

Inspection of a good school: St Joseph's Catholic Infant School

Marsh Lane, London E10 7BL

Inspection dates:

19 and 20 January 2022

Outcome

St Joseph's Catholic Infant School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy their learning in school and are eager to talk about it. They are proud of what they do. Pupils behave well in lessons and focus on their learning. They respond promptly to requests made by their teachers and meet the high standards expected of them. Leaders ensure that appropriate support is in place for all to achieve.

Pupils are safe and happy at school. Staff know pupils well and support their well-being effectively. Pupils value the importance of being caring to each other. Leaders have introduced the idea of 'filling buckets with kindness'. Pupils know that bullying is not acceptable. One pupil referred to this as 'taking the kindness out of someone's bucket'. Staff deal with any concerns promptly and effectively.

There is a strong sense of community in the school. Pupils appreciate the positive relationships that they have with staff. They know that teachers recognise their hard work, for example with gold stars and prizes. Many pupils take part in clubs after school, including for cookery, gymnastics and tennis.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders have worked hard to construct the new curriculum. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the school had significant changes in staffing, including the appointment of a new headteacher. As a result, leaders have chosen to prioritise English and mathematics.

Pupils learn to read well. This is because leaders have a clear structure for the teaching of phonics that starts in early years. Staff provide additional sessions for pupils who need to catch up with their reading. In phonics lessons, pupils read books that are closely matched to the sounds they know. Sometimes, the books that pupils take home to help them learn to read are not well matched to their place in the phonics programme.

In most subjects, leaders have thought carefully about what pupils should be taught and when. They have considered how pupils' learning is sequenced over time. For example, in

mathematics, what children learn about number in early years is built on in Years 1 and 2. Pupils can apply their knowledge to different mathematical concepts. For instance, pupils explained that their knowledge of times tables helps them with new learning. They said that practice helps them 'get the hang of it'. In art, pupils use what they have learned in early years about mark making and apply it to more sophisticated drawing in Year 2. Pupils talked about the techniques used by Roy Lichtenstein and how they had used these for their portraits of Nelson Mandela.

Teachers check what pupils have learned and make sure that pupils have opportunities to revisit their learning. In early years, teachers ensure that children are able to see, practise and embed new knowledge. For example, children in Reception used cubes confidently to find different ways of making numbers to 14.

Leaders have made varying degrees of progress in developing subjects other than English and mathematics, but this is not fully complete. In some subjects, pupils are not able to build their knowledge sequentially. Leaders know this and have already started to put it right. They have a clear plan in place to develop these subjects.

Careful monitoring means that staff are quick to identify pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils with SEND have access to the same curriculum as other pupils. If pupils need more support, staff put in place a personalised teaching plan that meets pupils' individual needs.

Pupils behave well. The school environment is calm and orderly. Pupils value the rewards structure that they have. Diversity is celebrated within the school community. Pupils enjoyed their whole-school cultural week celebration, for example. They came to school dressed in clothes representing different cultures. Leaders prioritise pupils' personal development. Staff provide a variety of clubs for pupils to enjoy. Pupils are taught about healthy relationships in an age-appropriate way. Children in early years talked about the importance of cleaning their teeth regularly.

Leaders make sure that staff workload is reasonable. This is much appreciated by staff, who said that their needs and well-being are carefully considered. Staff are very positive about the support they receive.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All staff have received up-to-date safeguarding training and know what to do if they have any concerns. Staff know the pupils well. They are vigilant to potential welfare risks and record anything that worries them, no matter how small. Leaders follow up any concerns quickly and effectively. They use external agencies as necessary to ensure that pupils and families get the right support. The curriculum includes opportunities for pupils to learn about keeping safe, including online. Pupils play well together on the playground and are well supervised. Staff circulate and support to help keep pupils safe.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The curriculum is well planned and implemented in most subjects. Some subjects are less well developed. Leaders have plans in place to improve the curriculum in these subjects and are in the process of bringing this about. For this reason, the transitional arrangements have been applied. Leaders need to continue implementing their plans to make sure that what pupils learn in all subjects is well planned and sequenced.
- Pupils learn to read well. The books used in lessons are well matched to the phonics that pupils have learned. However, sometimes pupils take home books that are not closely matched to their place in the phonics programme. This does not help pupils to build their reading fluency. Leaders must ensure that, among the books pupils take home, they have books that help them to consolidate the phonics that they learn at school.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in June 2013.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

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.

School details

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| Unique reference number | 103090 |
| Local authority | London Borough of Waltham Forest |
| Inspection number | 10211178 |
| Type of school | Infant |
| School category | Voluntary aided |
| Age range of pupils | 3 to 7 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 160 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair of governing body | Nicola Brunton |
| Headteacher | Merryl D'Souza |
| Website | www.stjosephsinfantleyton.co.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 17 January 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 |

Information about this school

- The headteacher took up post in May 2021. The school has joined a hard federation with St Joseph's Catholic Junior School.
- The school does not use any alternative providers.
- The school holds a Catholic religious character. Its most recent section 48 inspection took place in June 2018.
- The school runs a breakfast club.

Information about this inspection

This was the first routine inspection the school had received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders, and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- The inspectors spoke to the headteacher, assistant headteacher and the local authority school improvement partner.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also spoke to leaders about art and design, science, music, computing and physical education, and looked at curriculum plans in these subjects. Samples of pupils' work in art and design and science were reviewed.
- Inspectors discussed and looked at leaders' priorities for improvement. They also spoke to representatives of the governing body.
- Inspectors reviewed the arrangements for safeguarding and spoke to pupils, staff and leaders about these. Relevant documents and records were scrutinised.
- The views of parents and carers and staff were considered through the Ofsted surveys.

Inspection team

Sophie Healey-Welch, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Samantha Ingram

Her Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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