

# St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	100833
<b>Local authority</b>	Southwark
<b>Inspection number</b>	402835
<b>Inspection dates</b>	24–25 May 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Natalia Power

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>	242
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Jane Christofi
<b>Headteacher</b>	Christopher Wilcocks
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	10 October 2007
<b>School address</b>	Gomm Road Lower Road London SE16 2TY
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 7237 4036
<b>Fax number</b>	020 7231 5191
<b>Email address</b>	office@stjosephs026.southwark.sch.uk

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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	24–25 May 2012
<b>Inspection number</b>	402835



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## Introduction

Inspection team

Natalia Power

Additional inspector

Mehar Brar

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors visited 19 lessons or part lessons, observing all eight class teachers as well as other teachers and support staff. The inspectors conducted scrutinies of pupils' work, spoke to parents and carers, listened to pupils read, and held meetings with staff and members of the governing body. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line Parent View survey in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at its self-evaluation documents and plans for improvement, the data collected on pupils' progress, safeguarding information and the minutes of meetings of the governing body. They received and analysed 108 questionnaires from parents and carers, as well as surveys from pupils and staff.

## Information about the school

This one-form entry primary school is average in size. Around one third of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals, and this proportion is higher than usual. Approximately nine out of ten pupils are from a wide range of minority ethnic heritages. Approximately 30% of pupils speak English as an additional language, of whom very few are at an early stage of learning the language. An average proportion of pupils are supported by school action plus or have a statement of special educational needs. The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress. The breakfast and after-school clubs are managed by outside providers and are subject to separate inspection.

**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>1</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>1</b>

## Key findings

- This is an outstanding school. It is much loved in the local community, and many parents and carers used the word 'family' when describing the school's ethos.
- Pupils' achievement is outstanding. Year 6 pupils consistently outperform their peers in the country as a whole in national tests.
- Pupils learn exceptionally well, because much of the teaching is outstanding. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils, and consequently pupils are keen to rise to the challenge. Very occasionally, pupils are kept sitting on the carpet for too long, or teachers do too much that the pupils could do for themselves, and then the pace of learning drops. However, this is quickly picked up by leaders and managers in their highly effective programme of classroom visits to monitor the quality of teaching, so that pupils continue to make outstanding progress overall.
- Pupils are eager to learn, and behave exceptionally well. They consider the feelings of others and are protective of one another. They feel extremely safe in school and are kept safe.
- Leaders and managers know their school extremely well and are rigorous in their self-evaluation. They plan in meticulous detail to ensure that the pupils receive the highest quality education based on an outstanding curriculum. As a result, the school is consistently one of the top-performing schools in the country for the progress made by its pupils. Leaders and managers have met the recommendation from the last inspection to raise the quality of teaching.
- The extremely strong provision for developing pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural qualities ensures that they are kind and respect one another's values. The relentless pursuit of excellence by leaders, managers and members of the governing body shows that the school is well placed to continue to improve.

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

- Ensure that pupils in all lessons spend as little time as possible sitting on the

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carpet listening to their teachers, so that they have even more opportunities than they do already to explore and find things out for themselves.

## **Main report**

### **Achievement of pupils**

Children enter the Nursery and Reception classes with language and number skills which vary but which are generally below those expected for their age. Through outstanding teaching and an imaginative curriculum, they get off to an excellent start, and leave the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that are in line with expectations for their age. Pupils continue to make rapid and sustained progress from Years 1 to 6, so that attainment is consistently well-above average in the national tests taken at the end of Year 6. Inspectors confirmed, after looking at pupils' current and past work, talking to them and observing their lessons, that pupils' current achievement continues to be outstanding.

Inspectors found that the pupils learn particularly well when they are fully involved in their learning and given challenging tasks. In one fast-paced Year 5 mathematics lesson, for example, pupils greatly enjoyed learning how to find the average of a series of numbers by using teachers' ages, a task which they told inspectors was 'fun'. They were then actively involved in measuring the handspans of their fellow pupils in order to find the average for their table. The lesson challenged the pupils to do their own investigations and to present their findings to one another. Very occasionally, however, teachers keep the pupils sitting on the carpet for too long and do too much that the pupils could do for themselves. In these rare cases the excellent skills of teaching assistants are under-used.

Reading is a strong aspect of the school's work, because of a focus on it from the earliest years. For example, in the Reception class, the children loved reading the story of Jack and the Beanstalk together. The teacher revised their previous learning of sounds and letters (phonics), almost without the pupils being aware of it, stopping briefly from time to time to ask them, for example, how to read the 'ar' sound in 'market'. The reading skills of pupils in Year 2 are just above average, and those who read aloud to inspectors were able to show they understood the books they were reading and could successfully read unfamiliar words. Because of the school's continued focus on improving pupils' reading skills as they move up the school, their attainment in reading by the time they leave school is significantly above average.

The school is highly skilled at removing barriers to learning so that all groups of pupils, irrespective of ethnic heritage, make outstanding progress, with no group falling behind. Girls and boys perform equally. Pupils who speak English as an additional language, disabled pupils and those identified with special educational needs are supported extremely well in class and in small groups by the teachers and their assistants, who know their individual needs, and this enables them to make

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progress in line with others.

