

Inspection of St Joseph's Catholic Junior School

Chatsworth Avenue, Wembley, Middlesex, HA9 6BE

Inspection dates: 20 and 21 September 2023

Overall effectiveness

Good

The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Good

Previous inspection grade

Outstanding

This school was last inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 twelve 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 proud of their school and love to come here. They are caring and well mannered. They behave exceptionally well. Older pupils are role models to younger pupils.

The school's curriculum is broad. Expectations are high. Pupils study the full range of national curriculum subjects. The curriculum in English and mathematics is well sequenced and teachers deliver the curriculum with clarity. Staff provide effective support for pupils at an early stage of learning to read. As a result, pupils achieve highly in their end of stage national assessments.

The teaching of personal, social and health education (PSHE) fosters pupils' understanding of the importance of kindness and citizenship. This teaching is further embedded by the school's Caritas curriculum. Pupils of all ages take on a variety of leadership roles to support other pupils and improve the school's environment.

Leaders provide ample opportunities for pupils to broaden their experiences. They ensure that all pupils have access to a range of clubs and educational outings during their time at school. Leaders recognise the importance of developing pupils' confidence. Activities including debating and musical performance take a prominent place here.

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

Leaders know that fluency and confidence in reading is of paramount importance to all pupils. A love of reading is encouraged in all aspects of school life. Teachers use books as rewards to celebrate the success of pupils. Pupils build up their own home library throughout their time at the school. Pupils take on roles as reading ambassadors and support the school's reading programme. This includes managing the book-vending machine. The school caters for a larger than usual number of pupils who speak English as an additional language. Staff have the necessary skills to support these pupils to become confident and fluent readers.

The school has thought carefully about curriculum resources. For example, in English, pupils encounter a range of texts from diverse authors. Leaders have carefully chosen texts for pupils to read that capture pupils' interest and link to learning in other subjects. Leaders have carefully planned the order in which key learning should be taught. In mathematics, for example, teachers break down key learning into clear steps. They provide regular opportunities for pupils to practise what they have learned. Published outcomes in national assessments are strong.

In some other subjects in the wider curriculum, the curriculum does not develop pupils' knowledge and skills as securely. At times, the work given to pupils distracts from the key learning that should be taking place. As a result, sometimes pupils recall isolated facts rather than building a firm understanding of subject content.

Teachers routinely check what pupils know and can do. Typically, this allows them to identify and address any gaps in pupils' knowledge when they arise. However, at times, misunderstandings are not addressed clearly in class. When this occurs, misconceptions persist in pupils' long-term memory.

Leaders ensure that they identify pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) quickly. Teachers know the strategies that best support pupils with SEND in class. Additional adults who work with pupils with SEND are well trained.

Teachers have high expectations for pupils' behaviour. In class, pupils try their best. They follow clearly established routines right from the start. The playground is a calm and pleasant environment. Pupils play together well. Older pupils take on roles including as peer mentors. They are trained to help younger pupils to make friends and work through any problems.

Regular attendance is treated as a priority. Attendance in the school is swiftly returning to pre-pandemic rates. Leaders have a clear understanding of the barriers to good attendance that families in the school's community face. They take effective action to support pupils to improve their attendance over time.

Pupils have an exceptional sense of community spirit. They love to help others. Charity work is a strong feature of the school. Pupils in Year 5 choose local charities to support and plan fundraising events, including clothing collections for the homeless. Pupils on the school council carry out projects to make the school more sustainable. For example, they have written letters to the local council identifying improvements that could be made to the environment in their local area.

Staff are very proud to work here. They appreciate the work of leaders to reduce their workload and support their well-being. Curriculum leaders have additional time to carry out their roles. The school's dog, Nutmeg, plays her part in supporting pupils' welfare as dog mentor. Staff, pupils parents and carers find that Nutmeg's presence improves their mental health.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some foundation subjects, aspects of disciplinary knowledge and skills have not been sequenced as clearly as in other subjects. At times, the work given to pupils does not support pupils to practise and embed new knowledge securely. This means that sometimes, pupils develop knowledge as isolated facts and struggle to build meaningful connections in their learning. Leaders should ensure

that the planned curriculum and its delivery enables pupils to build up a rich understanding of disciplinary knowledge and skills over time.

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 special educational needs and/or disabilities (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	101539
Local authority	Brent
Inspection number	10289817
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	271
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Fabiola Marini
Headteacher	Amanda Whelan
Website	www.sjjnr.brent.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	28 and 29 November 2011, under section 5

Information about this school

- The school has a 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 providers.

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 the school improvement partner.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, science, history and art. 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 responses to the online parent survey, Ofsted Parent View. They also reviewed responses to the online staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Annabel Davies, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Curtis Sweetingham

Ofsted Inspector

Seamus Gibbons

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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