in key stages 1 and 2 include:
- planning for lessons is thorough and well differentiated;
 - teachers have very good skills and strategies to gain and maintain pupils' interest;
 - commitment to equal opportunity for all pupils;
 - effective cross-curricular links;
 - high quality team work between teachers and teaching assistants (TAs) with both teaching and support staff fully involved in planning in the early years and both key stages;
 - outstanding relationships between teachers, TAs and pupils;
 - good opportunities afforded to pupils to reflect and develop their skills for working independently;
 - very effective development of the Welsh language;
 - effective use of ICT to support pupils' learning;
 - secure classroom management;
 - good questioning skills enabling pupils to give extended responses; and
 - effective behaviour management.
- 42 Where teaching has some shortcomings, the pace of lessons is too slow or too much time taken up by explanations. Occasionally, pupils are over-directed by the teacher, which inhibits the development of pupils' independent learning skills. Sometimes, pupils are given an insufficient range of tasks to complete and there are inadequate opportunities for pupils to evaluate their work. In some lessons, work is not sufficiently challenging for more able pupils and tasks are not well matched to the needs of less able pupils.
- 43 Teachers are good role models. The quality of the working relationship between them and pupils, based on fairness and mutual respect, is outstanding. On the whole, teachers have high expectations and offer pupils good support, frequently praising them for their efforts. Teachers know their pupils very well and, in most cases, their planning takes good account of the needs of individuals including those with ALN.
- 44 Incidental Welsh is used very regularly by teachers and TAs in the school's daily routines. The consistent use of good quality bilingual signs throughout the school add to pupils understanding. Teachers and others provide very good

opportunities for pupils to use and develop Welsh in classes, in the dining hall and in the playground. Teachers encourage older pupils to write in Welsh across the curriculum and this is impressive, for example, in subjects such as mathematics.

- 45 The quality of assessment is good and meets statutory requirements. There are good standardising and moderating processes in place to ensure teachers' assessments are robust and accurate. Assessments are regularly undertaken to track pupils' progress and to adjust the planning of teaching and learning. Pupils' work is marked diligently with encouraging comments which often point to the way in which a pupil's performance can be improved.
- 46 The quality of the annual reports to parents is good and reports meet all statutory requirements. Reports are provided on all subjects including the foundation subjects. They are very detailed and give a comprehensive account of pupils' academic, social and personal development. Parents are invited to make comments on their children's reports and the school's 'open door' policy means that they are always welcome to discuss any concerns they might have about their children's progress.

Key Question 3: How well do the learning experiences meet the needs and interests of learners and the wider community

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

- 47 The inspection team did not agree with the grade the school gave itself in its self-evaluation report. There were insufficient outstanding features and some minor shortcomings in this key question. As a result, the inspection team judged this key question grade 2.
- 48 The learning experiences given to pupils throughout the school are good. There is a variety of opportunities and a very wide range of local visits offered. Opportunities to attend short residential courses (including the Urdd) are a particularly strong feature of the school's provision. Pupils take part in local choral and dance festivals and benefit from art and storytelling projects provided by professional story tellers and theatre groups in the school.
- 49 The curriculum meets statutory requirements. The introduction of the skills-based curriculum and the Foundation Phase is progressing well. The school responds effectively to the needs of talented pupils, but provision to extend the more able is not sufficiently well developed. The quality of whole-school planning for key skills is good and opportunities for developing literary, numeracy and ICT skills are identified effectively in teachers' lesson plans. Pupils' thinking, creative and problem-solving skills are developing well.
- 50 The efforts made by the school to tackle social disadvantage and stereotyping and ensure equality of access for all pupils are exceptionally good. The provision for pupils with EAL is very good. Pupils make very rapid progress in the acquisition of both English and Welsh.
- 51 The school's provision for the development of pupils' spiritual, moral and social and cultural development is outstanding. It includes a thorough programme for personal and social education (PSE), which forms a substantial part of the 'Here I

Am' religious education syllabus. The school is an extremely happy environment and pupils are very well mannered and confident when speaking to visitors. They are always encouraged to take on responsibilities and they work extremely well together in groups and in class.

