

# St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	100729
<b>Local Authority</b>	Lewisham
<b>Inspection number</b>	307458
<b>Inspection dates</b>	28–29 November 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Jacqueline Krafft HMI

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	256
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Bola Abiwon
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr David Feasey
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	24 September 2001
<b>School address</b>	Crossfield Street Deptford London SE8 3PH
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8692 4836
<b>Fax number</b>	020 8694 6421

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<b>Age group</b>	4-11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

St Joseph's is an average sized primary school that serves the local Catholic community. Most pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds with the largest group of Black African heritage. Almost three quarters of the pupils speak English as an additional language although few are at the early stages of English language acquisition. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals has fallen since the previous inspection but remains higher than found nationally. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is also higher.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Parents and pupils are proud of their improving school. It provides a satisfactory education in an attractive, orderly learning environment. A strong Catholic ethos and celebration of cultural diversity is supported by firm links with the church and local community. These features make a significant contribution to the good personal development and well-being of the pupils. They say they feel safe and well cared for so enjoy coming to school and attend regularly.

Relationships are based on mutual trust and respect, with adults providing good role models, so pupils behave well, are confident and welcoming. As one parent wrote, 'Pupils are encouraged to have a go'.

Pupils make satisfactory progress through the school and by the end of Year 6, standards are broadly average. Pupils make better progress in English because of the extra support they receive. Standards are improving and the school's focus on mathematics resulted in significantly improved results for mathematics in 2007.

The school is determined to ensure that pupils are well prepared for a culturally diverse society and are providing an appropriate curriculum to support this aim. Subjects have been linked through relevant topics and provide pupils with more opportunities to use their literacy and numeracy skills. Good partnerships with the church and other local groups enrich the pupils' learning and contribute to their enjoyment.

Teachers manage classes well. They have good relationships with their pupils and plan lessons to interest and engage them. Pupils particularly enjoy participating in a variety of practical activities and using a range of resources. Although these strengths are evident, teaching is satisfactory overall because tasks and the pace of learning are not consistently well matched to pupils' needs and do not provide them with sufficient challenge. Pupils have targets for improvement but they are too general and marking does not tell pupils precisely what they need to do to improve.

All staff work well together as a team, make good use of advice and training to develop their skills and expertise, and take on new ideas readily. Systems to track the progress pupils make are in place and there is a cycle of monitoring which involves subject leaders. However, these systems are not sufficiently developed to provide the detailed information needed to ensure the school's plan for improvement is sharply focused on the achievement of pupils and how success will be measured.

Improvements in attendance and rising standards, particularly in mathematics in 2007, demonstrate that the school has the satisfactory capacity to make further improvements.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 3

Children make a satisfactory start to their education when they join the school although few have the skills and knowledge expected for their age, particularly in communication, language and literacy. A large proportion of children come from backgrounds where English is an additional language but few are at the early stages of learning English. Children make satisfactory progress because staff are attentive to their personal needs and quickly develop good relationships with them. Activities engage the children's interests so that they are well motivated and behave well. Teaching assistants provide appropriate support for children in small groups. Children's progress is monitored but information is not used consistently to match activities specifically

to children's needs. Leadership of the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. Changes in staffing and the leadership of the Foundation Stage mean that assessment and the use of the outside area are at an early stage of development.

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

- Link improvement planning and monitoring more sharply to the overall achievement of pupils.
- Provide pupils with clear, focused guidance on what they need to do to improve their work.
- Ensure tasks and the pace of learning provide sufficient challenge for all pupils to achieve well.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Standards have improved over the past five years and are broadly average by the end of Year 6. However, fewer pupils attain the highest levels. Results in mathematics in 2007 improved and challenging targets were exceeded because mathematics has been a particular area of focus. Pupils make satisfactory progress from their low starting points as they move through the school. They make better progress in English because pupils are given additional support when needed to develop their literacy skills. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language are provided with appropriate levels of support by teaching assistants so make satisfactory progress.

