



St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 101235
Local Authority Barking and Dagenham
Inspection number 286003
Inspection dates 1–2 March 2007
Reporting inspector Alan Jarvis

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	The Broadway
School category	Voluntary aided		Barking
Age range of pupils	3–11		IG11 7AR
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	020 8270 6474
Number on roll (school)	250	Fax number	020 8270 6478
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mrs Teresa Baumann
		Headteacher	Mr Jim Sims
Date of previous school inspection	8 May 2001		

Age group 3–11	Inspection dates 1–2 March 2007	Inspection number 286003
--------------------------	-------------------------------------------	------------------------------------

© Crown copyright 2007

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

This Catholic school serves a socially deprived area. Its intake has markedly changed to include an increasing number of pupils who have significant additional needs. Around three-quarters of pupils come from a minority ethnic background. The largest groups are of Black African or Black Caribbean heritage. Most speak English fluently with a few at an early stage of speaking the language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is typical of most schools nationally and increasing. More join or leave outside normal admission times than in most schools. Standards on entry are lower than at the last inspection and are currently below those expected for children of their age.

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 provides a satisfactory and improving standard of education. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory and standards are average by the end of Year 6. Standards are rising because teaching is improving under the good direction of the leadership. Parents think well of the school, feel welcomed and say, 'It is an oasis of calm in what can be a turbulent world outside'. Due to the changing nature of the intake the headteacher has focused on meeting the challenging needs of those pupils with behavioural, emotional, social, learning and language needs. This has paid dividends in terms of the good progress and personal development of these pupils.

This welcoming school caters successfully for all pupils, regardless of their backgrounds. Care and support are of the highest quality and result in excellent spiritual, moral and cultural development within a strong Catholic ethos. Good levels of attendance reflect how much pupils enjoy coming to school. Although most pupils behave well at all times, behaviour is satisfactory overall. This is because a few sometimes do not listen or are restless in class and this interrupts learning.

Children make the best possible start in the Nursery class. Overall provision in the Foundation Stage is good and ensures children are prepared well for learning in Year 1. Most pupils in Years 1 and 2 make satisfactory progress in reading, writing and mathematics. In Years 3 to 6 pupils continue to make sound progress in English. Results improved in mathematics in 2006 and pupils now achieve well in this subject. Standards have lagged behind in science but the introduction of more practical work is starting to improve the standards attained. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities achieve well because of the carefully focused support they receive. Although teachers are beginning to set challenging work for the more able pupils this is not done consistently well. As a result, not enough reach the higher levels in their work.

The school is now benefiting from more stable staffing and a core of experienced teachers, supported by well focused leadership. Teaching has a satisfactory impact on standards but not enough sparkles and ensures all groups of pupils are working to the upper limits of their capabilities. More learning needs to be good if standards and achievement are to continue to rise. A satisfactory curriculum is offered but it is enriched well which impacts well on pupils' personal development.

Good leadership and management at all levels have already strengthened many aspects of pupils' personal development and well being. The good steps being taken to improve teaching and the curriculum have already helped standards and achievement rise in some areas and are beginning to be felt more widely. Governance is good. The school has made good strides since the last inspection and has a good capacity to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure teachers provide greater challenge for the more able pupils.
- Bring standards in science in line with those in English and mathematics.
- Enliven teaching and increase the proportion which is good or better by focusing on setting more challenging work.

