

St Joseph's RC Primary School

90 Oakhill Road, London, SW15 2QD

Inspection dates 1–2 July 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The headteacher's good leadership and high expectations have contributed to the school's improving practice found at the last inspection.
- The governing body and other senior and middle leaders contribute very well to building on good teaching and achievement. They are sharply focused on improving the school further.
- Behaviour and safety are good. Pupils feel very safe; they get on well together and see themselves as a family. Inclusion is a key strength of the school.
- The quality of teaching is good. Teachers plan carefully and seek to use activities to stretch pupils.
- The school has effective systems for assessing and tracking pupils' rates of progress.
- Pupils' achievement is good. Standards have improved since the last inspection; it is above average and a minority of pupils exceed expectations.
- Provision for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is of good quality.
- Partnership work with parents is excellent. Very good opportunities are provided for them to become involved in their children's learning.
- The curriculum is varied and provides challenge. Opportunities to learn subjects such as Latin and experience new ideas through project work at universities and other settings abound. These promote British values and pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Inconsistent practices in teaching affect pupils making faster progress. The quality of marking is not always thorough to help pupils improve their work. In some classes, work is unmarked and presentation skills are untidy.
- All teachers do not pick up quickly enough that the pace of learning could be faster when pupils grasp an idea.
- Achievement in writing is lower in both key stages and the rates of progress are not consistently rapid. Too few of the most able pupils achieve the higher levels in writing. The achievement gap in mathematics between disadvantaged pupils and their peers is too wide.
- Difficulties with recruitment mean that new middle leaders require time to consolidate and build on the good practice in order to drive improvement further.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 12 lessons, four of which were visited together with the headteacher and the assistant headteacher responsible for teaching. Inspectors also looked at work in pupils' books for the current school year.
- Meetings were held with senior and middle leaders, the Vice-Chair of the Governing Body and a representative from the local authority. A telephone conversation was held with the Chair of the Governing Body.
- Inspectors took account of the 105 responses to the school-based parent questionnaire, modelled on the Ofsted online Parent View. They also held informal discussions with parents at the start and end of the school day. The inspectors also took into account 19 questionnaires completed by staff.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation. This included the school's self-evaluation and improvement plan, information on the attainment of children and pupils, their progress and behaviour, and all evidence of procedures and systems for protecting and safeguarding children.

Inspection team

Carmen Rodney, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Alastair McMeckan

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The school makes full-time provision for 16 children and 20 children attend part time. Those who attend part time do so for up to five half-days each week, either in the morning or afternoon.
- Most children attend for three terms before transferring to Reception classes in the main school.
- The proportion of pupils who are from a minority ethnic heritage is high, as is the proportion of those who speak English as an additional language. A few pupils are at the early stage of learning English. Figures vary each term because the number of pupils who leave or join the school at different times during the school year is high.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by funding through the pupil premium is above the national average. This is additional funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after.
- The school uses the local primary pupil referral unit as an alternative provision for one pupil.
- The section 48 inspection of religious education took place on 3 June 2015, several weeks before the section 5 inspection.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that the school converts the current good practice to outstanding by:
 - middle leaders, in the relentless drive to make teaching outstanding, focusing more sharply on the non-negotiable when monitoring teaching
 - developing and distributing the skills of the senior leadership team to the middle leaders.
- Make sure that all staff consistently apply all aspects of the teaching policy so that pupils can make and sustain outstanding progress through:
 - teachers marking pupils' work and giving pupils clear and detailed guidelines on how to improve further
 - focusing on pupils' handwriting and presentation skills.
- Increase pupils' performance in all subjects, particularly in writing for the most-able pupils and in mathematics for those identified as disadvantaged:
 - so that more of the most-able pupils reach the highest levels in both key stages
 - so that the attainment gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers closes at a faster pace
 - by pupils using the writing process to plan, draft and edit their work carefully.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management

