



St Joseph's RC Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 101045
Local Authority Wandsworth
Inspection number 285954
Inspection dates 10–11 October 2006
Reporting inspector Lynn Bappa

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	90 Oakhill Road
School category	Voluntary aided		London
Age range of pupils	3–11		SW15 2QD
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	02088741888
Number on roll (school)	227	Fax number	02088705900
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr John McHugo
		Headteacher	Mrs Yvonne Wozniak
Date of previous school inspection	17 September 2001		

Age group 3–11	Inspection dates 10–11 October 2006	Inspection number 285954
--------------------------	---	------------------------------------

© Crown copyright 2006

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

St Joseph's is situated in a disadvantaged part of Putney. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is much higher than average. A high proportion of pupils is from minority ethnic groups and a high percentage speaks a first language other than English. The main languages represented in the school are Polish and Portuguese. An above average number of pupils join or leave the school other than at normal times. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is well above the national average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

St Joseph's is an improving school that gives a satisfactory standard of education to its pupils. It has begun to recover from a two year period when standards fell significantly. In 2005, the results achieved by pupils in Year 2 were well below average and showed significant under-achievement. The provisional results for 2006, however, show that standards by the end of Year 2 have improved considerably and are now below average. Achievement in Years 1 and 2 is now satisfactory. Standards in Years 3 to 6 have also begun to rise, but more slowly. National test results for pupils in Year 6 were well below average in 2005 and again in 2006. Current pupils in Year 6, however, are working at standards that are below average and their achievement is now satisfactory. The school is on its way to meeting its challenging targets and satisfactorily prepares pupils for the next stage of their education.

At the heart of this school lies a commitment to Catholic values. Pupils feel safe, welcomed and cared for from the start. Most attend school regularly, enjoy lessons and other activities, and make good progress in their personal and social skills. As one pupil commented, 'I learn something new everyday'.

While teaching and learning are satisfactory, the school is rightly keen to improve the quality to good and better in order to raise standards further. Recent improvements to teaching have accelerated progress in lessons, but have not had time to make an impact on national test results. Another reason why teaching results in satisfactory, rather than good progress is that teachers do not ensure that pupils listen well enough in lessons.

The curriculum meets the needs of the pupils and promotes their personal skills well. Senior leaders make good use of data to track the progress of pupils in different year groups and subjects, but teachers do not yet make consistent enough use of this information to set targets for pupils so that they understand what they need to do to progress further.

The headteacher has a clear focus on raising standards and ensuring pupils do as well as they can. She knows the school well and is quietly determined that pupils' achievements must not be allowed to slip again. There is a tangible sense of determination to do better. The drive to improve standards is supported by subject leaders but at the moment they do not play a rigorous enough part in checking and evaluating work in their areas. The school has begun to provide training to help them to become more involved. The school has successfully tackled the issues for improvement from the last inspection. The success of the recent drive to raise standards in Years 1 and 2 provides a clear indication of the school's sound capacity to improve.

What the school should do to improve further

* Involve all teachers in making better use of data to track progress and set targets so that pupils in all year groups achieve as well as possible.

* Improve the quality of teaching and learning so that a greater proportion is good or better.

* Improve pupils' listening skills.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Achievement is satisfactory. Pupils enter the school with much lower levels of skills than pupils in most schools. The achievement of pupils in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory, although standards are still below average when they enter Year 1. Standards at the end of Year 2 are below what is expected for pupils of this age. This represents satisfactory progress, given their low starting points. Last year's national test results for pupils in Year 6 were well below average, particularly in mathematics, and showed significant under-achievement. The school has started to tackle this problem. Although there is more to do, the steps taken to raise standards are already beginning to bear fruit. Inspection evidence and the school's own data shows that standards are now below average and pupils of all abilities make satisfactory progress in lessons. There are no major differences in the progress made by different groups of pupils, including those with English as an additional language. Pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities gain the basic skills for learning and make satisfactory progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Personal development and well being are good. Pupils are proud of their school, feel safe and use the school buildings and equipment sensibly. There is a sense of calm throughout the school. Pupils are well behaved, friendly and eager to enjoy all the school has to offer. They report bullying, if it occurs, and play and work together happily. As one pupil commented, 'Everyone is treated equally here'. They participate enthusiastically in sporting activities and show a good understanding of which foods are good for you. The school is working very hard with parents to ensure that their children attend regularly. As a result, attendance has improved, although, despite the school's best efforts, it remains just below average.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They enjoy assemblies and benefit from good opportunities to reflect and pray. They express concern for the needs of others and show a good understanding of life in multi-cultural Britain. Pupils make a good contribution to the school community through the school council and as 'Eco Warriors.' They contribute well to the wider community through supporting the local hospice.

