

# St Joseph's Catholic Junior School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	103086
<b>Local Authority</b>	Waltham Forest
<b>Inspection number</b>	323752
<b>Inspection date</b>	10 March 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Glynis Bradley-Peat

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>	Junior
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	235
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Miss Jessie Howard
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ms Rosie McGlynn
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	11 October 2005
<b>School address</b>	Vicarage Road Leyton London E10 5DX
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8539 5971
<b>Fax number</b>	020 8556 9668

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

The inspection evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues.

- What were the reasons for the dip in attainment in English in 2008 and the rise in standards in mathematics and science?
- What impact are leaders having on improving the quality of teaching and learning in order to move it towards outstanding?
- What are the strengths in the personal development of pupils and in the curriculum?

Evidence was gathered from analysis of school documentation; observation of lessons; conversations with pupils; and discussions with teachers, a governor and senior staff. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspectors 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 where appropriate in this report.

## Description of the school

The school is of average size and there is extended provision, as the school offers a breakfast club and an after-school club. The school shares close links with a school in a neighbouring local authority. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is higher than is usually found. Most pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds. Just under a third of pupils are learning English as an additional language, which is also above average. The proportion with behavioural, emotional and social and speech and language difficulties is higher than average.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

St Joseph's is a good school where standards are above average and pupils' achievement is good. The hard-working, committed headteacher gives strong leadership to the school and is supported exceptionally well by her talented deputy headteacher. Parents praise the school for its work, and many wrote positive comments, such as 'I am really pleased with the way the school is being managed. The staff are fantastic, well done' and 'We are very pleased with the school and the way it is run.' The excellent care, guidance and support of pupils contribute very well towards their outstanding personal development and well-being. Pupils enjoy school very much, and as one said, 'There are lots of different ways to learn. We enjoy doing experiments and using the computers.' Behaviour is excellent both in and out of classrooms. Attendance is consistently high. Pupils say they feel extremely safe in school: 'If there is any bullying, we tell a teacher and they stop it.' Bullying issues are highlighted during anti-bullying week. Pupils are very aware of internet safety. Safeguarding and risk assessments are in place. They readily adopt healthy lifestyles and praise the quality of the school lunches. They say quite clearly, 'You are what you eat.' Pupils say they have enjoyed visiting places of interest and appreciate the chance to learn more about the environment. They particularly enjoy the residential visits to a youth retreat centre, where the main focus is on personal and social education, with a strong spiritual dimension.

The school has made good improvement in the areas indicated by the last inspection and has good capacity to continue doing so. High-quality help is provided for pupils with a variety of learning difficulties or at an early stage of learning English. Data are used much more effectively to raise achievement. Clear, measurable, challenging targets are set to ensure that all pupils make good progress. The school is making good progress towards meeting these. The system used by the school to track pupil progress is easy for staff to use, and effectively pinpoints those pupils in need of extra help. One boy said, 'There is lots of support to help us if we get stuck.' The school offers a number of classes to boost attainment, both within and in addition to the normal school day. The majority of pupils know and understand their targets. Pupils spoke clearly about how termly targets are set for them in literacy and mathematics, and say, 'When we meet our targets, we get stickers or stars on the internet.'

Pupils enter the school with just above average starting points. Many make good progress overall, particularly in mathematics and science. Standards in mathematics and science are higher than in English. This is because there has been a dip in performance in writing. The school has already begun to address this and has reintroduced the 'Big Writing' strategy, and is looking to improve the opportunities for writing more extensively across the curriculum in other subjects. This is beginning to have an impact, but there is still work to be done in this area. Currently, the school's tracking data show that there is an increase in the percentage of pupils in Year 6 who are making good progress compared to 2008. Mathematics and science results are above average, because teachers' approaches to learning have changed and now focus well on investigative and problem-solving work.

Together with governors, senior leaders have identified the important areas for development, and school self-evaluation is effective. The governing body is well informed about the school and keeps a close eye on how priorities are dealt with. They care about the school and hold it to account. Performance management is well established and targets are effectively linked to pupils' progress and achievement. All pupils, including those with severe learning difficulties, those with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties, and those with speech and language

difficulties, benefit from the school's commitment to provide equal, stimulating opportunities for every child. The school seeks to include all learners in everything it does. However, the role of middle leaders in monitoring and developing teaching and learning is less well developed. There has been little opportunity for them to gain first-hand evidence of the impact of their actions in the classroom.

