

St Joseph's RC Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101337
Local Authority	Barnet
Inspection number	276502
Inspection dates	4–5 May 2006
Reporting inspector	Alan Jarvis

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Frances Fenton Mrs Irene Ciapryna
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Watford Way Hendon London NW4 4TY
Telephone number	02082025229
Fax number	02082025530

Age group	7–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This average sized junior school has two forms of entry. Pupils are predominantly Roman Catholic. Seven out of ten are from minority ethnic backgrounds. Their diversity has been increasing in recent years. Around one quarter speak English as an additional language. Most do so fluently. An average proportion has a learning difficulty or disability. Six pupils have a statement of special educational needs. This is above average. Around half the teachers have been appointed during the last two years.

In recent years the school has achieved three Schools Achievement Awards, the Healthy Schools Award, International School Award and Investor in People Status.

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

* Carry out the planned refinements to the use of ICT across the curriculum, enrichment activities and the rigour of governors' classroom visits.

Achievement and standards

Grade:

Personal development and well-being

Grade:

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade:

Teaching is outstanding and a key contributor to pupils' rapid progress. This is especially so in Years 5 and 6. Not a moment is wasted in lessons because of teachers' high expectations, outstanding relationships, pupils' keenness to learn and their notable confidence. Lesson objectives are pupil friendly and so pupils are crystal clear about what they have to do. Many pupils said the teachers try their best to make "boring topics fun". All teachers use the classroom interactive whiteboards to great effect to enliven their teaching. Many parents actively support their children's learning at home, for example, by providing a computer or space to complete homework.

Individual pupils are supported extremely well in their learning. Teaching assistants work alongside a set of pupils with learning disabilities or difficulties as they move through the school. Pupils with a specific need, such as in language development, are withdrawn from classes and given very expert one to one help. In Year 6, the ablest pupils have been set work on a par with that in Year 8 high flyers in secondary school. Very good marking gives teachers a perceptive understanding of learning and pushes pupils' learning on.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade:

The curriculum is outstanding, fully inclusive and supports pupils' excellent achievement and personal development. It meets and goes well beyond statutory requirements. Extremely good planning ensures it meets the individual needs of all groups of pupils. Provision for ICT is good and improving. Its use across the curriculum has been embedded well this year. However, the school appreciates that the use of ICT can be further honed.

Provision in music is first class. The school boasts weekly music lessons, instrumental tuition, an orchestra and a choir who have performed at the Royal Albert Hall. Unusually, dance is also on the curriculum. Priority is given to the teaching of a number of European languages such as Spanish and Italian. A wide range of extremely popular sporting, musical and linguistic opportunities also enrich the curriculum. More are planned. The programme for pupils' personal, social and emotional development is very effective. This is seen in the eye-catching displays

around the school. These also reflect the school's cultural diversity and pupils' wide ranging work in the local community.

Care, guidance and support

Grade:

The quality of care, support and guidance is outstanding. It would be hard for this to be better. The nurturing atmosphere in the school results in pupils feeling safe and valued at all times. The high esteem engendered by all adults contributes significantly to pupils' extremely positive work ethic. Manageable, but incisive, systems are in place to assess pupils' personal and academic progress. Consequently, staff are able to take timely and extremely effective action to address difficulties and maximise pupils' progress. Particularly thoughtful attention is given to deploying the support for pupils with a special educational need. Each pupil has clear targets attached to their desks or in their trays. Inspectors were impressed by the way many pupils spoke about their determination to meet their goals and the support given by their teachers. Parents say they feel fully involved at every stage of their child's education. Pupils are very well supported in making the transition to secondary school. All requirements for child protection and health and safety procedures are meticulously established and put into practice.

Leadership and management

Grade:

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Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Pupils

As you know we visited your school recently to find out how well you were doing. We really enjoyed our time in St Joseph's. Thank you for being so welcoming, polite and letting us know how much you enjoy school.

We judge St Joseph's to be an outstanding school, and this is why: * You reach exceptionally high standards in English, mathematics and science. * The progress you make is amongst the best in the country. * Your behaviour, enthusiasm and good manners all shine like a beacon. * All the adults in the school do their very best to make your school a very friendly, safe place to be where everyone is very well looked after. * Teaching is consistently of a very high quality. Your teachers work extremely hard to make sure that lessons are interesting, fun and just right for you, even when you find learning difficult. * Your parents give you all the support they can. * The school leaders are doing an excellent job of making sure the school keeps on improving.

No wonder your parents are so pleased that you attend such a good school! Even in a super school such as yours there are always a few things that can be better. Your headteacher knows this. We have asked her to continue to work on her current development plan. In particular she is giving you more opportunities to use ICT in lessons, planning more extra-curricular activities and working with the governors to strengthen their work. Thank you once again for all your help. We wish you well in the future.

Yours sincerely

Alan Jarvis

Lead Inspector