

# St Joseph's RC Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	101555
<b>Local Authority</b>	Brent
<b>Inspection number</b>	355024
<b>Inspection dates</b>	15–16 February 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Gordon Ewing

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>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	448
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Clive Romain
<b>Headteacher</b>	Dawn Titus
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	8 July 2008
<b>School address</b>	Goodson Road Willesden London NW10 9LS
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8965 5651
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<b>Email address</b>	admin@stjo.brent.sch.uk

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. They visited 24 lessons, observing 20 teachers. Meetings were held with the headteacher, other senior leaders, members of the governing body, members of staff, parents and carers representing the parents' forum, and groups of pupils. Informal discussions were conducted with some parents, carers and pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work, including the systems for assessing and monitoring pupils' progress, pupils' work and teachers' planning and marking. Inspectors took account of separate questionnaires completed by 117 parents and carers, 41 staff and 99 older pupils.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The steps taken since the last inspection to improve day-to-day assessment practice in the Early Years Foundation Stage in order to evaluate the accuracy of the school's tracking of children's progress over time.
- The relative rates of progress through the school of all pupils in English and mathematics, but especially high attainers, boys, those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those of Black British or Caribbean heritage.
- How effectively leaders at all levels monitor the quality of teaching and ensure that assessment information is used effectively, and the impact of the strategies to improve the quality of teaching and to secure consistently good rates of learning.
- The rigour and accuracy of the school's self-evaluation, given that the school judges much of its work as outstanding.

## Information about the school

St Joseph's is larger than the average-sized primary school. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is high. The largest group of pupils (42%) is of Black or Black British heritage. A high proportion of pupils are learning English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. The percentage of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is also above average; predominantly, these pupils have behavioural, social and emotional difficulties or moderate learning difficulties. The governing body manages out-of-hours provision in the form of a breakfast club for up to 15 pupils and an after-school club for up to 33 pupils.

**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

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**3**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**3**

## Main findings

St Joseph's is a satisfactory school where pupils are very happy and participate enthusiastically in an inclusive and harmonious community. Some aspects of the school's work, particularly those related to ensuring pupils are well cared for and kept safe, are outstanding. This reflects the headteacher's clear vision and commitment to providing a learning environment that is secure, stimulating and welcoming. The school works hard, and with evident impact, to engage 'hard to reach families' and communities locally. Pupils' great enjoyment of school is reflected in their excellent attendance and their exemplary behaviour. As one pupil commented, 'I love this school very much.' The school's very strong partnership with parents and carers is reflected in the high regard in which it is held within the community. One parent's comment, 'I am very happy with the school,' reflects the views of almost all parents and carers.

Children make good progress in the Nursery and Reception classes because the provision there is consistently good. They move to Year 1 well prepared for the challenges ahead. Pupils continue to make good progress in Years 1 and 2, although their progress in writing is less consistently good than in reading and mathematics. At the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment in English and mathematics is broadly average although, as with younger pupils, their progress in writing continues to lag behind that in reading. In English and mathematics, the progress rates for older pupils vary considerably and are directly linked to the quality of teaching. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, those eligible for free school meals, and those of Black British origin do not always do as well as they should because the teaching does not consistently meet their needs. Effective teaching in Year 6 helps these pupils to make up for some of the ground lost in earlier years. The school's leadership has taken steps to improve the consistency of teaching but these strategies are not, as yet, having an impact on pupils' progress.

Teachers do not consistently use the detailed assessment data available to cater for pupils' learning needs. Consequently, opportunities are frequently missed to accelerate learning and increase challenge. In some lessons, pupils are encouraged to use self-checking strategies to improve their accuracy and to evaluate their work independently. However, this good practice is not a common feature across the school. The marking of pupils' work is positive and punctual but does not always show pupils what they need to do next.

The determined leadership of the headteacher has played a key role in securing a safe and positive learning environment for all pupils. Safeguarding procedures are exemplary and the quality of support given to pupils facing more challenging circumstances and their families is outstanding. The evaluation of the school's work, by leaders at all levels, lacks precision and rigour; insufficient emphasis is placed on the impact of teaching over time or the day-to-day progress of key groups. Staff morale is high and the sense of teamwork is palpable. All staff have benefited from a good range of professional development but the

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monitoring of its impact on outcomes for pupils is not rigorous enough. The governors are knowledgeable and committed. They have a clear understanding of the challenges that the school faces, are robust on matters of safety and have been particularly effective in improving attendance. However, the degree to which the governing body holds the school's leadership to account for key aspects of the school's work, especially pupils' achievement and the quality of the curriculum, is underdeveloped. Although the school has areas to improve upon, it is clear that it has been effective in improving provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage, raising levels of attendance and ensuring that pupils are extremely safe and very well cared for. Consequently, the school demonstrates a satisfactory capacity to sustain further improvement.

Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

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

- By December 2011, improve the quality of teaching so that 80% of lessons are good or better by:
  - ensuring teachers confidently understand the components of a good lesson by giving them targeted training and support
  - holding teachers to account for their pupils' performance through performance management and termly progress meetings
  - monitoring teaching and learning to gauge the impact of the training and support, and sharing good practice across the school.
- By July 2011, raise pupils' overall levels of attainment and progress by:
  - ensuring teachers use assessment information to plan work that is better attuned to their learning needs
  - involving pupils in the setting of their own learning targets
  - monitoring pupils' work and providing feedback to teachers on the quality of their marking.
- By December 2011, raise pupils' levels of attainment and progress in writing by:
  - providing training in the teaching of writing so that all lessons are challenging and stimulating
  - ensuring all pupils are aware of their targets in writing and that teachers provide them with regular feedback
  - ensuring that pupils consistently engage in writing across the curriculum.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****3**

Although variations in the progress they make at different stages and in different subjects mean that overall pupils' achievement is no more than satisfactory, they nevertheless have very positive attitudes to school and their learning. The recently appointed attendance officer has played a pivotal role in improving attendance so that it is now high. Pupils work and play well together and report that, although incidents of bullying and racist behaviour

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are rare, staff respond effectively to problems. Pupils appreciate the importance of a healthy lifestyle and understand the dangers of alcohol, drug taking and smoking.

Pupils show concentration and perseverance even when the quality of teaching dips. When teaching is good, all pupils make good progress. In a good Year 6 English lesson, for example, pupils learned about the components of a successful thriller. The teacher clearly communicated her high expectations of their written work and pupils readily rose to the challenge. They used words such as 'perplexed', 'malevolent', 'sinister' and 'pedantic' with understanding and purpose.

Pupils are proud of their contribution to the life of the school, and the school council is keen to do more in taking the lead in running meetings and projects. They know that the school listens carefully to their views. Pupils show a good appreciation of other cultures. However, while they are fully aware of their own faith, they are less knowledgeable about others. They have sound basic skills, including in information and communication technology, and can apply these in a range of contexts. Taking into account their positive attitudes, their excellent attendance and their good personal and social development, the school prepares them well for life's challenges.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	1
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

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## How effective is the provision?

Relationships throughout the school are strong, ensuring that pupils want to make the most of their learning. When these attributes are fully tapped by effective teaching, pupils' learning is vibrant and rapid. For example, in an outstanding music lesson, pupils learned how to compose an ostinato accompaniment to a song. Pupils responded well to the challenge because the teaching was well paced with resources very effectively prepared to meet the needs of all pupils. Teachers sometimes use discussion to good effect. However, opportunities are often missed to develop pupils' skills in reviewing their own work and that of their peers. Consequently, pupils' independent learning skills are underdeveloped.

The curriculum is enriched by a broad range of extra-curricular activities, including visits and clubs before and after school. The breakfast club, for example, ensures that those pupils that attend it have a smooth and positive start to the school day. Opportunities to develop writing across the curriculum are underdeveloped, although good practice was seen in the Year 2 classes where pupils enjoyed a 'visit' from Thomas Faynor, the baker who allegedly started the Great Fire of London, before writing enthusiastically about how he may have felt about his place in history. The curriculum is adequately matched to pupils' needs and is effectively personalised for those pupils who are at an early stage of learning English.

Outstanding support and care are provided to vulnerable pupils and families. Close links with a range of agencies ensure that the learning, development and well-being of these pupils form a very effective component of the school's work. Transition arrangements within and beyond the school are also very effective. For example, the induction of children to the Nursery and Reception classes is outstanding.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

A clear collective spirit permeates the school and staff fully share the leadership's vision. The effective induction of new teachers and a comprehensive training schedule demonstrate a commitment to school improvement. However, the monitoring of teaching is too focused on the mechanics of the teaching rather than its impact on outcomes for pupils over time. Leaders and the governing body do not make sufficiently rigorous use of the available assessment data to inform strategic and day-to-day planning or to monitor the work of the school. In particular, they do not have a precise enough grasp of the attainment and achievement of key groups of pupils across different classes in the school.

