

St Joseph's Catholic Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100853
Local Authority	Southwark
Inspection number	335604
Inspection dates	8–9 October 2009
Reporting inspector	Sarah McDermott

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 of pupils on the school roll	232
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Father David Gibbons
Headteacher	Mrs Shelagh Kelly
Date of previous school inspection	7 September 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 12 lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at the data the school had collected on pupils' progress, the school development plan and procedures for keeping pupils safe. Over 150 parental questionnaires were returned and analysed.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- whether girls, pupils of Black African heritage and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities were making the same good progress as other pupils
- the impact of leadership and management at all levels in contributing to the school's improvement
- whether pupils had sufficient links with their local neighbourhood and children from other faiths.

Information about the school

St Joseph's Junior is an average-sized school situated in a multi-ethnic area of Camberwell. A very high proportion of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds, particularly of Black African origin. Nearly three quarters of pupils do not speak English at home, but few are at the early stages of learning English. More pupils than average are eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils who need extra help because they learn slowly, find it difficult to concentrate or have difficulty with speech is higher than in most primary schools. The school has gained the Healthy Schools award.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

St Joseph's Catholic Junior is a satisfactory school, with the pastoral needs of all pupils very much at its heart. Pupils, parents and staff show great affection for their school. One parent commented, 'I am proud that my children go to St Joseph's ' it emphasises spiritual well-being, which is so vital for their everyday life.' The inspectors agree that the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is good. The pupils are a pleasure to be with. They are polite and courteous and behave very well. Pupils from many different ethnic and social backgrounds get on together very well. One pupil told us, 'My school is lovely because everyone is friendly.' It is not surprising that attendance rates are high. Pupils lead safe and healthy lives and willingly take on responsibilities around the school. The headteacher and governors realise that pupils' knowledge of other faiths beyond Christianity is limited and is starting to develop stronger links in the local neighbourhood.

In the last two years the headteacher has worked effectively to address underachievement and move the school forward. Pupils make satisfactory progress in their learning and leave school with standards generally in line with national averages. A specific focus on mathematics has reaped rewards with improved performance in the Year 6 tests in the summer of 2009. The school also improved the standards of writing for this year group, but progress in writing has not been sufficiently consistent in other classes. A particularly successful contributory factor has been the more accurate use of assessment data to identify which pupils need extra support to help their learning. Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory. The good, verging on excellent, practice of some teachers is not sufficiently replicated in all classes. The rapport between teacher and pupil is trusting and positive, but the pace and productivity of learning is not always urgent enough and the independence of pupils is sometimes hampered by over-direction from the teacher. Marking is always encouraging and is starting to give pupils guidance on how they can improve their work.

The headteacher is developing an effective senior leadership team, with carefully planned delegation of duties. Much-improved use of data is allowing the senior leaders to have an accurate overview of the school's performance. However, the monitoring of teaching and learning by senior leaders is not sufficiently rigorous to enable them to highlight what the school needs to do to improve the quality of teaching at a faster rate. Training sessions for teachers are regular, but there are too few opportunities for teachers to experience excellent teaching practice within or beyond the school. Since the last inspection, the school has made satisfactory progress in tackling the areas for improvement. Following a time of staff change and a dip in achievement, there is now a trend of improvement. Consequently, the school has satisfactory capacity for sustained

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improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning in order to raise achievement by:
 - moving learning along at a smarter pace
 - ensuring all pupils have a chance to be more independent in their learning
 - making sure that marking consistently gives pupils pointers on how they can improve their learning.
- Develop the roles of senior leaders in evaluating the quality of teaching and learning so that teachers are supported in improving their techniques through:
 - well-planned and effective professional development
 - more opportunities to experience the best practice inside and outside the school.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils arrive at school in the morning with happy, smiling faces eager to meet their friends and get down to learning. Most pupils arrive on time, although a few find it difficult to be punctual. Pupils behave well, particularly in lessons. Sometimes pupils can be over-boisterous in the playground but games equipment, such as skipping ropes and hoops, help pupils make the most of the fresh air. There have been no exclusions for several years. There is very little bullying in the school. If any arises, pupils know who to turn to and trust that it will be dealt with effectively by the staff. Pupils from many different ethnic and social backgrounds get on very well together. The school reports that there are no incidents of racism. Pupils have sufficient timetabled gym and games lessons to promote healthy living. They know what to eat to help them keep in good health and are quick to make suggestions about improvements to school lunches. Within school, pupils willingly take on responsibilities, for example, as councillors and prefects. They show high levels of concern for the less fortunate by collecting money for national charities. However, the inspectors agree with their wish to have more opportunities to support local initiatives in their neighbourhood and to have further links with children from other faiths. By the time pupils leave in Year 6, they are mature, sensible and well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Pupils learn satisfactorily in lessons. They have respect and affection for their teachers. One boy commented, 'I enjoy my lessons because I like the teachers and they are always there for you.' Pupils are interested to hear what the teachers have to say and follow instructions carefully. A few lose concentration when teachers dominate the lesson and talk too much. When teachers plan interesting activities that capture the pupils' imagination, as in a Year 6 writing lesson based on science fiction or in a Year 4 information and communication technology lesson designing leaflets for younger children, pupils acquire knowledge and develop understanding well. However, in some lessons pupils' sense of urgency in picking up new skills is less evident and productivity lags. Inspectors agree with a few of the more able pupils who said they would like to have the chance to plan and organise how they learn, rather than wait to be told what

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to do. Pupils appreciate having targets, but as they are newly introduced they are not yet reliably used by pupils to practise their skills in writing and mathematics across other subjects.