- 52 The school is very inclusive and successfully promotes the Gospel values outlined in its mission statement. Acts of collective worship in the classroom and in whole-school assemblies are of a very high standard. They are very meaningful and extremely well prepared. There is a high degree of pupils' participation. Behaviour in assemblies is exemplary. Collective worship fully complies with current statutory requirements.
- 53 Pupils' understanding of other cultures is very good and developed through their work in geography, history and religious education. Pupils are very generous in their contributions to the many charities supported by the school
- 54 Links with other schools in the cluster (local group of schools) and with other Roman Catholic primary schools throughout the diocese are good. There is a well developed approach to the transition to the high school. Bridging courses (work started in the final primary year and completed in the first year of the secondary phase) are provided in several subjects including Welsh. A senior teacher from the school teaches in the high school for two mornings a week which helps the transition process greatly.
- 55 The school has a few visits to places of work and some visitors who talk about their jobs. However, provision for work-related education is at an early stage of development.
- 56 There is very good provision for the development of pupils' Welsh language skills, and a wide range of strategies are used around the school, including bilingual signs, conversations between staff in Welsh and a 'phrase of the week'. Pupils have a good understanding of Welsh culture. There are annual eisteddfodau and opportunities to compose 'bardic' poems which further extend pupils understanding of Welsh culture and adds to the outstanding quality of the school's Cwricwlwm Cymreig.
- 57 The school started on the eco schools scheme three years ago and achieved the bronze award. Much is being done to promote education for sustainable development and global citizenship (ESDGC). The eco committee is very active in promoting various recycling schemes and raising awareness of energy conservation and pupils are involved in growing vegetables. A recently formed 'Fair Trade' committee is also beginning to have a positive influence. While ESDGC has been addressed well as part of the geography scheme of work, it has yet to become embedded across the curriculum.
- 58 Apart from the involvement of pupils in Year 6 in an 'enterprise week', there are few opportunities for pupils across the school to develop their entrepreneurial skills. Also, the school's committees do not have the benefit of budgets to manage. Relevant skills such as problem solving and decision making are developed well in subjects such as mathematics and science.

Key Question 4: How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?

Grade 2: Good features with no important shortcomings
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- 59 The inspection team did not agree with the grade the school gave itself in its self-evaluation report. There were insufficient outstanding features and some minor shortcomings in this key question. As a result, the inspection team judged this key question grade 2.
- 60 The personal support and guidance provided for pupils is a key element of the overall school ethos. All members of staff, led by the headteacher, are dedicated to ensuring pupils receive the support appropriate to their needs. Staff get to know each pupil as an individual and conscientiously identify their needs and draw up appropriate plans to meet them. Where applicable, effective use is made of external specialists. Members of the school council are very appreciative of the support and guidance they and their colleagues receive.
- 61 Parents, especially those of pupils with SEN, confirm how well the school works with them in ensuring the appropriate level of support and guidance for their children. The pupils themselves also have an influence on the life of the school through the school council. The school council is an effective body.
- 62 There is an appropriate system for ensuring pupils joining the school settle in quickly. Teachers visit the feeder nursery schools to develop profiles of each future pupil while the children and their parents have acclimatisation visits to the school during the previous term. There is also a detailed information pack provided for parents of all newcomers. These include those joining classes other than Reception, who are made to feel at home by staff and pupils.
- 63 The school has good systems for monitoring the poor punctuality and attendance of a minority of pupils. These systems are resulting in substantial improvements in these pupils' attendance. Similarly, the system for managing pupils' behaviour is applied consistently and achieves good results.
- 64 The school has introduced a few initiatives to help pupils understand the importance of a healthy lifestyle. These include water bottles in the classrooms, an emphasis on healthy living during some lessons, including physical education, and an encouragement to bring healthy snacks at break time.
- 65 Suitable arrangements for child protection are in place and the school meets statutory requirements. Pupils say they feel safe and staff have received appropriate training.
- 66 Health and safety arrangements are suitable. Although statutory requirements are met, some minor health and safety issues were brought to the school's attention during the inspection. The school is in the process of addressing the recommendations of a recent audit and a governor, who is a health and safety professional has drawn up an action plan. These actions have ensured that the school is a safe place for its pupils.
- 67 Provision for pupils with ALN is good overall. There are effective systems for the early diagnosis of pupils' needs and the school makes good use of outside agencies to strengthen their own assessments. Provision is managed well by the special needs co-ordinator (SENCo), who is supported effectively by the

