

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100169
Local Authority	Greenwich
Inspection number	354810
Inspection dates	12–13 May 2011
Reporting inspector	George Logan

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	190
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Tim Morris
Headteacher	Catherine Green
Date of previous school inspection	1 November 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They visited 13 lessons taught by seven different members of staff. Inspectors held meetings with the Chair of the Governing Body, a representative of the local authority and with staff and pupils. They looked at pupils' books, records of their progress, teachers' lesson planning, playtime activities and the school's documentation, which included records of teaching and the main improvement plan. Responses to inspection questionnaires completed by staff, pupils and by 88 parents and carers were also analysed.

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

- How well pupils, particularly those in Years 3 to 6, make progress and what their current levels of attainment are.
- Whether staff use assessment information to plan challenging work so that pupils, particularly Travellers, and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make good progress.
- The effectiveness of senior leaders and managers, the governing body and subject leaders in developing the school's capacity to make improvements.

Information about the school

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School is slightly smaller than the majority of primary schools. The school serves an ethnically diverse community, with a wide range of minority ethnic groups represented. The largest groups are those of Black African and White British heritage. A few pupils come from the Traveller community. Almost half the pupils speak English as an additional language, although very few are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average. Most have specific learning difficulties. A high proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals.

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

This is a satisfactory school. However, the pace of improvement has picked up more quickly in the last year. Pupils are making better progress and standards are rising at Year 6. Provision for pupils' personal development is a key strength. Pupils have good attitudes to learning and behave well. They feel safe and have confidence in adults. They have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles and how to keep fit. Pupils' day-to-day contribution to the school is good and links with the local community, including the church and community organisations, are well established.

Children in the Reception class achieve well, attaining standards above those expected in most areas of learning. This is beginning to underpin better progress and higher outcomes in Years 1 and 2. Progress in reading and writing has improved to be good in Years 3 to 6 as a result of recent initiatives, and attainment at the end of Year 6 is now at least average. However, progress in mathematics has been too slow as not all teachers have higher expectations of what all pupils can achieve. This includes those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and the more-able and gifted. The proportion of good teaching is increasing, although not all teaching makes best use of assessment routines. Neither self-evaluation by pupils nor individual targets are used consistently to promote better progress. Teachers' marking does not always give sufficient guidance as to how pupils could improve their work. The revised curriculum offers good opportunities for cross-curricular use of literacy skills. This has contributed significantly to improved progress in writing.

Senior leaders and managers, led by the positive approach of the headteacher, strongly promote the school's caring ethos. They know the school well, although not enough priority is given to the rigorous evaluation of information about pupils' progress, particularly of those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. However, the focus on raising pupils' achievement has paid dividends in improving some outcomes. The homeschool liaison officer has had a very positive impact on raising attendance to above-average levels and on the engagement of pupils, whose circumstances might make them vulnerable. The effective governing body is knowledgeable and effective. The school's strength as a community and the increasing impact of its work to reduce underperformance, together with its commitment to raise achievement, all indicate that the school has satisfactory capacity for 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.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Extend and develop the use of assessment so that the pace and consistency of pupils' learning, particularly in mathematics, is increased further by:
 - more effective use of pupils' individual learning targets
 - more rigorous marking of work so that pupils are clear as to what they must do to move their learning on
 - ensuring that pupils are more confident in the evaluation of their own work.
- Increase the impact of senior leaders through more rigorous analysis of available information on pupils' progress, especially for those who are more-able and gifted and for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Children's skills on joining the school have improved and are now close to the expected level. Good progress in Reception ensures that children enter Year 1 with secure basic skills, including reading, writing and calculation. While outcomes in pupils' personal development are mostly good, support for their academic progress has, over time, been less consistent.