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Procedures for child protection and safeguarding are exemplary. Staff and the governing body are fully committed to promoting equal opportunities and challenging discrimination. However, the lack of challenge in some lessons and the variable progress of key groups of pupils in specific classes place some pupils at a disadvantage. The school works well with a range of agencies to promote learning and to broaden the curriculum, for example, by sharing practice with other primary schools within Brent and other local authorities. The school gives good attention to community cohesion. It knows its community well and very effectively supports key groups, especially those considered vulnerable and those for whom English is an additional language. Links with other faith communities and schools nationally and beyond are beginning to be established.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter the Nursery and Reception classes with skills well below those expected for their age. As a result of the high-quality home visits and a carefully planned induction process, they settle into class routines smoothly and swiftly. Levels of care for the children are high so they develop into increasingly confident and independent learners. The good quality of provision and effective tracking of their learning ensures that children make good progress so that, by the time they move to Year 1, they have attained skill levels close to those expected in all early learning areas. Very effective links between the school and home are being established through the 'Learning Journey' books, which provide a thorough record of each child's achievement. Parents and carers greatly appreciate their involvement in tracking their child's progress. Children display evident enjoyment in the balance of adult-directed and child-initiated activities. The indoor and outdoor environments are stimulating so that children develop a wide range of social, emotional and practical skills. Resources are rich and varied so that learning is generally matched to individual need. However, questioning by staff, especially during practical activities, is not



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always challenging enough, particularly for high attainers. Leadership is good. Effective assessment and subsequent planning ensure that children's learning and welfare needs are well met. The Early Years Foundation Stage has made good progress since the last inspection and has a strong capacity to improve further.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

## Views of parents and carers

Approximately one quarter of parents and carers returned completed questionnaires. Inspectors also had informal discussions with parents and carers and received three emails with parental comments. The responses of the overwhelming majority were positive about their child's overall experience at school. A very small number of parents and carers expressed concerns about the effectiveness of the school's leaders and managers, the school's approach to misbehaviour and general discipline, including school uniform, and the school's response to their suggestions and concerns.

During this inspection, inspectors judged that the school's leaders are responding to the considerable challenges of improving teaching and learning with purpose and vigour. Inspection evidence indicates that the vast majority of parents and carers are very satisfied with the school's approach to managing misbehaviour and with the school's consistent approach to school uniform. Inspectors found that pupils feel extremely safe and that their behaviour is outstanding. In discussions with parents and carers at the start and the end of the day, inspectors heard very positive views about the school's response to their suggestions and concerns. They reported that any issues brought to the attention of the school were generally dealt with promptly and effectively.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Joseph's RC Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 117 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 448 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	89	76	28	24	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	83	71	34	29	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	76	65	37	32	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	66	56	50	43	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	78	67	37	32	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	65	56	49	42	1	1	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	64	55	48	41	3	3	1	1
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	53	45	53	45	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	61	52	50	43	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	66	56	44	38	4	3	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	49	42	64	55	0	0	2	2
The school is led and managed effectively	66	56	45	38	2	2	2	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	78	67	35	30	0	0	2	2

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## 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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 August 2010 and 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 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on 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 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:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.

**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.**



16 February 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of St Joseph's RC Primary School, Willesden NW10 9LS**

The whole inspection team enjoyed its recent visit to see you at work. Thank you for such a warm welcome and for talking to us about your learning and school life.

You informed us that you enjoy school and that you all get on well together. Almost all of your parents and carers are also happy with the school. These are the things that we found to be good.

- You behave well, especially when lessons are interesting, share your ideas with each other and work and play as part of a strong school community.
- You make sound progress through the school, though we know you can do even better, especially with your writing.
- You know how to lead a healthy lifestyle, for example by exercising regularly, although we were concerned that some of you waste vegetables at lunchtime.
- All of you feel very safe and secure and thoroughly enjoy lessons.
- You are keen to improve your school and you play your part by taking on responsibilities, such as being a school councillor or prefect.
- The staff take excellent care of you and you are confident that they are always available to help if you have any worries.

Everyone at St Joseph's wants the school to be even better, and to achieve this, we have asked the staff and the governing body to improve these things.

- Your attainment and rates of progress in writing.
- The quality of teaching across the school, especially for older pupils.
- Teachers' marking, target setting and advice to you so that you know what you have to do to improve your work.

All of you can help by continuing to work as hard as you can. We wish you all every future success.

Yours sincerely

Gordon Ewing  
Lead inspector

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