inclusion manager. Pupils with SEN are given a good range of supporting activities, including specialist lessons in groups. TAs play a vital role in providing focussed support for pupils with SEN, especially in developing their language skills. IEPs are well written, clear and reviewed regularly. Pupils with SEN are well aware of their targets and contribute to reviews. Effective use is made of IEPs by staff to ensure tasks are well matched to pupils' needs.

- 68 Provision for pupils with EAL is good. They are supported well in classes and as a result are making good progress in their acquisition of English and Welsh. Pupils whose behaviour may impede their own or others' work are managed well.
- 69 The school's provision for talented pupils is good, and many pupils have been enabled to achieve high standards in their particular specialism. However, provision for more able pupils is at an early stage of development and the school has yet to formally identify pupils who may benefit from more challenging work, which is better matched to their capabilities.
- 70 The way in which the school promotes equal opportunities is an outstanding feature of the school. From the time pupils join the school, it ensures that they grow up free from the influence of traditional gender, social or racial stereotypes. Examples of this are the mixed sports teams and the role-play in an assembly where the jobs of nurses and fire-fighters were taken by boys and girls.
- 71 Pupils come from a diverse range of ethnic backgrounds. The school celebrates this while, at the same time, impressing on its pupils that they are all equal to one another in terms of their opportunities and aspirations. The way in which they exist as one happy family is evidence of the exceptionally inclusive ethos, which pervades the school.
- 72 There is a clear policy to enable pupils to respect diversity and an action plan for ensuring it is effectively carried out. Pupils are made aware of other cultures and faiths through their peers, other parents and visitors to the school.
- 73 The school has robust procedures to deal with all forms of oppressive behaviour, including racial discrimination and bullying. Most pupils and parents are appreciative of the prompt and sensitive way the school deals with any reported instances of bullying.
- 74 The school has a brief disability equality scheme, which addresses the issues of access to the building. However, wheelchair users are not able to access the upper storey of the school and there are no plans to address this. Also, the school's prospectus does not contain details of the access plan, and therefore does not meet statutory requirements.

Leadership and management

Key Question 5 : How effective are leadership and strategic management?

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings.

- 75 The inspection team did not agree with the grade the school gave itself in its self-evaluation report. There were insufficient outstanding features and some minor shortcomings in this key question. As a result, the inspection team judged this key question grade 2.
- 76 The headteacher provides very good pastoral leadership for the school. He is generally well supported by senior leaders, but there are some inconsistencies in the management structure, which has resulted in some shortcomings in the management of health and safety. Although senior managers and governors have worked hard to overcome these shortcomings, these have somewhat impeded the efficiency of the senior management team.
- 77 The school has appropriate aims and objectives and a strong commitment to equality of opportunity for all. The shared values, along with a very positive ethos provide a real sense of purpose and this is reflected clearly in the day to day life of the school.
- 78 Subject leaders set realistic, but challenging targets for their subjects based on evaluations of action plans, and teaching and learning is monitored using a range of processes. Subject leaders are well informed about pupil performance within their area of responsibility.
- 79 The school takes appropriate account of national initiatives, including the Foundation Phase and the skills-based curriculum, and these are developing well. The school promotes sustainability and encourages a healthy lifestyle for pupils. It also takes into account local partnerships and works closely with cluster schools and the high school.
- 80 Effective performance management procedures for teachers are in place, and teachers' targets reflect both personal and whole school objectives. Targets are closely linked to the school's improvement plan (SIP). However, the performance management process does not yet fully involve support staff and this aspect of the school's management is in its initial stages.
- 81 The governing body meets its responsibilities appropriately and is very supportive of the headteacher and the school. Individual governors have areas of expertise and they make a valuable contribution to the school's overall provision. However, the governing body's contribution to the strategic direction of the school is underdeveloped as there is an over-reliance on the professional leadership of the school. Governors do monitor provision regularly, but this is not systematic. Although the governing body meets most legal requirements, the school prospectus does not contain information about the school's access plan, which is a statutory requirement.

