

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101236
Local Authority	Barking and Dagenham
Inspection number	276474
Inspection dates	13–14 December 2005
Reporting inspector	Michael Pye

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Noreen Brooks Mr David De Cruz
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Connor Road Dagenham RM9 5UL
Telephone number	020 8270 6480
Fax number	020 8595 5061

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

St Joseph's is a larger than average Roman Catholic primary school. The numbers of pupils entitled to free school meals is below the national average. The locality is recognized as having below average social economic circumstances. Almost a third of pupils come from minority ethnic groups, particularly from Black African backgrounds. Although there are only average numbers of pupils for whom English is not their first language, these numbers are increasing. There are average numbers of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities, but below average numbers with statements of special need. The school has a 51 place nursery. The school is on two sites separated by a section of closed road. It has the Investors in People Award.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade:

What the school should do to improve further

* Adopt broader approaches to curriculum planning, so as to promote more consistent challenge and creativity* Plan work that is more suitable for pupils of high ability in Years 1 and 2* Develop the consistency of marking across the school.

Achievement and standards

Grade:

Personal development and well-being

Grade:

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade:

Teaching is good overall although in a minority of lessons there still exists some weaknesses. This is an improvement on the last inspection, and reflects the monitoring efforts of senior staff. They have set ambitious but attainable targets for further improvements in teaching. New and more thorough schemes for marking pupils' work have been introduced, although these have still to be implemented in some classes. Monitoring by the school has helped to identify the need to further develop the word and sound knowledge of pupils in the Foundation Stage through extra reading activities. Some lessons seen during the inspection were outstanding with teachers demanding a lot from the pupils. Teachers in such lessons plan well to deliver work for pupils of different abilities. Discussions are used very effectively to identify possible misunderstandings, and teachers adjust their approaches to ensure pupils learn as well as they can. Work topics and teaching methods capture pupils' interest, and this results in exceptional levels of concentration and effort. A great deal is learned in a short time. The positive relationships that teachers establish result in pupils wanting to get involved in lessons and do their best. Occasionally brighter pupils in Years 1 and 2 could progress more quickly if the work provided a greater challenge.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade:

The curriculum is satisfactory. Teachers have begun to develop links between subjects so that pupils appreciate the relevance of what they are learning. For example, pupils studying the local river system use digital photography to illustrate geographical features. Not all subjects have sufficiently developed their work programmes to enable them to identify and deliver a broad range of creative experiences to pupils. For example the use of some worksheets and workbooks limit the challenge and creativity of pupils. Opportunities are missed in subjects such as physical education to use information and communication technology. Pupils' learning could be further enhanced by the more efficient use of the library and the information and communication technology room. Pupils appreciate and are motivated by the good opportunities the school provides to enhance their learning. The multi-cultural day allowed pupils to dress in a fashion that reflected their ethnic origin, and learn about music from around the world. A

satisfactory range of extra-curricular clubs, particularly sports and music, are well attended. Good residential trips help promote the personal development of pupils. There is good provision for pupils with learning difficulties. Support is well targeted and contributes significantly to pupils' progress. The early years curriculum is good, with well developed opportunities for pupils to develop their language skills.

Care, guidance and support

Grade:

Overall, care, guidance and support are good and reflect the Catholic ethos of the school. Consequently pupils feel safe and secure at school and are able to concentrate on their work. Pupils speak of how they value the guidance that staff provide in helping them to overcome any difficulties they may have. Child protection procedures have greatly improved since the last inspection. The procedures are rigorous, are reviewed regularly with staff, and are overseen by governors. The school works well with outside agencies and parents to ensure the care and well being of pupils. Inspectors agree with parent views and the school, that some surface areas of the playground are uneven and may cause accidents. The school correctly identifies that pupils need more guidance about how they might improve their work as not all pupils know how to do this. Good procedures are being developed so that they can make even better progress.

Leadership and management

Grade:

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Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for your warm welcome to us during the inspection. We really enjoyed talking to you, and listened carefully to what you had to say.

We liked these things the most: * The way you work hard and learn new things quicker than pupils in many other schools * How you enjoy life in school * How you behave and get along well with adults and other pupils* That you told us how much you enjoy your lessons* That many of you do well in English, mathematics and science * That the school has improved as a result of the hard work of adults and you, the pupils.

We have asked your school to work on these things now: * To make your work more interesting and exciting* That more pupils in Years 1 and 2 are encouraged to do even better* To make sure that when your work is marked there are suggestions about how to improve. I hope you enjoyed your Christmas concerts.