

# St Joseph's College

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	101820
<b>Local authority</b>	Croydon
<b>Inspection number</b>	376630
<b>Inspection dates</b>	22–23 February 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Lesley Farmer

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary Aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Boys
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1,080
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	156
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	William Doris
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mark Franchetti
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	8–9 October 2008
<b>School address</b>	Beulah Hill Upper Norwood London SE19 3HL
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8761 1426
<b>Fax number</b>	020 8761 7667
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<b>Age group</b>	11-18
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	22-23 February 2012
<b>Inspection number</b>	376630



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## Introduction

Inspection team

Lesley Farmer

Additional inspector

Robert Ellis

Her Majesty's Inspector

Omar Ganie

Additional inspector

Beverly Dobson

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 42 lessons taught by 39 different teachers and held discussions with groups of students, staff and the Chair of the Governing Body. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at development plans, the school's tracking data showing students' progress, students' work and the governing body minutes. Joint observations of lessons were conducted with a deputy headteacher and an assistant headteacher. In addition, inspectors analysed the questionnaire responses of 157 parents and carers, 39 staff and 160 students, and took their views into account.

## Information about the school

This is a voluntary aided Catholic school for boys, with a specialism in mathematics and computing. It is situated within the Archdiocese of Southwark and has trust status. It is of average size and has a small sixth form which offers courses to boys and girls. Students come from a variety of heritages. The majority are from minority ethnic backgrounds and around a third speak English as an additional language. The proportion of students who are disabled and who have special educational needs is around average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is lower than the national figure. The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress. Since the last inspection, there have been some significant staffing changes. The previous headteacher and several senior staff have moved on and the school is now being led by one of the deputies in an acting capacity, with several new appointees to the senior team.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>3</b>

## Key findings

- This is a satisfactory school. Most students progress well and their positive attitudes to learning are a key contributory factor. Achievement is good overall and best in the key subjects of mathematics, English and science. There is some variability in other subjects because of inconsistencies in the quality of teaching. Consequently, overall effectiveness is not yet good. Disabled students and those with special educational needs achieve well.
- Behaviour and safety are good. In lessons and around the school, students are courteous and polite. They say they feel safe and free from harassment. They can recognise unsafe situations and act responsibly. In lessons, they behave well and want to learn, even when teaching does not inspire them.
- Teaching is satisfactory overall with some good and outstanding features. While students are willing learners, not all of their teachers take full advantage of these positive attitudes by engaging them actively in learning. Lessons are generally well planned to ensure students receive work that is tailored to their individual needs. However, this is not always the case in all subjects. Marking is inconsistent across subjects. Students try hard but are sometimes unclear about how to meet or exceed their targets.
- The acting headteacher has a compelling vision for the school and an accurate view of its strengths and areas for development. Senior leaders have begun to embrace his vision and take action to strengthen the school's procedures and policies. However, not all middle leaders are fully effective in monitoring and evaluating the impact of teaching on learning and taking the necessary actions to improve performance. The school provides a balanced curriculum. It is improving the range of subjects and levels offered in the sixth form to ensure a broader choice of opportunities for all. The overall effectiveness of the sixth form is satisfactory.

Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

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## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that:
  - all teachers take full advantage of students' positive attitudes and behaviour by actively engaging them in their learning
  - assessment information is always used to match tasks and activities to students' needs and prior attainment so as to challenge all of them fully
  - students receive regular and helpful feedback from teachers on their work in all subjects so they know how to improve it and are able to evaluate their progress.
- Ensure that the planned improvements to the sixth-form curriculum enable more students to progress into the sixth form and drive up students' achievement.
- Ensure that leaders and managers at all levels, particularly those leading subjects, make a greater impact by accurately evaluating provision in their areas to identify and address any underperformance by staff and students.

## Main report

### Achievement of students

In lessons, students progress well. They make the best progress where teachers provide activities which enthuse and engage them. For example, in a Year 11 English lesson, students took on the perspectives of differing characters in a play and responded to questioning from one another. All students engaged fully and learning proceeded at a rapid pace with very little facilitation required on the part of the teacher. Students' positive attitudes to learning enable them to sustain their progress even when lessons fail to inspire. Their strong progress in English, science and particularly mathematics is explained by the fact that lessons in these subjects usually engage students fully. Their good progress in mathematics and English also makes a valuable contribution to the good development of their communication and numeracy skills in subjects across the curriculum. Most parents and carers feel that their child is progressing well.

Students join the school with attainment ranging from broadly average to above average for different year groups. They make good progress to attain standards above national averages, although the rate of improvement has been slightly slower than the national rate. Disabled students or those who have special educational needs make better progress than similar groups nationally because of the thorough identification of need and the appropriate support they receive. Students from different ethnic groups achieve as well as other groups, and students known to be eligible for free school meals make slightly better progress than similar students nationally. In 2011, Black African students did not make the expected progress but

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this is no longer the case based on the school's current assessment information and lesson observations.

Current achievement in the sixth form shows improvement compared to previous years, but there is significant variation in outcomes in different subjects. The proportion of students who had been achieving higher grades at both A- and AS-level was lower than expected. However, current assessment information and evidence from lessons observed indicates that this is no longer the case and students make satisfactory progress.