## **Quality of teaching**

Teachers are very caring and enjoy excellent relationships with pupils. A typical comment from one parent which reflected inspection findings was, 'We are really impressed with how much our child has learnt and how happy she is.' The teachers manage the pupils' behaviour extremely well. They use questioning skilfully to stimulate pupils to think for themselves and encourage them to discuss tasks with one another so that they are fully engaged. Very occasionally, teachers do too much that the pupils could do for themselves and pupils' concentration begins to flag and the pace of learning slows. In the vast majority of cases, however, pupils learn exceptionally well, because teachers expect a great deal from them and the pupils are keen to rise to the challenge. For example, Year 6 pupils were set the task of writing information leaflets based on a trip they had made to a local park. The teaching was accurately matched to the differing capabilities of the pupils and stimulated them to use imaginative language, which they shared with one another and presented to the class.

Marking is consistent and thorough, offering helpful guidance to pupils on the next steps they need to take. Disabled pupils or those with special educational needs receive highly effective support from the teachers and their assistants. Teaching actively promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, encouraging those of all ages to respect the views of others. For example, in the Nursery, the children were as keen to listen to the puppet play put on by their classmates, as to work the puppets themselves. In an assembly led by the headteacher, pupils from Years 3 to 6 were encouraged to reflect on changes they would like to see in the world and in themselves. As a result of such focus on considering the feelings of others, pupils behave exceptionally well in lessons and value their learning.

## **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Pupils told inspectors that the excellent behaviour seen in and around the school during the inspection was typical of behaviour generally. Pupils are polite and welcoming to visitors. They told inspectors that there is no bullying, such as cyber-bullying or religious or racial abuse. One pupil said, 'Sometimes pupils hurt people's feelings without meaning to, but then we ask them to stop.' This protectiveness towards one another comes from the strong moral and spiritual ethos of the school. Pupils know which adults to turn to if they have any worries. Their attitudes to learning are highly positive, and this is seen in the school's attendance record, which is consistently above average.

Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to keep themselves safe, and are taught how to protect themselves, for example, when using the internet. A number of parents and carers told inspectors how much they value the safe and secure ethos of the school. All of those who completed the questionnaire or who spoke to

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inspectors were very satisfied with the pupils' behaviour, and inspectors found it to be outstanding. A typical comment from a parent was, 'The school is a warm and nurturing environment for the children.'

## **Leadership and management**

The headteacher, deputy headteacher and the leadership team have created a happy school, and the uniformly positive staff questionnaires indicate that each individual feels valued. The governing body is fully involved in the life of the school and works in highly effective partnership with leaders and managers. Planning and self-evaluation by leaders, managers and governors are rigorous and continually focused on improvement, including that of teaching through continuous professional development. Leaders and managers have met fully the recommendation for improvement from the previous inspection, ensuring through an exacting programme of classroom observations and a thorough examination of pupils' books that the quality of teaching is now outstanding. Since the previous inspection, the school has introduced sophisticated ways of checking how well pupils are doing, enabling it to provide highly effective support if anyone is in danger of falling behind. Leaders and managers make an outstanding contribution towards promoting equality of opportunity, enabling all pupils, whatever their social or ethnic backgrounds or needs, to make outstanding progress. Pupils respect one another, and those from all backgrounds get on well together, because discrimination is not tolerated.

Leaders, managers and the governing body ensure that the arrangements to keep pupils safe are effective. The premises are securely protected. Statutory requirements concerning safeguarding are met. Staff are regularly trained in child protection procedures and all adults are thoroughly checked and vetted before working at the school.

The curriculum provides full coverage of all key areas of learning, including information and communication technology, and it prepares pupils extremely well for the next stage of schooling. Pupils report that they enjoy the school's exciting programme of clubs, trips and visits, and these activities strengthen their learning of a wide range of topics. The school places considerable emphasis on shared experiences and on respecting the views of others. It celebrates the rich ethnic diversity of the pupils, so that all feel welcome and part of the school's family. All these experiences show the strength of the school's development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural qualities.

## 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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	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 to 31 December 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.
Floor standards:	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
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.**



28 May 2012

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, London SE16 2TY**

We very much enjoyed our recent visit to your school, and it was lovely to see how helpful you are and how nicely you play together. Thank you for making us welcome and telling us your views, both in person and through your questionnaires.

You are fortunate to go to an outstanding school. It has been getting better and better in recent years, thanks to the hard work and dedication of your headteacher, deputy headteacher and all the adults. You take the moral and spiritual ethos of your school very much to heart. You behave extremely well and are kind to one another.

You enjoy learning and are given many exciting things to do. You do extremely well in your schoolwork and make outstanding progress, and this is because the adults encourage you to do your very best.

You told us how much you enjoy school and how the teachers help you and make learning fun, especially when you find things out for yourselves. We have asked all your teachers to give you even more chances to explore ideas for yourselves.

We were impressed by how much care you take of one another, and we shall remember for a long time how nicely those of you in Years 3 to 6 sat in a circle in assembly, thinking hard about ways to make the world better for others, not just yourselves.

All of you have a part to play in improving your school. Work hard and keep up the good attendance.

We wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours faithfully

Natalia Power  
Lead inspector

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