

St Joseph's RC Junior School

Woodend, London SE19 3NU

Inspection dates

13–14 June 2018

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Outstanding
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Outstanding
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- Leaders and governors have worked extremely effectively to improve outcomes and the quality of teaching and learning since the previous inspection.
- Pupils' progress is well above average in reading, writing and mathematics, and was in the top 10% of schools in the country in 2017.
- Teachers' exceptionally strong subject knowledge ensures that pupils achieve well across the curriculum. While outcomes are excellent in most subjects, there are a few where pupils' achievement could be further improved.
- Leaders and governors ensure that the curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to think about moral dilemmas, challenge stereotypes and develop a broad general knowledge. This strong foundation, along with their academic success, prepares pupils well for secondary school and beyond.
- The sports provision is a particular strength of the school. Leaders ensure that as many pupils as possible develop a positive attitude to physical well-being. The vast majority of pupils attend after-school clubs, and school teams do very well in local tournaments.
- Leaders have used training systematically and judiciously to improve the quality of teaching. Throughout the school, teachers use the methods leaders have introduced. As a result, pupils make equally strong progress in each year group.
- Pupils conduct themselves impeccably, greet visitors warmly and get along together well.
- Pupils enjoy learning and feel safe at school. This is evidenced by their above average attendance.
- Parents and carers are very positive about the school and engage well by attending events and information evenings.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that French and personal, social and health education are taught to the very high standards of the other subjects in the curriculum.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- Leaders foster a highly conducive atmosphere for learning. Staff have consistently high expectations. This results in outstanding pupil outcomes.
- Highly ambitious leaders and governors have been uncompromising in making significant and sustainable improvements to all areas of school life since the previous inspection.
- Training and professional development have been vital in improving the quality of teaching so that it is outstanding. There is a systematic approach to providing training. For example, there is concerted focus on a particular aspect of teaching over a number of training sessions. This ensures that staff have a deep understanding of the approach to teaching that leaders advocate.
- Staff work in groups to share good practice and reflect on their strengths and what they would like to improve. This has been extremely successful and ensures that staff are fully involved in developing their own professional expertise.
- Staff at the very early stages of their career are highly complimentary of and grateful for the support they receive.
- Middle leaders are highly effective in their roles. Subjects such as computing, science, physical education (PE), history and geography are exceptionally well led. Leaders know how well pupils are doing and plan carefully to ensure that standards remain high. Other subjects have not been as well developed yet. For example, the school only introduced French as its modern foreign language in September 2017. Personal, social and health education is not taught as a discrete subject, but rather intertwined with the religious education curriculum. This means that some areas are not covered in sufficient depth to ensure outstanding learning.
- The breadth of the curriculum, and the strong links across subjects, is a strength of the school. For example, when studying the properties of rocks and soil in science, teachers make explicit links with geography. These connections enhance pupils' understanding of both subjects.
- The curriculum is enriched by trips to places of interest and visitors, including theatre groups, into school. Leaders have a keen awareness of pupils' backgrounds and ensure that they expose them to a range of experiences that they might otherwise not come into contact with. These include a trip to the Royal Ballet, extensive work on Shakespeare and the chance to play in an orchestra.
- Leaders use the pupil premium funding extremely well to ensure that outcomes for disadvantaged pupils are at least as good as those for other pupils nationally. For example, progress across key stage 2 in reading and mathematics improved from the bottom 20% nationally in 2015 to the top 20% in 2017.
- The primary PE and sport premium is very well spent. There is a wide range of after-school sports clubs, which are well attended. The school has held the gold mark award in sports for the last three years, reflecting its success in competitive sports. Leaders work closely with the parents of the very few pupils who are not involved in any extra-

curricular sporting activity to try and encourage participation. Leaders find alternative ways of being active for those who are not attracted by traditional sports, for example they offer active storytelling and Irish dancing. Leaders check that pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities are involved in sports, including representing the school at local SEN tournaments.

- Leaders ensure that pupils learn how to live a healthy lifestyle. For example, as part of a science topic, Year 6 experimented with flavouring water with natural ingredients such as lemon and mint to see if this was as tasty as commercially available drinks. They were keen to try because they know how bad fizzy drinks are due to the large amount of sugar they contain.
- The school fosters pupils' spiritual, moral and social development well. Core values are threaded through all aspects of the school's work. The sports team works around the six values that underpin the school's behaviour policy, with a strong focus on teamwork and resilience. Pupils have opportunities for building intergenerational understanding on grandparents' day, and mix with pupils from other backgrounds, ethnicities and faiths through the many sporting tournaments that they enter. Pupils learn to question stereotypes through the curriculum, for example by learning about female and minority ethnic scientists, meeting politicians and athletes from minority ethnic backgrounds and watching ballet involving male dancers. Pupils are prepared well for life in modern Britain.
- Parents engage positively with the school. For example, the Fathers' Day breakfast, held on the second day of the inspection, was extremely well attended and pupils and their fathers were clearly enjoying the experience.
- The local authority supported the school well after the previous inspection to help leaders embed the necessary improvements. This level of support is no longer deemed relevant as the local authority judges the school to be extremely effective.