are good

- The headteacher, other leaders and members of the governing body have high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour. They want pupils to 'be the best they can'. Since the last inspection, they have increased the focus on raising achievement so that the school is in a better position to develop further.
- Over the last school year, senior leaders, in particular the governing body, have persisted in creating a culture where teachers are more proficient and pupils can achieve better outcomes. However, the speed of driving improvement faster has been affected by difficulties with recruiting middle leaders.
- Despite the difficulties experienced, the headteacher leads the school very well. She is very well supported by other leaders and together, they have maintained a sharp focus on raising standards. As a result, achievement has improved each year since the last inspection. The school has currently recruited experienced and permanent middle leaders.
- The leadership of teaching is effective. Senior leaders regularly check the quality of teaching and learning, and feedback on good practice and areas for improvement is thorough. Nevertheless, all teachers do not consistently apply the actions identified to help pupils achieve extremely well. This unevenness in practice affects the pace of improvement. The challenge for the school is to ensure that all staff constantly apply the non-negotiable in teaching.
- Systems for checking pupils' progress are rigorous. Senior and middle leaders gather, analyse and evaluate and validate assessment information regularly. They combine this information well with progress meetings to hold staff to account for pupils' progress. These reviews are used well to judge the school's effectiveness, and ensure that weaknesses are identified and actions for improvement are appropriate. Close scrutiny of assessment information ensures that all groups of pupils have equal access to achieve well. The Equality Act 2010 is given a high priority, reflecting the school's ethos and emphasis on inclusion.
- Procedures for performance management include clear criteria that are linked to the school improvement plan, the Teachers' Standards and responsibilities. A pay award is conditional to applicants meeting and substantiating each criterion. Very few members of staff have had a pay award over the last two years.
- Middle leaders with responsibility for English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology are making a considerable contribution to developing teaching, particularly through monitoring and professional development. They use opportunities for relevant training and networking with other subject specialists to develop their leadership and subject skills. New and refined ideas are passed on to colleagues regularly as part of a rolling training programme.
- The curriculum is appropriately broad and balanced, with some depth and excitement for learning. This is stimulated by the 'learning challenge' curriculum, which teachers use effectively to provide a range of experiences to deepen pupils' thinking and promote provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Subjects such as Latin, taught in Years 4, 5 and 6, increase pupils' grasp of English grammar. The focus on literacy and numeracy is supported well by the emphasis on challenging pupils to become curious through topic themes. This has led to pupils being more excited about learning.
- Thematic work serves to deepen pupils' understanding of moral issues on, for example, the holocaust. The school's work to develop pupils' spiritual moral, social and cultural development is linked closely to the school's mission statement. The emphasis on promoting Christian values, and British values, democracy, respect and tolerance, leads to pupils conscientiously following one of the school's maxims, 'Treat others as you would like to be treated'. Wider experiences are provided through, for example, a community cohesion project with the elderly; working with local arts team, Wandsworth Museum and Trinity College; and gaining pre-university accreditation. Partnership work with community groups and local universities and a wide range of organisations is extremely strong. For instance, the most-able pupils have worked on a STEM project with Imperial College.
- The support for pupils with a disability and those with special educational needs is of good quality. Training for staff is well organised. As a nurturing school, staff know and identify the needs of individual pupils carefully. There is regular tracking of pupils' progress and links with specialist providers are carefully matched to needs.
- Partnership work with parents is excellent. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of how the school works with them to improve their children's progress. They are fully involved in their children's assessment and have ample opportunities to take part in their learning. Volunteers, as mentors, are used very well to support and foster weaker readers to enjoy a range of texts.
- The school has used additional funding for physical education very well. Strong links with Southfield Academy is providing pupils with expert coaching in a wide range of sports, such as squash and circuit

training.

- The local authority's work with the school is light touch, primarily because there is confidence in the leadership team's work to sustain changes and improve further. The local authority provides good support and has an accurate view of the school's effectiveness. Periodic visits and support with assessment, literacy and training have contributed to further developments in teaching, learning and governance.
- Safeguarding systems are very well organised, with good methods for protecting and safeguarding children. For example, extremely good links with external agencies and provision such as the Place2Be contribute to pupils receiving support without delay. Policies are fully implemented and updated regularly. Staff are fully trained and are vigilant in ensuring that pupils are safe.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is effective in supporting the school to move forward. As lay people, members are proactive in seeking information and triangulating evidence to assess the school's effectiveness.
 - The governors fulfil safeguarding responsibilities very well and have given a high priority to issues on extremism, radicalisation, female genital mutilation and e-safety. A specialist monitors this work regularly.
 - Governors keep up to date with changes in education and are very well informed about the school's work. They are knowledgeable about the quality of teaching and pupils' progress. They scrutinise the assessment information on pupils' progress and seek to validate the evidence through tracking, questioning and observations.
 - They visit the school regularly and are proactive in driving improvement. As a result, they have set up a 'good to outstanding' working party, and have accurately identified inconsistency of practice as the main barrier to accelerating pupils' progress. They provide challenge and support and have a clear understanding of the next steps for the school to become highly effective. They make sure that staff appraisal is linked closely to performance.
 - Governors monitor the budget closely and ensure that the school is in line with audited requirements. They are knowledgeable about the impact of additional funding.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and are responsive to questioning and want to do well. They vie with each other during discussion and become deeply involved in whole class or group work. Well-known classroom routines mean that pupils arrive on time and are ready to begin working.
- Pupils demonstrate good levels of concentration and most focus very well on their work. Very few pupils need constant reminding about full engagement. This was well illustrated during the hottest day of the year, the first day of the inspection. Despite the heat, pupils remained calm and pressed on with their work.
- Behaviour in class and around the school is good. Pupils are polite to each other and visitors and offer help. They are confident in discussion and demonstrate a mature and reflective approach.
- They work well together and play happily with each other. Relationships are harmonious and strong and lead to pupils viewing their school community as a big family. Parents praise this aspect of the school's work. Those who spoke with inspectors described their children as happy and enthusiastic about school; some do not want to leave at the end of the school day.
- Pupils exude poise when representing their school. From Year 2 through to Year 6, those with responsibilities take their positions very seriously. They reported increased confidence in public speaking and understanding of team work.
- Exclusions are rare. The school has not had any permanent exclusion over the last three years.
- Most children attend regularly and attendance is slightly above the national average for primary schools. The school does its best to identify individual concerns and works very well with external agencies to improve attendance. The school makes parents aware of the importance of their children not missing any time.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe is good. The school actively prioritises and works with pupils on how they should remain safe. Opportunities are provided for pupils to discuss behaviour, in particular anti-bullying and use of derogatory language.
- Pupils are knowledgeable about different types of bullying. They were forceful when talking about unacceptable behaviour. They indicated that incidents of bullying are rare. However, they know that it is