Links with other schools, higher education institutions and the local Catholic church are extremely well developed. For example, gifted and talented pupils in Year 5 have attended weekly mathematics lessons at the local secondary school, which has also been responsible for gaining the funding for an allotment which St Joseph uses. Parent partnerships are strong. Over the past years, the school has run courses in family literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology (ICT). The school is currently working towards the International School Award and has developed global links with Canada and the USA, Hungary, Austria and Norway. There are close links with the local football club, which provides a number of activities for the pupils - for example, multi-skills coaching and learning through a football programme with an ICT theme. This has been very popular with the pupils. Recently, the school has trialled a community cohesion project which the secondary school facilitated. This involved 15 pupils from St Joseph's working alongside 15 pupils from another local primary school on an art project. Pupils contribute very well to the community. The school council is effective and pupils take their duties seriously. They are pleased with the improvements made to toilets and playground equipment, for example, and are proud of their fund-raising activities. Pupils' preparation for their economic well-being is excellent. Their basic skills are above average and they work well together on projects to develop their business skills. During a Maths Week, pupils bought and sold fruit at playtimes, constructed graphs of sales, and discussed what would have encouraged more profits. Towards the end of the year, during a Healthy School week, some pupils organised a lemonade-making business, where they bought the raw ingredients, made the lemonade and sold it at a profit.

Teaching and learning are good. Teachers plan carefully, and many make the learning interesting by organising lessons into a series of activities which are timed well. Teachers set clear lesson objectives so that pupils know clearly what they are about to learn. Opportunities for paired and group working are good, and pupils have scope in all lessons to exercise their speaking and listening skills. This is helpful to those whose first language is not English. Overall, teachers' questioning skills are good. They manage their classes well and develop good relationships with pupils, resulting in a purposeful atmosphere for learning. Occasionally, lessons lose pace because teaching is not demanding enough. Marking is carried out regularly and effectively in literacy and mathematics, and pupils like the time that teachers give them to read any comments that have been written at the beginning of lessons. Pupils say that this feedback 'helps us to improve our work.' However, marking in science and the humanities is not as good.

The good curriculum gives pupils many opportunities to participate in the life of the school through a wide variety of extra-curricular clubs. This they really appreciate. During the year, special curricular events are organised. These have a good impact on the personal development of pupils. The annual International Day, for instance, sees pupils performing dances which represent many different countries and heritages. The school makes good use of specialist teachers, for example in music. German is taught in Years 3 and 4, and Spanish in Years 5 and 6. The variety of subjects enhances pupils' enjoyment of school. There are a number of visitors to the school, which pupils enjoy. In Year 6, pupils receive a talk from a fire officer and also are offered the opportunity to complete a cycling proficiency course. Trips out offer further enrichment. Pupils attend the Media Unit in the local secondary school, where they learn how

to produce films on a topic of their choice. However, opportunities to work in a cross-curricular way, for example to practise writing for a purpose across a variety of subjects, are sometimes missed.

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

- Ensure that plans in place to provide pupils with more opportunities to practise writing in different subject areas are developed.
- Empower middle leaders to monitor and evaluate the impact of the work they do more effectively.

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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 <sup>1</sup> 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/or disabilities make progress	2

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<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.



## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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
The extent to which 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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	2
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?	1

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	1
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

**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

23 March 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Joseph's Catholic Junior School, London, E10 5DX

Thank you very much for the polite and courteous reception you gave to me when I recently visited your school. Another thank you to those of you who spent time talking to me - you told me lots of interesting things about your school. You told me about all the clubs and activities that you can take part in, and how much you enjoy them. You do lots of good work in the community too, such as raising money for charity, and your school council has a good influence on decorating the toilets and getting more playground equipment. I was impressed by how grown up some of you were. What a credit to the school you are!

Your parents filled in many questionnaires for me to look at, and they really think that St Joseph's is a good school. I agree with them. The teachers in your school do a good job and teach you well. You help them to do this because you are so well behaved. Your headteacher and her deputy do a good job and keep a very close eye on everything that happens in your school, so that they can keep making it better for you. Even in a good school like yours there are a few things which could be even better, and I have asked your headteacher to concentrate on them. When you do your writing, I have asked your headteacher to ensure that you write more in subjects other than literacy, for example in geography and history. Your headteacher and deputy headteacher work extremely hard, and I have asked that they help some of the other teachers to assist them more in their work, for example by looking at what you are doing in the classroom. I am sure that the headteacher, her deputy and her assistant headteacher will do their best to make sure that these things happen.

Once again, thank you for helping to make my visit such a pleasant one. I wish you all the success you deserve in the future.

Yours faithfully

Glynis Bradley-Peat

Lead Inspector