Key Question 6: How well do leaders and managers evaluate and improve quality and standards?

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings.
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- 82 The inspection team did not agree with the grade the school gave itself in its self-evaluation report. There were insufficient outstanding features and some minor shortcomings in this key question. As a result, the inspection team judged this key question grade 2.
- 83 The school has established good procedures for self-evaluation. Managers and subject leaders are well informed about performance in the areas for which they are responsible. The school collects a comprehensive range of data, which is analysed effectively to help the school identify areas for improvement.
- 84 Leaders have taken appropriate steps to involve staff, governors and, to a lesser extent, parents in the self-evaluation process, but the involvement of pupils and the wider community is less well developed. Pupils who were interviewed during the inspection expressed the opinion that they would like to be more involved in the evaluation process and had some valid suggestions about how provision could be improved further. However, they are not yet sufficiently well informed about the self-evaluation process to articulate their opinions effectively. There is no evidence that the school had consulted more widely in the parish or local community when preparing its self-evaluation report.
- 85 The school has a good SIP, which clearly sets out its priorities to bring about improvements to provision. Resources are allocated effectively and there is an appropriate time-scale for the actions to be completed. The majority of subject leaders' action plans are of a good quality and identify accurately what needs to be done to raise standards in various subjects. The school can demonstrate that its actions have brought about measurable improvements. For example, standards in writing have improved significantly since this was made a focus in 2006. The school has successfully addressed the key issues raised in the last inspection report.
- 86 The inspection team did not agree with the grades the school awarded itself in any of the key questions. This was because standards are above, but not well above national averages compared with similar schools. The team judged that in the other key questions, although there were several strong features, none of these was sufficient influential to warrant a grade 1. An exception is the outstanding provision for pupils' personal development, which has had a very beneficial effect on pupils' social skills and behaviour.

Key Question 7: How efficient are leaders and managers in using resources?

Grade 2: Good features with no important shortcomings
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- 87 The inspection team did not agree with the grade the school gave itself in its self-evaluation report. There were insufficient outstanding features and some minor shortcomings in this key question. As a result, the inspection team judged this key question grade 2.

- 88 The school has an appropriate number of qualified and experienced teachers who cover the curriculum effectively. The teachers are very ably supported by TAs who work closely and efficiently with teachers on both planning and assessment tasks.
- 89 All teachers receive their proper allotted preparation, planning and assessment (PPA) time, which they use effectively to support their teaching and enable curriculum leaders to undertake their monitoring commitments. Workforce remodelling has been implemented appropriately.
- 90 All pupils have easy access to high quality learning resources which through careful planning are well matched to their educational needs. The wall displays in corridors and all classrooms are of a very high quality and are conducive to learning. Classrooms have a very good range of high quality books, both fiction and non-fiction, which are used well.
- 91 The accommodation is fit for purpose and includes several areas that were added on to the original building at different periods. These provide the school with areas to use as a resource centre, an ICT suite and a small tutoring room for the use of withdrawn groups. The separate outside area for the under-fives is very stimulating. The woodland area and garden, which are outstanding features, are already used very well by teachers as a 'forest school'.
- 92 The school manages its resources well. The governing body finance sub-committee works well with the professional management of the school and the LEA finance officer to ensure the budget is monitored closely. There are effective systems to ensure the school reviews its spending in the light of its priorities in the SIP. Overall, the school gives good value for money.

School's response to the inspection

- 93 We received your report with a sense of satisfaction for the recognition of St Joseph's RC Primary as a good school with some outstanding features.
- 94 As governors of the school we ourselves know of the quality of its leadership and staff and are proud of the standards achieved by the pupils.