not tolerated and poor behaviour is dealt with swiftly. Pupils also know they can turn to the Place2Be and their teachers for support. Parents however, in discussion, referred to a few incidents of bullying linked to name calling. Like the pupils, they reported that the school is decisive in stamping out poor behaviour.

- Pupils develop trusting relationships with the staff, and those who responded to the parental questionnaire, or spoken to, said that their children are safe at the school. Pupils were also positive about being in the care of their teachers and feeling safe in their school.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Since the previous inspection, the school has been relentless in developing teaching. As a result, the quality of teaching and its impact on pupils' academic progress in English and mathematics has been sustained, and standards are higher.
- Assessment information is used well in all year groups, so that work is appropriately matched to the varying abilities of pupils. Teachers are using the established assessment system well to identify the next steps children need to take in their learning. The most-able pupils told inspectors that they were challenged in most lessons, particularly for the higher levels in the national tests. However, work scrutiny and observation of a few lessons indicated that teachers did not always move to provide additional work to allow pupils to gain more depth when they had grasped a skill or concept.
- Reading is very well promoted from Nursery through to Year 6. Parents told inspectors that their children read avidly. The structured approach to teaching phonics is mostly effective, particularly when pupils are in a classroom with the necessary resources. There it is focused and the environment with a rich range of resources supports the work well.
- The best features of teaching included prompt starts to lessons because routines are habitual. Teachers reinforced prior learning, and the learning environment supports learning well. Teachers quickly picked up errors and demonstrated very well how pupils should apply the taught skills. Activities were very well structured. For example, in early years, children experimented with making boats out of different materials to identify why their properties affected sailing. Teaching was built around all the areas of learning, with well-resourced activities that held children's attention for a long time.
- In these lessons, teachers skilfully questioned pupils and increased their thinking, so that they were reflective and could give original responses with supporting evidence. For example, in Year 6, pupils researched and debated the philosophical topic, 'Is the idea of evolution heresy?' Pupils observed the rules of debate very well as the class teacher guided them to explore and counteract each other's viewpoint.
- Teaching assistants mostly work well with pupils; they demonstrate the standard of work required to pupils, and join in and make contributions to keep them on tasks. As a result, pupils requiring additional support keep up with their peers and make good or better progress over time.
- Although monitoring of teaching is rigorous, and marking is given a high priority, all teachers do not consistently keep to the marking policy. Scrutiny of work showed that some books are not marked thoroughly. Routine ticks mean that errors are not always picked up and neither are pupils consistently given advice on how to improve their work in all year groups. Work that is carefully marked includes detailed comments with corresponding responses from pupils.
- Pupils are taught well to do extended writing. However, editing and redrafting skills to refine their work are not emphasised in all year groups before they move on to the next piece of work.
- All teachers do not ensure the school's approach to handwriting and presentation is followed. Presentation skills vary considerably across each year group.
- The Challenge Curriculum is used well to provide good opportunities to stimulate pupils' mathematical skills, in particular, problem solving and calculating quickly and accurately. Work is carefully linked to the needs of different ability groups and teachers consistently demonstrate initial tasks which help pupils to understand the standard of work required. However, learning challenge is not always constant when pupils have grasped a concept.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Pupils' achievement is good, with a minority making outstanding progress. In 2014, Year 6 pupils achieved above average results in the national tests, but writing was in line including pupils' performance in grammar, punctuation and spelling. Girls made slower progress.
- In Year 2, progress was significantly higher than at the time of the previous inspection. Results have risen year on year and were better than the national average in reading and mathematics.

