

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

Pitman Street, Camberwell, London SE5 0TS

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Inspection date:

7 December 2023

## Outcome

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

## What is it like to attend this school?

St Joseph's is a warm and welcoming school with its community at its heart. Pupils said that they feel happy and safe because adults care about them. Leaders know their families well. Parents and carers hold the school in high regard and appreciate the support that they receive from staff.

The school is determined that all pupils will get a good start to their education here, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders are ambitious for all. A wide range of experiences are provided to develop pupils' aspirations. For example, parents come in to talk to pupils about the range of jobs that they do. The school also commissions an artist to work directly with pupils. Across a range of subjects, pupils learn and achieve well.

Pupils behave well in the classroom, when moving around the school and outside in the playground. They are polite and friendly to visitors. Pupils take their roles of responsibility seriously, such as being a member of the school council or leading the daily prayer.

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

An ambitious curriculum has been developed that intends for pupils to achieve highly in all subjects. The curriculum is broken down into logical steps so that learning builds on what has been taught before. For example, as pupils practise and use different techniques in art, their portraits become more sophisticated over time. In mathematics, children in early years build their accuracy in counting. This gets them ready to tackle more complex mathematics in addition and subtraction as they get older.

Teachers plan carefully what they want pupils to learn. They explain ideas clearly and address misconceptions in lessons. However, in a few subjects, teaching does not check that pupils can remember what they have been taught previously before moving on to new learning. This means that pupils develop gaps in their knowledge.

Early reading is prioritised. All staff have been taught to teach phonics with precision and consistency. Pupils' phonics knowledge is checked regularly, and those falling behind are given extra help to catch up. For example, skilled adults deliver focused, small-group reading sessions that build pupils' reading fluency and understanding of vocabulary. However, in a few instances, the books that pupils read are not as well matched to their phonics knowledge as they need to be. This makes it difficult for these pupils to practise using their phonics and grow in confidence with their reading.

Children in early years get off to a good start from their varied starting points. Leaders forge strong links with families through relevant discussions and workshops. The curriculum is carefully planned to incorporate children's interests, while also providing all that children need to be well prepared for their next stage of education. Staff use every opportunity to deepen children's knowledge and understanding while they play. Adults skilfully interact with children, modelling the use of language well.

The school identifies the needs of pupils with SEND quickly so that they can provide the right support. Leaders work closely with experts beyond the school to plan what is best for pupils. Teachers adapt their teaching and resources well. This enables pupils with SEND to learn alongside their peers and develop their independence.

Pupils try hard in lessons and learning is rarely interrupted. They know that it is important to be kind and respectful. Pupils value the school's motto of 'Be Ready, Be Respectful, Be Safe'. Bullying is extremely rare, but if it were to occur, pupils are confident that adults would sort it out. Adults support pupils to rebuild relationships using friendship groups and peer mediation. Leaders make sure that pupils' attendance is high. Pupils enjoy school and want to come to school every day. They arrive on time and are ready to learn.

Leaders are committed to ensuring that all pupils, even the very youngest, enjoy rich experiences beyond the classroom. For example, Reception-age children recently visited the local park to collect sticks and hunt for Stick Man's 'family tree'. Older pupils visited a local art gallery to look at Victorian toys. Pupils appreciate the wide range of clubs on offer, such as sewing club. Pupils are also taught about different cultures as well as having many opportunities to celebrate their own heritage.

Staff feel well supported and valued by leaders. They receive the training that they need and are confident in their roles. Staff appreciate measures put in place by leaders to reduce workload and support their well-being, such as the provision of dedicated 'well-being time'.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## What does the school need to do to improve?

### (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few subjects, checks on what pupils know and can remember before introducing new learning are not fully established. As a result, pupils develop gaps in their knowledge. The school should make sure that checks on pupils' understanding in these subjects are fully established, so that any gaps can be identified and addressed before moving on to new learning.
- In a few instances, the books that pupils read to practise and apply their phonics knowledge are not as closely matched as they need to be to pupils' stage of learning phonics. This makes it harder for pupils to become confident readers as quickly as possible. The school should ensure that teachers routinely check that reading books are well matched to pupils' knowledge so that all pupils are able to develop their reading fluency and confidence.

## 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 an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in October 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.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	100854
<b>Local authority</b>	Southwark
<b>Inspection number</b>	10289794
<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5 to 7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	102
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Patsy Winters
<b>Headteacher</b>	Delia Jameson (Executive Headteacher)
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.stjosephs.southwark.sch.uk">www.stjosephs.southwark.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	22 March 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school has a Christian ethos of the Roman Catholic denomination. It is in the Diocese of Southwark. A section 48 inspection for schools of a religious character was carried out in November 2022.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school had 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.
- During the inspection, inspectors held discussions with the executive headteacher and the head of school. The inspector met with five members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. The inspector also spoke with a representative from the local authority and the Diocese of Southwark.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics and art. As part of each deep dive, the inspectors met with curriculum leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspectors also sampled learning in other subjects and listened to pupils reading to staff.
- 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 reviewed a range of school documentation, including records related to attendance, behaviour and pupil movement.
- Inspectors talked to parents at the school gate and considered parents' responses to Ofsted Parent View.

### **Inspection team**

Helen Morrison, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Jonathan Newby

Ofsted Inspector

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