Governance of the school

- Governance is highly effective. Governors restructured the governing body to ensure that there is a broad range of relevant skills. This ensures that governors have the requisite knowledge and understanding to challenge school leaders to make the necessary improvements.
- The governing body regularly reviews its own effectiveness to ensure that it continues to offer a high level of support and challenge.
- Governors are committed to ensuring that safeguarding is highly effective. For example, they check that records of staff suitability to work with children are kept up to date and that all necessary training is in place.
- Minutes of governing body meetings show that governors hold leaders to account robustly, asking challenging questions and expecting clear and precise answers.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Training is up to date and detailed, and includes training on female genital mutilation

awareness, the 'Prevent' duty and how to use an EpiPen for severe allergic reactions. Staff who spoke to inspectors were very clear on safeguarding procedures in school and staff who completed the survey all agreed that pupils are safe.

- Systems for checking the suitability of staff and other adults who come in to school are thorough.
- Leaders know the community really well. They know families and their different contexts, which means that they can put support in where necessary and are quick to escalate levels of support if they have any concerns. This ensures that vulnerable pupils' needs are met.
- The arrangements for providing first aid and caring for pupils with medical needs are well organised. Staff keep detailed records when they administer medicines or first aid. Systems for informing parents of any medical interventions are clear.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Outstanding

- Teachers have very secure subject knowledge across the curriculum. They constantly ask questions to check pupils' understanding. Where they ascertain that pupils are stuck, they devise effective ways to move pupils' learning forward. As a result, pupils make strong progress in a wide range of subjects.
- Provision for the most able pupils is equally effective, including for the most able disadvantaged pupils. Teachers keep a close eye on how well pupils are doing in lessons and provide additional challenge to ensure that the most able pupils build on their skills and understanding. Looking at the books of the most able pupils, inspectors could see how this challenge supports this group of pupils to substantial rapid progress over time.
- Routines are well embedded across the school. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and of the quality of work, including how neatly books are presented. Pupils rise to these expectations. As a result, standards are high in most subjects across the school.
- Resources are used extremely effectively to support learning. For example, if pupils need help with vocabulary or sentence structure, teachers ensure that they have access to relevant materials. This ensures that pupils from different starting points, including those who are at the early stages of learning English and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities, make strong gains in their learning.
- There are very strong opportunities to use reading, writing, speaking, listening and mathematical skills across the curriculum. In science, pupils wrote detailed and high-quality biographies of famous scientists. History topics regularly prompt a range of writing. Orienteering work in geography draws on pupils' mathematical skills. During PE lessons, there is a focus on vocabulary development. These links contribute to the strong progress pupils make.
- Pupils are encouraged to use their enquiry skills across the curriculum. At the start of a new unit in, for example, science, history or geography, pupils reflect on what they already know and what they would like to find out. This is revisited throughout the topic and gives pupils a frame of reference for their learning from which they can check

whether they have learned what they are expected to.

- Pupils are very keen to learn and state that they want to do their best. They use their deep knowledge to produce work of a very high standard. For example, Year 6 pupils during their Shakespeare topic had studied 'Romeo and Juliet' in such depth that they were able to produce comprehensive newspaper articles about major events in the play. Pupils told inspectors that teachers 'make learning fun' and that they like the interactive nature of their lessons.
- Leaders ensure that there is ample opportunity in lessons to reflect on challenging moral dilemmas, for example whether you should judge someone on the colour of their skin or whether parents have the right to dictate who their children can befriend.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils have excellent attitudes to learning. They actively participate in lessons by asking and answering questions. They focus intently when working independently and collaborate well in small groups. When working in larger groups or as a whole class, pupils listen to each other's viewpoints, share ideas and come to a consensus. This helps them understand the democratic process. These finely tuned skills ensure that pupils get the most out of their learning and prepare them well to move on to secondary school.
- Leaders provide ample opportunities for pupils to develop healthy lifestyles. Pupils attend the many after-school sporting clubs and have opportunities to represent the school at inter-school competitions. Pupils learn about healthy eating and the negative effect that drugs, including alcohol and tobacco, have on your body. Pupils told inspectors that they like to eat the healthy options the school provides at lunchtime.
- Despite the relative shortcomings of the personal, social and health education curriculum, the school fosters positive mental attitudes by, among other things, helping pupils to develop resilience and to see mistakes as learning opportunities. This is built into the curriculum and planned for alongside other subjects. This supports pupils not only to develop positive attitudes to learning but also to deal with disappointment, which prepares them well for later life.
- Pupils understand what bullying is, but state that it happens very rarely. They are confident that they could approach members of staff to deal with any concerns.
- Pupils are very knowledgeable about online safety. They know that you must never give out personal information and would always tell an adult if they felt uncomfortable about anything they encountered online.
- Pupils are very complimentary about all the school does to help them feel safe. The vast majority of pupils who completed the survey and all the pupils who spoke with inspectors stated that they feel safe at school. Parents echoed this view unanimously.
- Pupils are confident with road safety, know what to do in the event of a fire or other emergency, including if approached by strangers, and understand the dangers of

