



# St Joseph RC Junior School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 101539  
**Local Authority** Brent  
**Inspection number** 276532  
**Inspection dates** 10–11 October 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Wendy Simmons

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Junior	<b>School address</b>	Chatsworth Avenue
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided		Wembley
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11		HA9 6BE
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	02089023438
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	275	<b>Fax number</b>	02089035482
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	(Acting) Mr Richard Rodgers
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Pauline Moss
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	22 November 1999		

<b>Age group</b> 7–11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 10–11 October 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 276532
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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## **Description of the school**

This popular school educates a very diverse mix of pupils. The traditional Irish population has changed since the school was last inspected. The largest groups of pupils now include White British, Caribbean and Black African. In recent years there has been a significant increase in the number of families who are new to living in Britain. These families often join the school at different times throughout the school year. The proportion of pupils speaking English in addition to their home language is high. Overall, pupils come from lower than average social circumstances. The school won the 'Active Mark Gold Award' and works in partnership with local schools and the church. The school has a higher proportion of pupils with special needs than is found in most schools.

## **Key for inspection grades**

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

St Joseph's is a good and caring school. Pupils agree saying, 'It's great here, and we love our school.' Pupils are happy, enthusiastic and successful learners who are well prepared for the next stages of their lives. This is due to the very good work that the school does, particularly in helping pupils to develop outstanding skills in English and information and communication technology (ICT). Strong links with parents and outside agencies contribute to pupils' good progress and their enjoyment of learning. Relationships are happy and supportive.

Strong leadership by the headteacher and senior staff enables pupils to reach significantly above average standards by Year 6. Since 2001, standards have been largely maintained, despite changes in the profile of pupils joining the school. Staff have improved their understanding and skills in teaching pupils for whom English is an additional language and this is an important reason why standards are so high.

Achievement is good, with pupils making good progress from their above average starting points when joining the school in Year 3. Those who join the school throughout Years 4 to 6, also make good progress. Some pupils who are new to learning English make outstanding progress during the time they are at the school which, for some, is only a year. Inspectors agree with governors that, 'pupils develop well together.'

The headteacher has high expectations and is very capable. Her work is a significant factor behind the school's success. She is well supported by a strong team of staff who provide good teaching and learning opportunities. The teaching of English has a number of outstanding features, including opportunities for pupils to discuss things in class and then to write for a wide range of purposes. Significantly, the teaching of grammar and pupils' use of interesting vocabulary are of very high quality.

The school reaches significantly above average standards in mathematics although a very small proportion of the lower attaining pupils do not make as much progress as others. This is because learning activities are sometimes too difficult for them. Practical resources are not always used well enough to ensure that they make the same quick progress as other learners. Even so, they still make satisfactory progress. Middle and higher attaining pupils make good progress because teaching is fast moving, clear and very challenging. Pupils solve complex problems and explain well how they manipulate numbers. For example, they quickly explained about the equivalence of fractions and the various properties of different shapes.

Pupils' personal development is central to the ethos of the school. The values of care and respect permeate daily life. The good, well planned and varied curriculum helps pupils to enjoy learning. Pupils understand about being safe and healthy and make a good contribution to community life. They quickly gain confidence and develop important social skills. Pupils develop fitness through the wide range of sports, which they greatly value and enjoy.

## **What the school should do to improve further**

\* Ensure that the work and resources given to lower attaining pupils in mathematics enable them to make better progress.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Standards reached by Year 6 are significantly above average. Whilst it is not possible to make a comparison with other schools, the national test results for in 2006 were not as high, but still reflected a good level of achievement. This is because this group had a very high proportion of pupils with learning difficulties. In addition, one in five of pupils joined the school during Year 6 and many were new to this country. The current Year 6 pupils are on track to reach significantly above average standards in 2007.

Achievement is good. Pupils make good overall progress as they move through the school. They do particularly well in developing skills in ICT because of the way skills build up and are used to support pupils' understanding in other subjects. High quality support ensures that all pupils make marked progress what ever their ability. Teachers' improved knowledge of how pupils learn English as an additional language are effective in helping this group to achieve very well.

Higher and middle attaining pupils do especially well in all subjects. Lower attaining pupils, including those with learning difficulties make good progress in English and science but, in mathematics, their progress is only satisfactory because they sometimes find the work too hard.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Personal development is good. The school's Catholic ethos enhances pupils' well-being effectively. Pupils enjoy school, grow in confidence and develop positive attitudes. By the time they leave the school they have high self-esteem and strong academic and personal skills. They are well prepared for their future lives.

Pupils' spiritual and cultural development is good. Pupils explore their imaginations, feelings and develop creativity well, especially through art and music. Their moral and social development is very good. Pupils have a clear understanding about right and wrong and show respect for each other whatever their cultural or religious background. Pupils understand about how to overcome bullying if it should occasionally occur. They express their feelings well and have a clear understanding about how to be safe in the community.

