

St Joseph's RC Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101795
Local Authority	Croydon
Inspection number	307812
Inspection dates	23–24 January 2008
Reporting inspector	Marianne Harris

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	239
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Elaine Jones
Headteacher	Miss Giulia De Rosa
Date of previous school inspection	6 May 2003
School address	Woodend London SE19 3NU
Telephone number	020 8653 7195
Fax number	020 8653 0807

Age group	7–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is an average size school that serves pupils from a diverse range of ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils who are an early stage of learning English is higher than usual. The number of pupils with statements of specific need has risen lately and is higher than normal, as is proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. The school has achieved several awards including Artsmark Gold, Healthy Schools and Activemark Gold.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school with some outstanding aspects. Pupils are very proud of their achievements, both personal and academic, all of which are celebrated joyously. Parents comment positively on the strong Catholic ethos that promotes the well-being of every child and encourages them to achieve well.

Pupils enjoy coming to school because lessons are well planned and interesting. Teaching is good. When they join the school pupils have reached standards that are generally average. By the time they leave standards in English, mathematics and science are usually above average. However, the results of national test for mathematics fell in 2007. The school's careful tracking of performance anticipated this dip and their own accurate data shows pupils are now making good progress. National test results show that most pupils achieve well.

Pupils' personal development and well-being is excellent. They have a very good understanding about being healthy and keeping safe, and know that their views are listened to and acted upon. They make an excellent contribution to the school and local community. Behaviour is exemplary and attendance is above average. The pupils are very well prepared for the next stage of their education because basic skills are taught well, information and communication technology knowledge is promoted effectively and personal skills of listening carefully and negotiating are actively encouraged.

The curriculum is excellent. Many parents comment on the very wide range of extra activities, and the fact that pupils are encouraged to attend as many after school clubs as possible. The school has gained an award for the provision for those pupils who are gifted and talented and pupils who are learning English as an additional language are very well supported. Pupils who have learning difficulties and disabilities, including those who have a statement of specific need, have their needs accurately assessed and receive very good support so that they can achieve well.

The staff take very good care of the pupils. There is always someone to listen to pupils' opinions and worries. Parents are kept well informed about how well their children are doing. Individual targets in English and mathematics have been set for all pupils. Those in Years 5 and 6 are clear about these and know what they have to do to reach higher standards. However, pupils in Years 3 and 4 are sometimes a little confused about how they can improve their work.

Good leadership and management, including governance, confident pupils and supportive parents all combine to ensure that the school has a good capacity to improve further. Not only has the headteacher and senior management team been very effective in identifying where improvements need to be made, they have also been extremely successful in promoting pupils' personal development and well-being. Attendance has improved and pupils continue to reach above average standards and achieve well. One parent succinctly summed it up by saying, 'I have nothing but praise for St. Joseph's and will miss not being part of the school next year.'