smoking, drinking and taking recreational drugs. A much higher than average proportion know how to perform self-rescue in the water. Pupils have also been taught about the dangers of knife crime and what to do to avoid getting drawn into potentially dangerous situations. This is particularly vital as knife crime affects the local community.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils are charming, welcoming and courteous. They get on well with each other and have positive relationships with the adults in the school. This creates a harmonious environment which supports learning well and ensures that pupils leave school with excellent social skills.
- Teachers have very high expectations of behaviour and adhere to the behaviour policy consistently. The policy is based on six shared values, including honesty, determination and teamwork, and is clearly understood and adhered to by pupils, who say that it really helps them know how to behave well.
- Peer mediators encourage positive behaviour and sort out minor friendship disputes so that issues do not escalate. Adults deal with the occasional incidents of poor behaviour in the playground effectively. Leaders' analyses of behaviour records show that the number of incidents, which had already reduced by approximately a third from autumn 2016 to autumn 2017, has reduced further this year.
- Leaders ensure that pupils with particular behavioural needs are very well supported to learn to manage their behaviour. Consequently, there have been no exclusions in the last couple of years.
- Attendance figures are higher than average and very few pupils are persistently absent. Leaders are not complacent, however, and work closely with those families where pupils' attendance is a concern. This work is often successful in reducing absence.

Outcomes for pupils

Outstanding

- Pupils make excellent progress because of the exemplary teaching they receive.
- Outcomes have improved dramatically since the previous inspection. In 2016, at the end of Year 6, pupils' progress rose to well above average in reading, writing and mathematics. It rose further in 2017 so that progress in those three subjects was in the top 10% in the country.
- Work across a range of subjects shows that pupils' understanding grows as they are exposed to increasingly complex ideas. Evidence in books is very clear on this. For example, in mathematics, pupils have the opportunity to practise skills before applying them to solve problems. Standards are high in many subjects. For example, a far higher than average proportion of pupils leave the school being able to swim 25 metres. However, in French and personal, social and health education, pupils make good rather than excellent progress and standards are average.
- Leaders check pupils' achievement carefully. They know, for example, the proportion of pupils who have joined the school at the expected standard for their age and, of that

group, those who have made substantial progress to reach the higher standard. Evidence shows that even pupils who joined the school having reached the higher standard in key stage 1 in reading, writing and mathematics deepen their learning further.

- Pupils have strong reading skills. The pupils who read with inspectors professed a love of reading. They understand that reading books with words that challenge them develops their vocabulary. They use a range of strategies confidently to help them read unfamiliar words and to make sense of their meaning.
- Provision for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is highly effective. Teaching assistants support them well so that they make strong progress.
- Pupils are confident talking about learning. They regularly discuss and debate issues with each other and justify their opinions to their teachers. For example, when looking at a challenging piece of writing set in a dystopian future, pupils debated fiercely about the injustice of keeping slaves.
- Disadvantaged pupils achieve well at St Joseph's. A very high proportion reach the expected standard at the end of Year 6 in reading, writing and mathematics. Many more than is the case nationally reach the higher standard in their learning because the curriculum is closely tailored to their needs.

School details

Unique reference number	101795
Local authority	Croydon
Inspection number	10047391

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	220
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Kathleen Guest
Acting Headteacher	Lisa Kelly
Telephone number	020 8653 7195
Website	www.stjosephsfederation.co.uk
Email address	lpunkett2.306@lgflmail.org
Date of previous inspection	27–28 April 2016

Information about this school

- This is an average-sized junior school. It is federated with the nearby infant and nursery school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is higher than average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is higher than average.
- Most pupils are from minority ethnic groups, the largest of which is that of Black or Black British African heritage.
- A much higher than average proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The school has an on-site breakfast and after-school club. This was not included as part of the inspection because it is run by an external provider.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics

by the end of Year 6.

- There has been some change of leadership since the previous inspection. The deputy headteacher is currently acting headteacher, and the assistant headteacher is acting deputy headteacher. The governors have appointed a new headteacher, who will start in September.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in every class and a range of subjects across the school. They were accompanied on these visits by senior leaders. They also looked at the work pupils have completed in their books.
- The inspection team spoke to pupils both formally and informally and took account of the 30 responses to the inspection questionnaire for pupils. They also listened to pupils read.
- Inspectors took account of the 14 responses to the Ofsted online survey, Parent View, as well as the 10 comments left on the free-text facility. Inspectors also met with parents before and after school to gain their views. They also took account of the 14 responses to the staff inspection survey.
- Inspectors held meetings with members of staff, including middle leaders and staff at the early stage of their careers, governors, including the chair and vice-chair of the governing body, and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspection team looked at a range of documents, including those relating to safeguarding, the school's self-evaluation, information about pupils' academic achievement, attendance figures, analyses of behaviour incidents and minutes of governing body meetings.

Inspection team

Jeanie Jovanova, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Julie Davey

Ofsted Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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Manchester
M1 2WD

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