- Predicted results indicate that the 2015 national test results for Year 2 and Year 6 pupils are likely to be slightly lower this year because of the high level of pupil mobility. Additionally, those who join the school late in the school year have not had sufficient time to master the English language.
- Scrutiny of books indicated that writing is weaker because the process of writing is not routinely emphasised in all year groups to help pupils redraft and edit their work. There is not a consistent emphasis on presentation skills to encourage pupils to see a completed and refined piece of work.
- Whilst a minority of children join the Nursery with skills that are below those typical for their age, teachers make sure that targeted work is carefully matched to their needs in all areas of learning. By the time children who attend part time are ready to transfer to Reception they are in line with age-related expectations. Standards in Reception were higher than the national average in 2014, with the large majority of children achieving a good level of development. Outcomes are expected to be similar this year.
- The phonic screening check was below the national average in 2014. However, early analysis of the screening results shows much improved outcomes this year. The large majority of pupils in Year 1 reached the standard expected for their age group.
- Children's vocabulary expands quickly and children make progress at a fast pace because of targeted support for new arrivals at the early stage of learning English and those who are behind in their language development. Inspection evidence supports the views of parents new to the country that, within three terms, their children made good progress in developing their understanding of English to achieve well.
- Children in the Nursery begin to develop their knowledge and understanding of letters and the sounds they make quickly. This is linked to focused small group work. Work scrutiny show that they begin to make good progress from making marks, which by the end of the year become words, phrases and simple sentences. Those who are more advanced, read competently, using their knowledge of phonics (sounds letters make) to read known and unknown words. Children in Nursery and Reception enjoy reading, and writing about their journeys to, for example, the Natural History Museum. Attainment is consistently above average by the end of Reception. A minority of children exceeded levels expected for their age and all make the transfer competently to begin the Key Stage 1 curriculum.
- Pupils speaking English as an additional language make good progress and, in 2014, they made far better progress than their peers in all subjects.
- Disadvantaged pupils achieved standards in line with expectations for their group nationally and their progress was similar to their peers. However, while progress is good, the standards they reached were still lower than their peers in the school. They were at least 24 months behind in mathematics, and one term behind in reading and writing. The gap in attainment is much wider in mathematics. The school is more sharply focused on narrowing that attainment gap through increased accountability, better teaching and targeted intervention work.
- The progress of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is good. In lessons, and from scrutiny of assessment information, they are continuing to make rapid progress in all areas of their learning, and the rapid progress made in 2014 is expected to remain high in 2015.
- The most able pupils are suitably challenged and the proportion achieving the highest level in mathematics was in line with the national average. Considerably more pupils are expected to reach Level 6 this year. They achieved above average results in the 2104 national tests.

The early years provision

is good

- Children in early years make good progress and are very well prepared for Year 1. This is because teaching is consistently good and there is a sharp focus on developing basic communication, language and literacy skills. Teachers ensure that talk is central to children's learning and children are encouraged to expand their vocabulary. Targeted support and the induction programme are used well to help pupils at the early stage of learning English make rapid progress. Teaching assistants who are fluent speakers of the children's language work alongside these children to provide them with opportunities to become fluent speakers.
- Activities to engage children in Nursery and Reception are very well organised. Children stay in the different areas for learning for long periods and maintain their focus, whether writing, taking part in role-play or art work such as pottery. Very good supervision sustains their good behaviour and concentration, particularly as adults use talk well to encourage them to talk about their work.
- The school's work to assess children when they enter Nursery is thorough. Teachers collect information about each child and use it to set individual targets for them to achieve in communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; physical development; and, in personal, social and emotional development. These are tracked across Reception.

- Staff use the online information, known as 'finger-tips', very well to assess and record children's progress. Parents can access this information and use it very well to work with the school to support their child's learning.
- Children make good use of the limited outdoor space and the resources indoors. They learn to take turns, tidy up and cooperate well with each other and the adults working with them.
- During the inspection, children in the Reception demonstrated their love of writing when recounting their visit to the Natural History Museum. Writing showed that they were using phonic skills (sound of letters) to spell words that were recognisable, for example words such as 'beetle' (betels) and mini beasts (minibists). In particular, the most able recognised and could read and write unaided complex words. Their writing included evidence of occasionally using full stops and capital letters at the start of a sentence.
- A high priority is given to the welfare of children in early years. Staff are appropriately trained and they are thorough in ensuring that children are kept safe.

What inspection judgements mean

School

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	101045
Local authority	Wandsworth
Inspection number	448210

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	3-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	229
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr John McHugo
Headteacher	Mrs Yvonne Wozniak
Date of previous school inspection	22-23 March 2010
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