Pupils' positive attitudes and satisfactory achievement in basic skills prepare them soundly for the next stage in their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching has recently improved. This means that all groups of pupils now make satisfactory progress in their learning. Teachers prepare their lessons well, making good use of resources such as inter-active whiteboards to enhance the quality of learning. Classroom relationships are good and teachers strive to promote a productive learning atmosphere where pupils can take responsibility for their learning. Sometimes, however, teachers tend to direct pupils' learning rather than giving them opportunities to develop their problem-solving skills. There is now a clear and consistent structure to lessons and teachers use a good variety of activities and resources to capture learners' interest. The pace of learning, however, is not always fast enough.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Curricular provision is good. The curriculum in the Foundation Stage promotes effective learning and the improved outdoor play area is having a beneficial impact on children's progress. Teachers' planning has improved and is now good. More remains to be done in this area, however, to show more precisely how the learning needs of different groups of pupils are to be met. Particular strengths in the curriculum are the teaching of French and philosophy and the use of specialist teachers to teach sports such as Gaelic football. There are good enrichment opportunities and pupils enthusiastically attend extra-curricular activities such as the chess club.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory with some good features. The good personal development of the pupils is a result of strong pastoral leadership at all levels. It is clear that every child matters at St Joseph's. There are good procedures for child protection. Children who enter the school during the course of the year are very well supported and consequently settle quickly. Pupils with learning difficulties as well as those speaking a first language other than English receive sound support and guidance. These aspects are praised by parents, one of whom commented, 'I have a child with special needs. I feel that my child is a real part of the school community'.

The academic guidance for pupils is not as good as it should be because the school's systems for setting challenging targets for each individual to achieve are under-developed.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The school has developed effective procedures for monitoring and evaluating its work but these have not yet resulted in ensuring that all pupils make good progress. Standards are rising although they are still below average. The headteacher has steered the school well through a difficult period. While it is still too early to see the full impact of recent initiatives, there are many signs of improvement, and the school is in a sound position to build on them. Governors are supportive and have a growing understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. The school works well with a wide range of partners, including the Church and neighbouring schools. Parents are generally very positive about the school's work. However, a very small minority believes that the school should be more mindful of their views.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	-----------------------

Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	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	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

¹ 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

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
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

I'd like to begin by thanking you all for making us so welcome when we came to visit your school. Well done for this! Your comments and answers to questions were really useful in helping us get to know your school better and to write our report. We found that yours is a satisfactory school that is getting better. Standards are rising. During your time in the school you make satisfactory progress. You said you were happy in school and enjoy being there, and your parents and carers think this too. We think you get on well with each other and with the adults who work in your school. We also think you care for each other really well and that your teachers look after you very successfully.

One of the main reasons your school is improving is that your headteacher, supported by the teachers and governors, is determined to make sure the school does better and that standards are higher. We have suggested a number of things the school can do to improve, and you can help your teachers with these. We think your teachers need to make better use of the targets they give you to help you make even better progress. We think that too many of you chatter in lessons when you should be listening to each other or to the teacher - you can help your teachers by trying to listen more carefully so that you don't miss anything important. We think your teachers have worked hard to make lessons better so that you learn more quickly. We have asked them to carry on doing this, so that even more lessons are good ones.

I hope you work hard and enjoy the coming year.

Yours sincerely

Dr Lynn Bappa

Lead Inspector