What the school should do to improve further

- Extend the use of individual targets to Years 3 and 4 so that pupils have a clear understanding about how to improve their work and reach higher standards.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils make good progress and achieve well, whatever their ability. Standards in national tests have been above average over the recent past, although mathematics standards did dip in 2007. The school identified very good reasons for this and has used their comprehensive tracking systems to ensure that pupils make as much progress as possible. Their own data shows that standards remain above average in English and science, and have risen in mathematics so that pupils achieve well in all subjects. Pupils who are at an early stage of learning English make good progress because they are very well supported. The same is true for pupils who have learning difficulties and disabilities. Most able pupils also make good progress because lessons are planned effectively to meet the needs of all pupils in the class or group.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Personal development is outstanding. Pupils' spiritual and moral development based on the school's Catholic ethos is outstanding. They respond positively to the wealth of experiences and opportunities in school and quickly become mature and confident. They learn to understand discrimination and the harm it can do. In an assembly Year 6 pupils read their insightful views on current issues in Kenya with one comparing it to the treatment of Jews in the Second World War. Success in all areas is celebrated in class and through assemblies and their self-esteem is a key priority. Pupils enjoy school and attend regularly. Behaviour is excellent around the school and in classes and they are enthusiastic learners. Pupils understand risks and how to deal with them. They are adventurous and sensible without being fearful. They understand how to eat healthily and the benefits of sport. They take full advantage of the wide variety of sporting opportunities available. Through the many duties such as the excellent school council they contribute well to the school community. Pupils support many charities, are involved with the local church and visit the local old peoples' home to sing carols at Christmas. They are very well prepared for their future education and life outside school.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. Parents comment on the approachability of the staff, and how committed they are. Pupils say that lessons are interesting and they know exactly what they are supposed to learn. They comment that if they have difficulty then teachers helped them think it through. Resources are used effectively to capture the interest of the class and a variety of teaching methods are used. Pupils enjoy practical lessons, as well as those where they can debate issues or look at topics from a different point of view. Much emphasis has been put on encouraging boys to write more and many lessons reflect this by providing exciting themes and activities. Work in books is marked regularly and most contain encouraging remarks as well as ideas on how pupils can improve their work. There are some examples, however, when marking is not of this standard and there are few points for improvement. Teaching assistants are very skilled and provide very good support for pupils with specific needs, meaning that they can fully participate in lessons and achieve well.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The school's curriculum is outstanding. All National Curriculum requirements are met and the programme for promoting personal, social and health education is firmly established and results in pupils' excellent personal development and well-being. The range of extra activities is very impressive. Parents are very pleased with the variety of clubs and the many aspects of learning they cover. They range from sorting and musical activities, to art, homework and board games. Most pupils belong to more than one club and the skills they learn have a significant impact on the standards they reach. For example the standards in art are very high, and pupils sing confidently and expressively. Sporting achievements are many, and the enthusiasm of the pupils who cheerfully turn up early in the morning for running club is commendable. The curriculum is further enhanced by visits into the locality that further support learning. Links with the church emphasise how much the pupils belong to the local community and their sense of self-worth is fostered very effectively.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support for pupils are good. This is a caring school where pupils' safety and well-being are given the highest priority. Robust health and safety, risk assessment and child protection procedures are firmly in place. Effective procedures encourage good attendance and punctuality. Excellent procedures quickly identify those experiencing difficulties. A wide range of support including the school learning mentor ensures that all pupils are kept engaged in education. Pupils with learning difficulties are very well supported and progress well. Pupils' personal and academic progress are closely monitored. In Years 5 and 6 this is used to give individuals clear targets which greatly assist their progress. In Years 3 and 4 this is not as fully developed and pupils are less clear about what to do to reach higher standards.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher has a clear vision for her school based on accurate self-review. The senior leadership team supports the headteacher very well and they work in partnership for the benefit of the pupils. They provide good support for new teachers who quickly settle into their new roles. Systems to monitor and evaluate performance are used well to bring about improvement. This is particularly noticeable in the successful action taken to tackle the fall in mathematics results in 2007. The school has good systems to monitor pupils' academic progress and these are used well to set challenging targets for the older pupils. It is less established for younger pupils and they are less clear about how to improve. The school has taken effective action to address the issues raised at the last inspection and has a clear and appropriate plan for future development. Governance is good. The Governors have a clear understanding of the standards being achieved and provide good support for school improvement. They are actively involved in monitoring the work of the school, working with team leaders to evaluate the outcomes of initiatives.

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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?	2
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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ 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	2

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	2
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?	2
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?	2

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?	2
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	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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	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

04 February 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Joseph's RC Junior School, London, SE19 3NU

Thank you very much for being so helpful and welcoming when we visited your school recently. We are now writing to let you know what we found out.

We think that yours is a good school, and there are many things about it that are fantastic. We think that the opportunities that you get to learn in and out of lessons are excellent. We were very impressed with all the artwork and with the number of you who go to the many clubs and activities. We could have spent a whole day just looking at all the awards for all sorts of programmes and competitions. We secretly thought that you have had extra parts put on the building just to be able to show them all. You are really well behaved, energetic and enjoy learning. Many children told us that this is because the teaching is good and that if you have any difficulties learning there is always someone there to help you. We agree with this and so do your parents.

The adults in school take very good care of you so that you are safe. They have set targets to help you reach higher standards. Children in Years 5 and 6 are very sure about these and know what they have to do to improve their work. We are asking your teachers to make sure that younger children become just as good at reviewing their targets regularly in order to improve their work.

Thank you once again for your help and we wish you good luck in the future.

Marianne Harris

Lead Inspector