Pupils behave well and care for each other. For example, some are responsible for being 'buddies' to new entrants and this helps pupils to settle quickly. Pupils take their responsibilities seriously as evident in their charitable fundraising work and contribution to the community, notably, by performing at the Albert Hall and by

helping younger pupils with their reading. The school is working to further develop pupils' responsibilities within the school's council. Sports activities are popular and ensure that pupils develop teamwork, cooperation and fitness. They are beginning to understand about healthy eating.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

The quality of teaching and learning is good with outstanding features in how pupils learn literacy skills. Teachers plan English lessons especially well so that pupils' speaking skills are given high priority in lessons. Pupils learn reading, writing, grammar and punctuation skills successfully because teachers explain these in a very clear and meaningful way. As a result, pupils make brisk progress. Those who speak English as additional language are well supported in lessons and quickly begin to use more complex sentences.

Teachers have good knowledge of the subjects taught and make learning meaningful and fun so pupils enjoy lessons. Teachers have high expectations and lessons are brisk, resulting in pupils being attentive and eager to learn. Good relationships, regular praise and effective marking of pupils' work also help to motivate pupils. Teachers and pupils make very good use of ICT resources to support learning.

Teachers make good use of use assessment information to plan activities that are mostly matched well to pupils' learning needs. However, in mathematics some lower attaining pupils do not have enough guidance and practical activities to ensure that they make good progress.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The interesting and varied curriculum is well planned and enables all groups of pupils to enjoy learning and achieve well. Provision in English and ICT is outstanding because skills are built progressively and they are linked well with other subjects. Specialist teachers provide good support for sport, music, French and Spanish. A good range of clubs, links with the community, visits and special events, such as 'Mini Wimbledon Week,' and opera workshops support pupils' personal development very well. However, some visits are not planned to link closely with class topics. The school's 'Here I Am' programme, circle times and assembly themes enrich pupils' personal development.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 2**

Pastoral care and guidance are good. Child protection and health and safety requirements are rigorous. Teachers know their pupils well and carefully monitor their progress. Teachers provide good guidance, which helps pupils to improve. Pupils know

their targets both for their academic work and their personal development. They are encouraged to discuss their feelings, anxieties and problems. However, the school recognises that there is more to be done and is in the process of identifying 'Learning Mentors' to further develop this aspect of care. Visiting specialists and welfare agencies make a strong contribution to the care and support of pupils. The needs of English as additional language learners are identified swiftly and effective support helps them to make quick progress. Attractive displays enhance pupils' cultural awareness and give good support to learning.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher shows clear vision and has high expectations for the academic, personal development and care of pupils. She is effectively supported by all managers and staff. Teamwork is strong. Parents agree that the school is well led.

Leaders and managers have an accurate view of the school. Effective use of assessment data, monitoring of lessons and evaluation of results mean that their self-evaluation is good. They take into account pupils' and parents' views of the school. For example, this has helped to improve the behaviour management programme. Pupils think that sanctions and rewards are better. They say, 'It's fair because you get a warning, try your best and start each day fresh.' The school has taken effective action to address the issues raised at the time of the last inspection and has a clear and appropriate plan for further development. The school shows a good capacity to improve, as reflected in how standards, particularly in English and ICT, have improved.

Governance is satisfactory. Governors are keen and are working well to improve their role. They accurately recognise that their involvement in monitoring the school's work is at an early stage of development. They have appropriate plans to deal with this.

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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

You may remember that three inspectors came to your school recently to find out how well you were doing. Thank you for being so friendly and telling me about your school. I am writing to let you know what we found out.

Your school is a good school where you are well cared for and you clearly value all that the staff do for you. Teaching is good because teachers understand how to make learning interesting and clear. This helps you to make good progress. By the time you finish school in Year 6, standards of work are much higher than we usually see, which is a credit to you for working hard and is also a tribute to the way your teachers make learning challenging. Your teachers do especially well in helping you to learn important English and ICT skills. Well done for working so hard on these things because they will help you to be ready for secondary school. You behave well and this is a great credit to you all. We know that you are very pleased with the new sanctions and rewards and were delighted to hear that your teachers and governors listened to your views and ideas about how to improve these. Well done for being so polite, respectful, and helpful to each other.

Most importantly, your headteacher and all of the staff and governors are working especially hard to make the school even better for you. We have asked them to give some of you who find learning mathematics difficult more practical activities and support, so that you can make quicker progress.

Keep up with all of your sports activities because they are helping you to be fit and healthy. We especially enjoyed hearing about your 'Mini Wimbledon Week' and your musical activities. These are very exciting and help you to enjoy learning.

Yours sincerely

Wendy Simmons

Lead inspector