### **Quality of teaching**

Teaching is typically satisfactory. Where teaching is better, learning proceeds at a brisk pace because the teacher clearly communicates the purpose of the lesson to students and regularly checks their understanding. For example, in a Year 10 mathematics lesson, students worked in pairs on algebraic formulae. While much of the learning took place independently, the teacher asked students to show responses on mini-whiteboards so as to check progress and intervene when required. Students work with confidence and interest when activities are targeted at individual students' needs. However, a significant minority of teaching is less successful because the teacher does not adapt his or her approach so as to engage all groups of students fully, for example in questioning. Teachers' expectations of different students are not always made clear enough to them so as to challenge them fully and teachers do not always make the most of students' positive attitudes. The majority of parents and carers feel that teaching is good, but inspectors agree with the views of students expressed in their questionnaires, of which only a quarter felt that teaching is good all the time. In meetings and lessons, students noted they learn best when teaching is varied and tasks challenge them to work independently.

The development of students' literacy and communication skills is evident in most subjects, but less effective in lessons where teachers talk too much and opportunities are missed for students to participate in discussion. Across the curriculum and in assemblies, good opportunities are provided for students to develop spiritually, morally, socially and culturally through the careful selection of topics and materials that encourage reflection on current issues.

Marking of students' work is patchy. Although detailed, helpful and regular in certain subjects, such as mathematics and English, elsewhere it is variable in quality. Students value very highly the good marking and feedback where they receive it, but recognise this is inconsistent within and across subjects. As a result, they are sometimes unsure of the skills and knowledge required to meet their targets.

### **Behaviour and safety of students**

Students are welcoming, friendly and polite. They dress smartly and take pride in being part of the school community. Attendance is above the national rate, which gives testimony to the importance they attach to learning and contributes to their

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good progress. Students say they feel safe at school and free from bullying of any kind. They understand the nature of risk and act responsibly. There was no evidence to suggest that any kind of bullying occurs other than infrequently, and it is dealt with well by staff.

A new behaviour policy has recently been introduced and, although there are some inconsistencies in how teachers implement it, behaviour in lessons and elsewhere is predominantly good. Students requiring help to behave well receive effective support, and the proportion of students excluded from school, which had been above that seen nationally, is reducing securely over time. Students told us that disruption to learning occurs rarely and is associated with teachers not being explicit enough about their expectations or ensuring lessons capture and retain students' attention. Most parents and carers responding to the questionnaire say behaviour in the school is good.

### **Leadership and management**

The acting headteacher has set a clear and accurate agenda for improvement which is well supported by senior and middle leaders. The first priority has been to detail expectations of students' behaviour through the launch of a revised policy. Alongside this, the tracking of students' achievement in the main school and sixth form onto a single data base and with regular and consistent collection of assessment information has now been established. Senior leaders rightly see the next phase of the school's development as building on the best practice so that all leaders are equally effective in securing excellent teaching and achievement in their subject areas.

Although some leaders, notably at subject level, have embraced the new vision and direction by actively reshaping practice, and scrutinising the teaching and outcomes in their areas, others are less effective. Consequently, monitoring and evaluation of strengths and weaknesses by some middle leaders is inaccurate and has created an uneven staff response to priorities identified by senior leaders. While the school has successfully moved forward since the last inspection in improving overall outcomes for students, there remains variability across subject areas in the main school and in the sixth form. The capacity for sustained improvement, therefore, is satisfactory rather than good.

The governing body knows the school and supports senior leaders well. Equality is promoted effectively, and is reflected in the achievement of different ethnic groups in the school and the harmony that exists across those of differing faiths. Safeguarding and child protection procedures and training meet statutory requirements.

The school has developed a balanced curriculum that meets the needs and interests of students. In particular, the provision of Mandarin across all key stages has proved both popular and successful. Some vocational options, previously available through partnership arrangements, to students in Years 10 and 11 have been halted but through no fault of the school. The school is actively looking to replace these courses by developing links with alternative providers. The curriculum is effective in its

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promotion of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The sixth-form curriculum is less well developed, although progress has been made on introducing a well-considered range of new courses, with more to follow.



## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**

5 March 2012

Dear Students

**Inspection of St Joseph's College, London SE19 3HL**



Thank you for your help and for talking to us during the recent inspection. We thoroughly enjoyed meeting you and seeing your work. I am writing to tell you about our findings. Your school provides you with a satisfactory education.

- You make good progress in the main school and reach better than expected standards. Progress in the sixth form is satisfactory and improving.
- Teaching is satisfactory with some good and outstanding lessons.
- Your behaviour is good. Your attitudes to learning are positive even when lessons are not particularly exciting. The best lessons involve you thoroughly in learning, with good discussion. In some lessons, the work and activities are less varied, and not so effective in moving you on and challenging you. In others, the marking does not always give you enough information on how or what to improve.
- You told us you were proud of your school, pleased with the progress you make and feel well looked after. We saw for ourselves that you are polite, willing and keen to learn. Your attendance is good; please keep this up.
- The acting headteacher and staff are working hard to improve the school. They are concentrating well on the most important areas, such as behaviour and teaching. However, there are some variations in how well each department makes improvements in the quality of its teaching, especially in the sixth form.

We have asked the headteacher to include the following in his development plans:

- Ensure that the plans to improve the subjects offered in the sixth form also improve results and secure greater numbers going on into the sixth form.
- Ensure that each subject area develops the quality of its teaching equally well so that lessons meet your differing needs and engage you all in active learning, and ensure marking and feedback are always of high quality.

Please accept my best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Lesley Farmer  
Lead inspector

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