

Inspection of St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Gomm Road, Lower Road, Rotherhithe, London SE16 2TY

Inspection dates: 12 and 13 March 2024

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

Until November 2020, the school was exempt from routine inspection because it was judged as outstanding at its previous inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The school has not been inspected under section 5 of the Act since May 2012.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud of their achievements at this aspirational primary school, and rightly so. Across subjects, they excel in their learning.

The youngest children in early years know about the school's values of 'love, kindness and respect: the St Joseph's Way'. As they move up through the school, pupils use this as their moral compass to guide their behaviour and relationships. The school has a very strong community feel. Older pupils support their younger peers as reading buddies. Pupils trained as 'peacemakers' help to resolve any difficulties which may arise at playtimes.

The school places a strong emphasis on teamwork and collaboration. Pupils talk confidently about the values that they hold in common, as well as their pride in the school's diversity. They listen and build on each other's ideas and debate big issues in a respectful way. They are bursting to tell visitors about their love of learning.

The school provides a safe and harmonious environment. Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is exemplary. Parents and carers are greatly appreciative of the school's work. Reflecting the views of many, one parent commented that: 'The school doesn't only care about the children's welfare. It also cares about us as parents and gives us as much support as it can.'

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

The school has thought very carefully about its curriculum, which is highly effective. Teachers ensure that pupils are clear about the most important ideas they will be learning. This helps pupils to make connections over time, and build up secure and detailed knowledge. Through careful questioning and discussions, teachers enable pupils to deepen their understanding. In addition, the school has identified the common misconceptions that pupils might hold in subjects like science, to ensure that these are addressed specifically in lessons. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) have the extra support that they need to learn the curriculum well.

Pupils share their ideas clearly and confidently. They are respectful of those who need more time to say what they are thinking, so that everyone can participate in discussions. The school ensures that pupils can make links between the knowledge they learn and their character development. For example, in their work on science, pupils also apply their thinking about honesty. They learn that scientists must record their findings with precision, even if they are not the results they had expected.

Teachers have the subject knowledge and the skills they need to carry out their roles very effectively. Staff receive regular, high-quality professional development. The school is ambitious to keep improving its curriculum. For example, it is further refining its highly effective curriculum for mathematics. A small number of classes are piloting a new approach which puts even more emphasis on explaining and

modelling concepts. This ensures that pupils become highly proficient in using and apply mathematical knowledge.

From the start, children in the early years enjoy stories, songs and conversations with staff. As a result, they learn more-complex language and vocabulary. This focus on language continues throughout the school. The school prioritises reading. Expert teaching, together with the school's ambitious and rigorous curriculum for phonics, ensures that younger pupils learn and practise all their sounds. Extra support is quickly given to anyone who needs it. As a result, pupils quickly master the basics and move onto reading a wide range of books. Older pupils are eager to talk about how much they love to read. They are gripped by the exciting stories in the novels which teachers select for them. They enjoy reading for relaxation and pleasure.

Pupils' behaviour is immaculate. They focus intently during lessons and move sensibly and calmly around the school. Attendance rates are high. This is because the school sets clear expectations for attendance and punctuality. The school's monitoring is rigorous. Where families need more support, leaders work hard to understand their specific needs and improve attendance.

The school has robust procedures to identify pupils with SEND. This means that they are fully included in learning and the wider opportunities on offer, like after-school clubs.

The school's personal development curriculum has been thoughtfully designed. Pupils are taught about staying safe online, resisting peer pressure, and respecting others. The school's work on language development supports this and pupils are taught to think carefully about their choice of words. They know how to build on another person's ideas or disagree with them courteously. Pupils are taught to look after their mental and physical health. This links to their physical education (PE) lessons, where they develop their skills and fitness as well as learn about why it is important to stay fit and healthy. Pupils contribute actively to the local community. For example, there are regular visits to a local care home, where pupils sing to residents. Pupils enjoy a wide range of extra-curricular activities.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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	100833
Local authority	Southwark
Inspection number	10296575
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	226
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Eduardo Petrilli
Headteacher	Catherine McLoughlin
Website	www.stjosephsprimary.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	24 and 25 May 2012, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Information about this school

- The school uses one registered alternative provision.
- The school's last section 48 inspection took place in February 2018.

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.
- The inspectors met with the headteacher and other leaders. Inspectors also met with the chair of the governing body and other governors, and representatives from the local authority and the diocese.

- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, PE and science. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also reviewed the curriculum in some other subjects.
- The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in the playground and at lunchtime.
- 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 documents, including behaviour logs, bullying records, attendance records, pupil records and school policies.
- Inspectors considered responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View. Inspectors also spoke with parents as they arrived at school.
- The responses to Ofsted's questionnaire for school staff were considered. Inspectors also met with staff throughout the inspection to gather their views.

Inspection team

Julian Grenier, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Raj Mehta	Ofsted Inspector
Sacha Husnu-Beresford	His Majesty's Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children’s Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children’s social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children’s services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2024