

Inspection of St Joseph's Catholic Infant School

Waverley Avenue, Wembley HA9 6TA

Inspection dates: 10 and 11 October 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

This school was last inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 14 years ago and judged 'Outstanding' under a previous inspection framework. This reflected the school's overall effectiveness under the inspection framework in use at the time.

From then until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between graded inspections under section 5 of the Act. Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are really proud to come to this school. Leaders greet pupils at the school gate each morning. Pupils come into school happily, especially when pupils see Nutmeg, the school's dog.

All members of the school community aim to live by the school's mission statement, which is based on, love, kindness and forgiveness. This helps to create an environment where pupils feel secure, happy and safe. Pupils are keen to tell visitors about how they earn house points for their school houses when they demonstrate positive attitudes and behaviour.

Staff have high expectations of all pupils to do well, and pupils rise to this challenge. Staff and governors are clear that the central aim of the school is to provide the best education that they can for all pupils. This vision is achieved through the broad and ambitious curriculum, which enables pupils to learn well. There is a very wide range of after-school clubs for pupils to attend, such as chess, football and gymnastics. Most participate in at least one activity and leaders carefully monitor this.

Pupils work and play happily together. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. Staff address any issues swiftly and calmly, ensuring that no time is wasted during lessons. Pupils manage their own behaviour extremely well. Children in early years learn well together. They take turns and move calmly between different activities.

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

Leaders have created a curriculum which is ambitious for all. They have thought carefully about how to organise the curriculum, beginning from the moment that children join the school in Nursery to when they transfer to the adjoining junior school. Staff between the two schools work closely with each other to ensure that they know pupils well and plan to meet their needs. The careful identification of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities underpins this work. Leaders support teachers to adapt work for pupils very effectively.

In each subject, the knowledge that pupils are expected to learn is broad in scope and planned coherently. The school supports staff to develop their expertise in teaching the curriculum. In physical education, for example, teachers work alongside specialist staff to strengthen their subject knowledge. They plan engaging sequences of learning which enable pupils to develop knowledge and skills well. The importance of being physically active is prioritised. The curriculum is enriched with opportunities for pupils to experience different ways of keeping fit and healthy. For example, pupils take part in scooter lessons.

The school has prioritised reading and pupils enjoy it. Staff share stories with pupils in an engaging way, helping to develop a love of books and reading. Pupils learn the sounds that letters make from their first days in Reception class. This builds on what children have learned in Nursery about carefully listening to sounds around them

and learning new rhymes and stories. Leaders have made sure that staff are experts in early reading. The books that pupils read are closely matched to the sounds that they know. Pupils have a real sense of achievement when they are reading independently and with adults. Teachers check carefully the sounds that pupils know and identify where any gaps might be. Pupils who need additional support are helped to catch up.

Teaching explains clearly new information that pupils need to learn. This enables all pupils to usually understand and recall learning. However, occasionally, pupils struggle to form letters accurately when they are writing. Some pupils are not supported sufficiently well to improve the legibility of their handwriting. Sometimes, this hampers pupils from being able to read and understand their own written work. In addition, occasionally, teaching includes written resources that are beyond pupils' current stage of reading. These resources are therefore not as helpful as teachers intend in supporting pupils' learning.

Pupils attend school regularly. The school works closely with parents and carers to make sure that everyone understands the importance of regular attendance. Leaders have organised opportunities for parents to learn more about how they can support their children at home. This includes workshops where parents learn alongside their children.

Pupils behave extremely well around the school and in lessons. Pupils understand the school's expectations for behaviour and follow them without a fuss.

Excellent provision is planned to support pupils' personal development, including aspirational programmes for personal, social and health education. What is taught in class is supplemented well through thoughtful assemblies. Pupils learn about fundamental British values and different religions and beliefs. Pupils relish opportunities to make decisions in the school via the school council. Pupils think about others and take an active role in caring for each other and their school environment. For instance, following litter picking locally, pupils wrote to the local council to identify where there were areas outside of the school where litter was accumulating. Pupils raise money for charities and recently held a food collection for their recent harvest festival.

Staff appreciate how leaders consider their well-being. Staff are proud to work at this school.

Governors know the school well. When issues are identified, for example with the need for the recent building works, they have acted swiftly to ensure that disruption to pupils' learning is minimised.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The curriculum does not support all pupils to form letters correctly and legibly. At times, this means that some pupils are unable to read back and understand their own written work and express their ideas accurately. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum, including in the early years, enables all pupils to form letters correctly and improve the legibility of their handwriting.

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.

Further information

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

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' is used to mean pupils with SEND; pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	101546
Local authority	Brent
Inspection number	10255337
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	261
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Fabiola Marini
Headteacher	Amanda Whelan
Website	www.sjinf.brent.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	22 and 23 September 2009, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school has a Roman Catholic religious character. The school had its last section 48 inspection by the Archdiocese of Westminster in May 2017.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and deputy headteachers. They also met with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors and spoke with a representative for the local authority.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, science and history. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons and spoke to teachers. They also spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors also spoke to some parents and considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey for parents, Ofsted Parent View. They also reviewed the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff and pupils.

Inspection team

Adam Vincent, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Emma Watford	Ofsted Inspector
Gary Rawlings	His Majesty's Inspector

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