- Ensure behaviour is consistently good in all classes.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Achievement is satisfactory. Standards are average. Following good progress in the Foundation Stage many pupils enter Year 1 having reached the expectations for their age in most areas of learning, particularly in their personal, social and emotional development. However, their communication and mathematical skills are not as high as those expected for their age. Standards at the end of Year 2 are average in reading and writing and close to average in mathematics. This represents satisfactory achievement from the starting point for this group of pupils. Satisfactory progress is maintained in Year 3 to 6, although the more able could do better if some of their work was more challenging. The good support given to pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities and those with other additional needs are helping them make good progress and standards to rise. Good support for pupils who need help with their language development is helping to sustain average standards in English. Standards have already risen in mathematics through better planning and a focus on problem solving and investigations. However, standards in science are below average. The recent focus on experimental and investigative science is starting to help standards rise but there is still some way to go.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Most pupils respond positively to the strong school ethos of 'care, share and achieve'. Engaging assemblies, strong relationships, and times to reflect support the excellent development of pupils' spiritual and moral awareness. Cultural development is also excellent and is enhanced through the curriculum and by the wide range of arts and musical opportunities. Children in the Foundation Stage get on with each other well and make good strides in their personal development. Throughout the school, pupils enjoy the well-resourced computer suite, and visiting teachers, such as the athletics coach and African dance teacher. Most pupils behave well and develop positive attitudes to their work. Pupils are clear that the behaviour and social development of a few of their peers needs to improve. There is an active school council who say 'We help to make the school a better place.' Pupils effectively contribute to the wider community through charitable work and thinking of others less fortunate than themselves. They have a good awareness of how to stay safe and to live healthy lives as a result of a well thought out programme of personal, social and health education. Pupils' satisfactory basic skills adequately prepare them for the next stage of their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. They are consistently good in the Foundation Stage and improving elsewhere, through good guidance from leaders and managers. Throughout the school attractive classroom environments and consistent approaches to behaviour management underpin a productive climate for learning. Visual resources are now used frequently in class and help enliven learning but some lessons lack a sense of excitement and a good pace to learning. Where teaching assistants are available they effectively support pupils' learning. Marking is of a consistently good standard and pupils say it is helpful. Although there have been recent improvements the more able pupils are insufficiently challenged in their work. Whilst the purpose of each lesson is made clear, some pupils are unsure of what it is they have to learn and achieve by the end of the lesson. Behaviour management, whilst consistently adhering to school policy, is not always of a good quality.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory with some good features that impact well on pupils' personal qualities and learning. The varied clubs which are held are popular and cater for a wide range of interests. The many visitors to the school, opportunities to learn a musical instrument, residential trips and close links with the parish all help to extend pupils' learning and view of the world. Healthy eating and safety are effectively promoted through topics and visits from the emergency services. The curriculum covers all the required subjects. Good steps are being taken to improve it further. For example, more investigations have been introduced into mathematics and science and French is being introduced into Year 3. Information and communications technology is used well in mathematics but insufficiently used in pupils' learning across the curriculum. The curriculum effectively supports pupils with additional learning needs but it does not fully meet the needs of the more able pupils.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Parents appreciate the care their children receive and its impact on their personal development. One parent said, 'The school encourages good behaviour and promotes a calming ethos which I want my children to grow up with'. All staff follow rigorous systems for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare. Excellent relationships between adults and pupils foster confidence and trust. Consequently, pupils feel safe at all times. They say that unkind behaviour is dealt with promptly and effectively by adults. The progress of all groups of pupils is monitored efficiently and the information is used to identify those who need additional support. Extremely good links with outside agencies effectively support vulnerable pupils. Pupils are given good academic

guidance to help them improve their work particularly those with learning difficulties and disabilities or whose first language is not English.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good at all levels. The headteacher is a confident leader who has a clear vision for improvement. He has been particularly successful in prioritising developments to ensure the increasing numbers of pupils with learning, behavioural and language needs make good progress. He is ably supported by senior managers. These include the co-ordinators for special educational needs and children in the Foundation Stage whose work has had a particularly effective impact on improving provision and standards. The mathematics co-ordinator has had a good impact and the improvements other subject leaders are putting in place are also beginning to make a difference.

Through regular monitoring and self-evaluation, areas for improvement and strategies for action are clearly identified. For example, good support and guidance is helping teachers to improve their classroom practice. However, this and a number of other improvement strategies have yet to fully impact upon pupils' achievement and standards, particularly in science and for the more able. Teachers and support staff work effectively as a team and their work is valued by parents and pupils. The impact of their work is best reflected in the excellent care guidance and support and the good personal development of pupils. The governors are clearly aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and are fully involved in monitoring and its longer term strategic development.

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?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
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	2

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	3
The attendance of learners	2
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?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

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?	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	3
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	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
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

Thank you for being so helpful and friendly when we visited your school. We would particularly like to thank the many pupils who took time to talk to us about your school.

Our report says that St Joseph's is a satisfactory and improving school.

- You are fortunate to have such a well respected headteacher who is on the ball and is making sure all of you like coming to school, like your teachers and feel safe.
- You get the best start possible in the Nursery
- The care, guidance and support that the school provides is outstanding and it would be hard for it to be better!
- Your attendance is good. Well done! This shows you know the importance of your education and do your best to attend.
- Pupils from all different backgrounds get on well with each other and you have welcomed the growing numbers from other countries.
- Most of you who need extra help get it and as a result are doing well.
- You have worked hard to improve your standards in mathematics and they are also beginning to improve in English and science.

There are a few things that could be better. We have asked your teachers to work on these areas next.

- Standards in science should be higher. You can all help by further improving your work in scientific investigations as well as developing your scientific language skills.
- Teaching has improved but could be better still. Your teachers will try to make more learning quicker and even more interesting for you. They are also going to make it clearer to you what you need to achieve by the end of each lesson.
- Whilst most of you behave well at all times, a few of you do not. Thank you for pointing this out. Your teachers will work out what they need to do. However, may I ask more of you to act as really good role models for other pupils to follow?
- Finally, more of you ought to be reaching the higher levels in your work. I have asked your teachers to set even more challenging work.

Thank you once again for all your help. Mr Smith and I wish you well in the future.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. Alan JarvisLead inspector