School leaders have focused recently on raising attainment in writing and engaging pupils more actively in their learning. This was evident in a successful Year 3 literacy session where pupils were preparing to write a persuasive text around a moral dilemma. Outcomes were good because pupils were given a very clear indication of what was expected of them, there were good opportunities for them to engage orally and more-able pupils were challenged by activities matched to their needs. Year 6 pupils made good progress in another effective session where they generated vibrant images to describe cats. The pace was brisk, good opportunities for pupils to share ideas orally successfully engaged the many articulate pupils and available adults were strategically deployed to support the achievement of small groups. The effective use of speaking skills in order to extend pupils' thinking before committing ideas to paper was also evident in a Year 5 lesson on persuasive writing. The school now aims to have the same impact on mathematics. In general, better use of open-ended tasks has enabled pupils to extend their understanding. Teaching assistants are satisfactorily deployed, so that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those of Traveller heritage make satisfactory progress.

The school is providing more opportunities for pupils to work cooperatively. The school council offers pupils experience of the democratic process. Spiritual, social and moral development is good, which promotes pupils' good attitudes and behaviour, although their cultural awareness is less systematically developed. Pupils show respect for each other and for staff and have good interpersonal skills. Broadly average, but improving, basic skills mean that pupils are satisfactorily prepared for future study and later life.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	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
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

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

How effective is the provision?

Although there is a significant amount of good teaching, inconsistencies in pupils' learning and progress remain, notably in mathematics. Planning is mostly thorough across the school, however, the school recognises the need for an increased level of challenge and expectation in mathematics. Targeted training for staff has, for example, helped raise teachers' expectations in writing. Support staff, particularly those who work effectively with individuals and groups of pupils who have specific physical or academic needs, have a positive impact on learning. Teaching promotes good relationships which help pupils to work together effectively. Current ways of monitoring pupils' progress are not fully effective and are due to be replaced. In addition, pupils' individual targets for learning are inconsistently implemented and this limits their effectiveness. Marking of pupils' work provides pupils with some guidance as to their next steps in learning, but this is not the case in every class. Pupils are not consistently aware of how to improve their own learning.

The revised curriculum offers a well-balanced and good range of imaginative opportunities which underpin improving progress, particularly in literacy and for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Cross-curricular provision is good. Well-planned opportunities to undertake extended writing tasks have driven the significant improvement in attainment in writing and there are abundant examples of pupils' written work on display. There are many opportunities for sport and physical development. Information and communication

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technology is used increasingly to enhance learning in other subjects. Personal, social, health and citizenship education is carefully planned. External partnerships, through collaborations with other schools, contribute well to extending pupils' learning in other subjects as seen through a high quality transition project in science. The curriculum is increasingly effective at meeting the needs of all pupils. The school is planning specific enrichment activities to support more-able and gifted pupils. There are two residential trip opportunities, for pupils in Years 3 and 6. Extra-curricular provision is well supported and is good.

Staff are responsive to pupils' needs. Induction arrangements are good for children entering Reception and for older pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable. The school works effectively with support agencies. The homeschool liaison officer successfully engages with pupils who might otherwise have social or attendance issues and attendance has risen as a result.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

In response to an unanticipated downturn in attainment in 2010, the senior leadership team implemented a number of strategies to support rapid improvement in pupils' outcomes, particularly in writing. As a result, there has been an improvement in attainment. However, while the leadership team is committed to improvement, it recognises that some initiatives are at an embryonic stage, with more to do, for example, in mathematics, in order to enhance pupils' progress. Although satisfactory monitoring and support ensure that the quality of teaching and learning is improving, some planned initiatives, particularly around assessment and the evaluation of pupils' progress data, have been slow to take hold. Broadly accurate self-evaluation ensures that senior leaders have an appropriate three-year plan which accurately identifies the way forward. The school continues to build capacity in its senior leadership, supported well by knowledgeable middle managers. However, the leadership and management of provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, while proactive in relation to pupils' social and emotional needs, is less rigorous in the close monitoring of their academic progress.

The governing body is well organised, supportive and effective. Its members take decisive action when necessary and the challenge for school leaders has helped move the school forward more quickly. Governors are fully involved in setting priorities for improvement. They provide an effective bridge between the school and its community and are involved regularly in the life of the school to help gauge progress of initiatives. They ensure

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safeguarding arrangements are good. Staff are appropriately trained in child protection procedures.