Appendix 1

Basic information about the school

Name of school	St Joseph's RC Primary School
School type	Primary
Age-range of pupils	4-11
Address of school	204 North Road, Gabalfa Cardiff
Postcode	CF14 3BL
Telephone number	020920 621625

Headteacher	Mr Colin Lucas
Date of appointment	September 1987
Chair of governors	Mr William Adams
Registered inspector	Mr Stephen Dennett
Dates of inspection	12-14 May 2009

Appendix 2

School data and indicators

Number of pupils in each year group									
Year group	N (fte)	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Total
Number of pupils		24	26	32	31	29	29	27	198

Total number of teachers			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	7	3	8.5

Staffing information	
Pupil: teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery and special classes)	28:1
Average class size, excluding nursery and special classes	28
Teacher (fte): class ratio	1.2:1

Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to inspection			
Term	N	R	Rest of school
Summer 2008		92.8	92.1
Autumn 2008		91.4	93.8
Spring 2009		96.4	95.8

Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	11%
Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection	0

Appendix 3

National Curriculum Assessment Results

National Curriculum Assessment key stage 1 Results 2008			Number of pupils in Y2:			31	
Percentage of pupils at each level							
			D	W	1	2	3
English:	Teacher assessment	School	3	0	7	71	19
		National	0	4	14	63	19
En: reading	Teacher assessment	School	3	0	7	71	19
		National	0	4	15	55	26
En: writing	Teacher assessment	School	3	0	6	84	6
		National	0	5	16	68	11
En: speaking and listening	Teacher assessment	School	3	0	10	65	23
		National	0	2	11	63	24
Mathematics	Teacher assessment	School	3	0	7	71	19
		National	0	2	11	65	22
Science	Teacher assessment	School	3	0	7	71	19
		National	0	2	9	66	23

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 2 in mathematics, science and English or Welsh (first language) according to teacher assessment			
In the school	90.3	In Wales	80.7

D Pupils who have been disapplied from the statutory arrangements
W Pupils who are working towards level 1

National Curriculum Assessment key stage 2 Results 2008							Number of pupils in Y6			33	
Percentage of pupils at each level											
			D	A	F	W	1	2	3	4	5
English	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	6	3	39	52
		National	0	0	0	1	1	3	16	51	29
Mathematics	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	6	6	46	42
		National	0	0	0	1	1	3	15	51	30
Science	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	0	10	64	27
		National	0	0	0	1	1	2	11	54	32

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 4 in mathematics, science and English or Welsh (first language) according to teacher assessment			
In the school	87.9	In Wales	75.5

D Pupils who are excepted under statutory arrangements from part or all of the National Curriculum
A Pupils who have failed to register a level because of absence
F Pupils who have failed to register a level for reasons other than absence
W Pupils who are working towards level 1

Appendix 4

Evidence base of the inspection

A team of four inspectors spent a total of seven inspector days at the school. They were assisted by the school's nominee. There was no peer assessor.

These inspectors visited:

- 16 lessons or parts of lessons;
- registrations, assemblies and acts of collective worship; and
- a range of extra-curricular activities.

Members of the inspection team had meetings with:

- staff, governors and parents before the inspection;
- teachers and support staff;
- groups of pupils in all classes;
- the school council, the eco and Fair Trade committees; and
- other interested parties associated with the school.

The team also considered:

- the school's self-evaluation report;
- 70 responses to a parents' questionnaires;
- documents provided by the school before and during the inspection;
- a wide range of pupils' past and present work; and
- samples of pupils' reports.

After the inspection, the team held meetings with staff and governors.

Appendix 5

Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

Team member	Responsibilities
Mr Stephen Dennett Registered Inspector	Led on : Context, Summary, Recommendations and Appendices Key Questions 1 and 6 Contributed to: Key Question 4
Mr Edward Tipper Lay Inspector	Led on: Key Question 4 Contributed to: Key Questions 1 and 3 Recommendations
Mr Dafydd Treharne Team Inspector	Led on: Key Questions 2, 3 and 7 Contributed to: Recommendations
Mrs Ann Roberts Team Inspector	Led on: Key Question 5 Provision for under-fives Contributed to: Recommendations
Mr Colin Lucas Nominee	Contributed to: All key questions and subjects

Acknowledgement

The inspection team wish to express their thanks to the governing body, headteacher, staff, parents and pupils of St Joseph's RC Primary School for their co-operation and assistance both before and during the inspection.

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