Groups of pupils, including boys and girls and those from a Black African background, make satisfactory progress during their time at school. However, the rate of progress differs between year groups because of the varying quality of teaching in different classes. Pupils with special needs and/or disabilities and those who do not speak English at home make similar progress to their classmates.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teachers plan lessons carefully with the aid of accurate and up-to-date information on the progress pupils are making. Work is generally matched well to pupils' differing abilities, although more able pupils do not have enough scope to tackle their tasks independently and at their own pace. At the end of each lesson, teachers routinely assess how well pupils have picked up new skills and amend the next day's teaching plans accordingly. Teachers are starting to encourage pupils to check their own and

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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their peers' work. The exemplary marking practice of a few teachers in always suggesting ways pupils can improve their work is not yet consistent across the school. A notable strength of teaching is the how teachers never rush pupils, but give them time to think about the answers to questions. On the other hand, mundane tasks, such as cutting out shapes, can take too long and detract from productive learning. Several teachers use the interactive whiteboards well to engage pupils and boost achievement. Certain aspects of the curriculum are very popular and give the pupils experiences beyond the norm. Of particular note are samba drum sessions, visiting the Houses of Parliament, learning French and studying philosophy. The school is introducing different ways to improve writing across the curriculum; these have proved more successful in some year groups than others. In a good Year 5 lesson, pupils used presentation software very effectively to link writing, skills in information and communication technology and religious knowledge to produce deeply thoughtful 'My Faith' stories. The range of clubs and activities beyond lessons not as wide-ranging as that found in most primary schools.

Parents hand over their children in the morning in the confident knowledge that their children will be well looked after. Inspectors agree with one member of staff who wrote, 'The school is a safe haven where children have a routine and are surrounded by people who value and care for them.' The pastoral care of the pupils is second to none, based on a strong Catholic faith. Vulnerable pupils receive special help through effective links with outside agencies. The keeping of records to back up care, guidance and welfare is satisfactory. The site is safe and secure and welfare arrangements are effective.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and her senior management team have a clear vision of how they want to drive the school forward and communicate this well to staff and parents. The school development plan accurately identifies what needs to be bettered. Good work has been done in improving the gathering and use of data to ensure that pupils falling behind are helped to catch up. A start was made last year in addressing the inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and learning. Monitoring of teaching is regular. However, subject leaders are not yet effective in ensuring that they successfully support teachers through well-directed training programmes, including opportunities to share good practice by observing excellent teachers in school or experiencing innovative

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approaches in other schools. The chair of governors is knowledgeable and challenges the school to tackle weaknesses. Other governors are beginning to be more visible and to increase their strategic management role.

The school has a very positive relationship with most parents and works hard to communicate with the few who are not at ease with the education system. Parents attend class assemblies, masses and end-of-term productions in good numbers. Effective partnerships with outside agencies, such as social services or special needs experts, means that pupils at risk from harm or who are falling behind in their learning are helped to get back on track. Academic outcomes for pupils are benefiting from a close link between local authority and school. The safeguarding of pupils meets requirements. Staff appointments are rigorously checked and all staff know the correct child protection procedures.

No pupil is excluded from the opportunity to participate in any activity. One mother reported, 'The headteacher is a wonderful role model on how to treat all pupils equally.' The school analyses data carefully to ensure both boys and girls, and pupils from different ethnic backgrounds, all achieve as well as each other. The headteacher and her staff have a clear understanding of their Catholic community and the ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds of their pupils. They actively promote cohesion within the school community and are now looking to extend their pupils' experience of how children of other faiths and backgrounds live in the Camberwell area.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Views of parents and carers

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Parents who returned questionnaires or spoke to the inspection team are very pleased with the school. They consider that the headteacher and all the staff are very approachable and make the school a welcoming and friendly place. Inspectors fully endorse these views. The vast majority of parents believe their children are making sufficient progress and the school is meeting their needs.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Joseph's Catholic Junior School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 152 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 232 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	110	73	42	28	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	100	66	51	34	1	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	95	63	55	36	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	75	49	74	49	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	92	61	58	38	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	80	53	65	43	3	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	63	41	84	55	1	1	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	74	49	65	43	4	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	62	41	82	54	3	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	80	53	68	45	4	3	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	59	39	75	49	10	7	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	80	53	69	45	1	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	104	68	46	30	1	1	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



12 October 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Joseph's Catholic Junior School, Camberwell SE5 0TS

We thoroughly enjoyed our visit to your school. Thank you very much for helping with the inspection by talking to us and showing us what you can do. We agree with your parents that you are in safe hands and we know that you enjoy school.

You get on very well with your teachers and friends. We were impressed with the way you all work and play so well together, whatever your language or home country. Your behaviour is good and we are delighted to see that your attendance is higher than that of most schools. You know how to lead safe and healthy lives. We were especially impressed with how mature and sensible you are by the time you leave Year 6.

You make satisfactory progress to reach standards similar to other primary school children. We think some teaching is good but some of you could be allowed to get on with your work with less direction from the teacher so you can become more independent in your learning. Your headteacher and her team of senior teachers lead the school satisfactorily. They know what needs improving and have a good plan to help them.

To make your education better, I have asked your school to do two things:

- to make teaching consistently good by:
- always moving learning along at a smart pace
- giving you enough chances to work independently and at your own speed
- checking that marking always tells you how to improve your work
- to make sure that teachers help each other by sharing interesting and exciting ways of teaching.

We thoroughly enjoyed our visit to your school. We know that your teachers make your school a special place for you. You can do your bit by continuing to be positive, behaving well and making the most of your time at St Joseph's Catholic Junior School.

Yours sincerely

Sarah McDermott

Lead Inspector

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