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

### **Grade: 2**

The social, moral, spiritual and cultural development of pupils is good and a strength of the school. Pupils enjoy school and are proud of it. They embrace the Catholic values which underpin school life. Pupils are inspired by events such as 'International Day' to celebrate the anniversary of the independence of Ghana, and by learning about successful men and women such as Kofi Annan and Rosa Parks. Pupils raise money for charity and are involved in a large number of events in the community and with the church. Behaviour is good both in lessons and around the school because of the high expectations of staff. Attendance has improved since the previous inspection and is good. Pupils say that bullying is very rare and when it does occur, is dealt with firmly by teachers. Pupils feel safe in school and are confident that any concerns will be dealt with appropriately and with kindness. One pupil said of the headteacher, 'He will always get to the bottom of the problem and sort it out'. The school is working towards achieving the Healthy Schools Award and pupils know why it is important to eat healthily and take exercise. The school council plays an important part in the school and feels valued. Pupils develop good personal skills and social awareness which prepares them well for their next steps in education.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Teachers manage classes well and good relationships, respect and rapport are evident across the school. In the good lessons,

pupils are given effective opportunities to share and discuss their ideas. Important vocabulary is explained well, which helps all pupils, particularly those for whom English is an additional language, understand what they will be learning. Practical tasks are carefully planned to interest and engage pupils so they enjoy their learning and work productively. However, there are inconsistencies in the quality of teaching which slow the pace of learning. Teachers do not always provide pupils with tasks that are challenging, particularly for those who are more able, or well matched to their individual learning needs.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum is satisfactory and meets the needs of learners appropriately. It has been reorganised and improved since the previous inspection to provide pupils with opportunities to use their English, mathematics and computer skills through topic work. For example, in history, pupils extend their skills in English by writing reports. The school is working to develop this further. A particular strength of the curriculum is the high profile the school gives to ensuring it reflects the cultural diversity within the school. This makes a good contribution to their self-esteem and prepares them well for life in a multicultural society. Pupils benefit from the specialist sport and dance teaching they receive and value the range of after school clubs on offer. One pupil said, 'I like homework club because sometimes it's not easy to work at home'. Good use is made of the local environment, visits and visitors to make learning relevant and interesting.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

Pupils value the good care that is shown them by staff. This care, together with effective arrangements for safeguarding pupils, helps them feel safe. One pupil reported that the worry box that had been introduced was empty. All staff work hard to overcome the significant barriers to learning that exist for some of the pupils. The school identifies the needs of vulnerable pupils and works well with external agencies to support their learning. There is a clear focus on supporting the pastoral needs of pupils and the learning mentor offers good guidance to pupils who need extra help. Academic guidance is less developed. Procedures for setting targets to help pupils improve are inconsistent. As a result, pupils do not know what how well they are doing or what they need to do to improve.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

The headteacher has developed a positive school ethos where teachers, pupils, parents and governors work in partnership. This ensures there is a shared understanding of the school's main strengths and where improvements need to be made. Staff are provided with relevant training and good use is made of external advice and guidance to develop their skills and expertise. Systems are in place to track the progress pupils make but the school recognises that these are not sufficiently developed to enable rigorous analysis of the rates of progress of all groups of pupils. There is a clear cycle of monitoring, including lesson observations, which involves subject leaders. Information is used to inform planning for improvement but this is not sharply linked to the impact on pupil achievement. Action plans do not identify clear measures against which to evaluate success or monitor progress. Governors are dedicated and

provide good levels of support but weaknesses in the school improvement plan limit the challenge they are able to provide.

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## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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### 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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	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

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?	3

<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.

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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	3
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**

6 December 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Deptford, London, SE8 3PH

Thank you for making us feel so welcome when we visited your school recently. We especially enjoyed looking at your work, seeing you in lessons and talking with so many of you. You were very polite, confident and told us what you thought very clearly.

You and your parents are rightly proud of your school. You enjoy being there because you get on well with each other and enjoy the exciting things you do. You trust and respect the adults and you told us you feel safe and well cared for. You behave well, work hard and enjoy the different after school clubs. Some of you had an interesting day at the Tate Modern. I was also impressed with the class assembly when you shared what you had learnt about the Second World War.

Your headteacher and teachers have made your school a caring and attractive place and you get a satisfactory education. To make it even better, we have asked them to help you make even more progress by making sure the work you are given is challenging enough and that you know exactly what you can do to make it even better. We have also asked them to keep checking that you are making as much progress as you possible can so that they know if they need to do anything differently.

Thank you again for making us so welcome and we hope that you carry on working hard and enjoying being at school.

With very best wishes

Jackie Krafft

Her Majesty's Inspector