Discrimination is not tolerated and any instances are tackled effectively and the promotion of equality of opportunity is satisfactory. The school is harmonious and pupils get on well together. Staff have, for example, a good understanding of the culture of the Traveller community pupils and this has had a significant impact on the attendance. While local partnerships with agencies and providers, and with groups such as London Citizens, are well established, the promotion of community cohesion is satisfactory rather than good because the school has yet to develop significant national or international links.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

Almost all the children who enter the Reception class have had pre-school experience, the great majority having attended high-attaining nursery schools locally. As a result, most children are well prepared for entry to Reception. Children's progress and their attainment at the end of Reception have continued to improve. Outcomes in the last three years have been above average across almost all areas of learning, including personal and social development, reading, writing and calculation, with a significant proportion of children attaining at the highest level. Good induction arrangements, including home visits, establish a secure bond with parents and carers and ensure that children feel safe. Welfare is given a high priority. Children build very effective relationships with adults and with other children. They behave well and engage confidently with others, happily chatting to visitors and developing independence in their learning. Rapidly developing skills in reading and writing are well supported by an effective programme for teaching sounds and letters.

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Focused teaching and support ensure that children successfully extend their skills. Sessions of direct teaching provide good challenge and successfully meet children's needs across the ability range. A good balance of activities chosen by children and those led by adults ensures that learning has a brisk pace. Children have good opportunities to make choices, both indoors and outside. The school recently introduced the Forest School initiative. The classroom offers a well-resourced learning environment and the outdoor area, although not extensive, is used effectively. All areas of learning are planned for appropriately. Effective day-to-day assessments provide good information on children's progress, although progress journals, where this information is recorded, lack detail. The leader makes mostly effective use of data to track children's progress and has a clear awareness of the remaining areas for development.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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

An above-average proportion of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire. Most are happy with the school and the care it provides. The vast majority of parents and carers feel that their children enjoy school. One said, 'The staff have given my child a sense of self-worth. He will leave St Joseph's confident and with a bright future.' However, some parents and carers, and also some pupils, have concerns about behaviour. During the inspection, however, the inspection team observed pupils' behaviour to be consistently good in lessons and around the school. Some parents and carers also have concerns about the progress their children are making and the extent to which individual needs are met. The inspection team recognises in this report that there is still work to do to ensure that progress across the school is more rapid. A few parents and carers feel that insufficient priority is given to parents' and carers' concerns and that the management of provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities could be improved. Inspectors recognise that the leadership of special educational needs has not been sufficiently focused on the close monitoring of academic progress.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Joseph's Catholic 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 88 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 190 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	63	72	20	23	4	5	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	58	66	27	31	2	2	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	51	58	28	32	5	6	3	3
My child is making enough progress at this school	47	53	28	32	9	10	3	3
The teaching is good at this school	52	59	27	31	7	8	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	53	60	23	26	6	7	2	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	43	49	38	43	3	3	2	2
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)	40	45	27	31	10	11	3	3
The school meets my child's particular needs	42	48	32	36	9	10	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	46	52	33	38	7	8	2	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	42	48	35	40	4	5	4	5
The school is led and managed effectively	47	53	25	28	10	11	4	5
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	56	64	22	25	5	6	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	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 2010 to 31 December 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see 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.

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">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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 May 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Greenwich SE10 9AN

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school. We enjoyed meeting you, hearing your views and spending time in lessons. We found that although yours is a satisfactory school, it has made significant improvement recently. These are the things we liked best.

- You have good attitudes to learning and are making better progress in English.
- You feel very safe in school and you behave well.
- Children in Reception are making good progress.
- You undertake various jobs and make a good contribution to the school, and have good links with the local community.
- Staff care for you and support you well.
- You understand the importance of eating healthily and staying fit.
- You experience some interesting topics and enrichment activities.
- Some aspects of the leadership of the school, including the role of the governors and the efforts made to keep you safe, are good.

To help you do better, we have asked the school to do the following things.

- Ensure that you all reach higher standards, particularly in mathematics, through more effective use of individual targets, providing more opportunities for you to evaluate your own work and more rigorous marking to help you improve your work.
- Ensure that school leaders use all the information they have about the progress you are making, both for those of you who work very quickly, and for those who find learning difficult.

All of you can help by continuing to work hard and doing your best. We hope that you will have every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

George Logan

Lead inspector

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