

St Joseph's RC Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101133
Local Authority	Westminster
Inspection number	307596
Inspection date	11 June 2008
Reporting inspector	Kekshan Salaria HMI

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	332
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ms Priscilla Sharp
Headteacher	Mr Daniel McDonald
Date of previous school inspection	20 June 2005
School address	Lanark Road Maida Vale London W9 1DF
Telephone number	020 7286 3518
Fax number	020 7289 2303

Age group	3-11
Inspection date	11 June 2008
Inspection number	307596

© Crown copyright 2008

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 one of Her Majesty's Inspectors.

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated achievement and standards, personal development and well-being of pupils, the quality of provision and leadership and management. Inspectors met with staff, governors and pupils. Parts of some lessons were observed, parents' questionnaires were examined and school information, including self-evaluation, was scrutinised. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included in the report, where appropriate.

Description of the school

St Joseph's is a larger than average sized voluntary aided Roman Catholic primary school serving an inner city area. The school is highly oversubscribed. Attainment on entry to the school is variable but is generally below national expectations. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is below the national average. The percentage of pupils from minority ethnic heritages is very high. English is an additional language for nearly half of the pupils, which is a very high proportion. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is well below 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: 1

A parent of a child of this school commented, 'St Joseph's achieves the highest academic standards, bringing about the best in all pupils but does so without sacrificing its loving, caring, nurturing environment.' Inspection evidence fully supports this view. The school evaluates its performance as outstanding, and is right to do so. At the school's core lies a strong Catholic ethos in which individuals are exceptionally well looked after, achieve very high standards and develop very well socially, morally, spiritually and culturally. Parents are overwhelmingly pleased with the school. The highest praise from parents is for the headteacher, 'The Headteacher of this school is wonderful - not only does he know every pupil and parent by name but he personally takes each child into the classroom during the first week of nursery and reception.' The school's excellent reputation in the community reflects the leadership's outstanding commitment to inclusion.

Pupils achieve outstandingly well in this school. They enter the school with levels of skills, knowledge and understanding that are generally below those usually expected for their age. By the end of Years 2 and 6 overall standards in reading, writing and mathematics are exceptionally and consistently high. All groups of pupils make the same outstanding progress; this includes those learning English as an additional language, higher attaining pupils and those with learning difficulties, including those with moderate learning needs or behavioural difficulties. There are several features, which contribute to this excellent achievement. These include the pupils' very strong personal development and positive attitudes towards learning, an outstanding curriculum, excellent tracking of the progress of each pupil and very well focussed support. These factors are underpinned by teaching that is never less than good and is often outstanding throughout the school.

The school uses its resources extremely carefully. A high priority is given to staffing levels and this enables pupils' learning needs to be met very well. For example, the very effective use of a two-teacher system in each class enables staff to target specific groups of pupils. The excellent teaching and learning evident across the school is typified by precise planning which identifies relevant challenging learning objectives for the pupils. Pupils experience a very wide range of interesting activities to help them to learn; in addition, good use is made of local places of interest. As a result, pupils enjoy their lessons very much, are very well motivated and work hard. Teachers use information and communication technology (ICT) effectively and pupils are encouraged to use it to research and present their work. Throughout the school, as well as planning interesting activities, teachers ensure that classrooms are calm and industrious places to work.

The school provides an outstanding curriculum that enriches pupils' learning. Visits to places of interest, including annual residential visits in all of Key Stage 2, and visitors to the school, including specialist teachers make it a thoroughly enjoyable and meaningful experience. For example, 'Construction week' offers pupils the opportunity to explore the intricacies of bridge building coupled with a guided visit to a construction site in the local area. Annual visits from Young Enterprise and financial workshops very effectively develop pupils' financial understanding and future economic well-being. The wide range of extra-curricular activities helps to extend pupils' understanding and enjoyment of the work they do in lessons.

The pupils' academic progress is regularly assessed and rigorously tracked to ensure that no pupil underachieves. Any pupil at risk of falling behind is very well supported to catch up. Pupils

know how well they are doing and what they must do to get better. This is because marking is regular and time is spent talking to pupils about their work and how they can improve. Parents are full of praise for the support and encouragement provided by teachers and one, representing the views of many, reported, 'We have been delighted with the standard of teaching - our son has learnt to read and write very quickly.'

As a result of the high quality of care, guidance and support the school provides, pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. They clearly enjoy their work because all teachers plan lessons extremely well, which ensures pupils find them interesting and with just the right level of difficulty. A comprehensive personal social and health education programme ensures most pupils have an excellent understanding of what is needed for a healthy lifestyle. The school provides a calm, orderly learning environment where pupils feel safe and valued. School council members take their role very seriously and are proud of the changes they have made. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural developments are very strong. Pupils enjoy learning and love coming to school and this is evident in their excellent attendance. They form very good relationships, look after each other and behave exceptionally well. The school works very well with an extensive range of external agencies.

The outstanding leadership and management of the headteacher is the key reason for the continued success of the school. He is a strong presence in the school and his clear vision inspires commitment from all members of the school community. There is a strong sense of energy and enthusiasm, with all staff working as a highly dedicated team for the benefit of the pupils. The school's well-thought out professional development programme, combined with peer teaching enables teachers to flourish. Their innovative ideas are welcomed and their potential is developed so they can they take responsibility early. Self-evaluation is rigorous and accurate and very secure procedures for monitoring and evaluating performance are in place. Governors are fully involved in the life of the school; they share a clear vision for the future success of the school. Capacity to improve is excellent as demonstrated by the continuing high standards and the high quality provision that has been maintained and built upon since the last inspection.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

The provision in the Foundation Stage shares the strengths of the rest of the school. Children are very well looked after and enabled to settle quickly into school. The outstanding organisation, planning and management of the classes lead to children achieving extremely well in all the areas of learning. Excellent use of skilled support staff contributes to the very high quality of teaching and learning and the accurate assessment of progress. The atmosphere for learning, both indoors and outdoors, is very positive. There is a very good emphasis on language acquisition and the development of personal and social skills. Consequently, children, including those with limited English language skills, learn to communicate and socialise effectively.

What the school should do to improve further

- The school has no major weaknesses and has clear plans for a number of things it wishes to improve. The inspector agrees that these form a very good basis for future 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?	1
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?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
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.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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

19 June 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of St Joseph's RC Primary School, London, W9 1DF

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave me when I visited your school recently. I would particularly like to thank those of you that talked with me and told me how you thoroughly enjoy school and how well you are learning. You are right, St Joseph's is an outstanding school.

I checked out many things about your school and this is what I found.

- You really appreciate all of the extra interesting and exciting activities that the school provides for you.
- Your behaviour is excellent and you and your parents and carers are very proud of your school.
- The combination of excellent teaching and your hard work means that you make excellent progress and reach high standards.
- You are very well cared for because you are known and valued as individuals by all who work in the school. Your school is a very safe place and you know that if you have a problem, there is always an adult to talk to.
- Your headteacher runs the school tremendously well and makes sure that everyone learns well together and every child matters. The headteacher wants to keep on improving it and he and the teachers know just how to do that.

Thank you again for making my visit so enjoyable. I hope that you continue to enjoy coming to school, work hard and wish you every success for the future.

Yours sincerely,

Kekshan Salaria

Her Majesty's Inspector