

St Joseph's RC Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101045
Local Authority	Wandsworth
Inspection number	335650
Inspection dates	22–23 March 2010
Reporting inspector	Kathryn Taylor

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 of pupils on the school roll	217
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John McHugh
Headteacher	Yvonne Wozniak
Date of previous school inspection	10 October 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They spent approximately half of the time observing pupils' learning and made observations of 18 lessons taught by 10 teachers. They held meetings with governors and staff as well as talking to parents who were bringing their children to school. Inspectors looked at a number of documents including attendance data, pupils' work, local authority reports on the school, curriculum documents and safeguarding information. They analysed staff questionnaires, pupil questionnaires and the 69 parental questionnaires received.

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

- the progress that different groups of pupils make, especially in writing
- the extent to which teaching meets the needs of all ability groups
- pupils' attendance rates and their cultural development
- how well the leaders at different levels contribute to overall school leadership

Information about the school

Pupils in this average-sized school are drawn from a wide range of social, ethnic and faith backgrounds. A high proportion are from homes where English is not the first language, although a much lower proportion are at the early stages of learning English. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with statements of special educational needs, is higher than the national average. Pupils' needs include learning difficulties, behavioural, emotional and social difficulties, autism, medical need and physical disability. In recent years, the proportion of pupils joining and leaving the school at various times during the year has been higher than average, particularly for older pupils.

Children are admitted to the Early Years Foundation Stage Nursery classes when they are three years old, on either a part-time or full-time basis. They join Reception in September of the year in which they have their fifth birthday. The school has gained Healthy School and Active Mark awards and The Football Association Charter Standard for Schools.

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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

St Joseph's is a good school. It has a strong Christian ethos and offers a warm welcome to pupils and parents. The school works exceptionally hard to reach out to all families and to involve them in the school and their children's learning. Consequently, parents are highly satisfied with the school. Staff and parents work very well together to support pupils to achieve well.

Although a few inconsistencies remain, teaching and learning are good overall. This, combined with good additional support from the learning support staff and the wide range of catch-up programmes, enables pupils of all abilities to make good and in some cases outstanding progress. Lessons are well organised and prepared and staff have good subject knowledge and high expectations of their pupils.

Attainment has risen markedly since the last inspection, despite significant changes to the pupil population, and is now in line with the national average by the end of Reception, Year 2 and Year 6. Learning and progress in Years 5 and 6 are particularly strong. Given their historically low starting point on entry to the junior department, many pupils now at the top of the school have to work exceptionally hard to reach the nationally expected standards by the time they leave.

The relative weakness in writing standards in Years 1 to 4 is being tackled decisively. The current focus, aimed at improving handwriting skills, increasing pupils' vocabulary and developing their interest and enjoyment of writing, are all having a very positive impact. Consequently pupils have good ideas for writing, are eager to express themselves, and are well equipped to get started. In some lessons, however, pupils do not have enough learning 'props', such as key vocabulary lists or wordbooks, to help them with unfamiliar words. In addition, although some marking is very effective, this is not consistent. Therefore not all teachers and pupils are fully informed about when mistakes occur or where pupils have omitted to apply the skills they previously learned to their next piece of written work.

Parents are rightly confident that their children are very happy in school, enjoy learning and are well cared for. As one parent noted, 'All staff members are very helpful and kind.'

Pupils say how much they enjoy their lessons, especially mathematics, writing and sports. The majority attend an after-school club and there is good provision for home learning. Pupils understand how to keep safe and stay healthy. They enjoy eating healthy snacks and lunches and participating in sporting activities and competitions. Playtimes are active and pleasurable experiences and pupils take good care of each other.

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The majority of pupils are very attentive in lessons, behave well and work very cooperatively. Occasionally, some pupils find it difficult to manage their behaviour. The teachers' pace of delivery or skills in managing difficult behaviour are not always strong enough. This can sometimes lead to pupils becoming distracted so that learning slows. The school is well led and managed. Senior leaders' clear direction ensures that the commitment to improvement and achieving the school's aims is a shared one. Staff say that they are very happy in their work and feel part of a team. The strong emphasis on staff training has had a positive effect on improving their expertise and teaching. Monitoring of pupils' finished work and progress is regular and very effective, although some of the evaluation of pupils' learning in lessons lacks rigour. Governors, staff, parents and pupils are fully involved in evaluating the school's work and identifying future priorities. The school's track record in making improvements, combined with staff's commitment and strong teamwork, provides the school with a good capacity to continue to improve.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards in writing in Years 1 to 4 by:
 - improving the consistency of feedback to pupils through marking
 - placing more emphasis on teaching pupils how to apply the skills they learn to their future work
 - displaying lists of new vocabulary or encouraging pupils to compile their own word banks.
- Address inconsistencies in teaching by:
 - bringing greater rigour to the monitoring of learning in lessons
 - increasing the pace of the whole-class teacher input in some lessons
 - extending staff skills in managing any instances of difficult or inappropriate behaviour.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Pupils' progress has improved since the last inspection. Consequently, attainment at the end of Reception and Years 2 and 6 has risen and is now broadly average. Pupils' current work and their learning in lessons confirm that pupils of all abilities and ethnic backgrounds are making good progress.

The majority of pupils are very eager to learn, listen well and sustain good levels of concentration in lessons. Pupils are very clear about what they are meant to be learning and increasingly take responsibility for assessing and improving their own work. Good examples of this were seen in Year 4 when pupils reviewed their work, highlighting their success in using adverbs to make their writing more interesting. Similarly, pupils in Year 6 checked their work against a 'ladder of skills'.

Pupils take a pride in their work and persevere with tasks. They happily share their

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learning and are respectful of each other's views. Pupils have a clear understanding of their responsibilities. They respond well to fundraising events and to helping the school to run smoothly. Pupils contribute fully to decision making. The school council, for example, requested that the school purchase more reading books and an additional 'friendship bench'. It also asked for an opportunity to meet with the school cook to discuss the menus. Through the diversity of the school's own population and a good range of visits, visitors and family events, pupils develop a good understanding of British culture and cultural diversity. Racial harmony and relationships at all levels are good. Pupils' work independently and collaboratively. They are eager to learn and do well. These abilities prepare them well for secondary school. However, in view of their attendance levels being no better than satisfactory, their preparedness for future economic well-being is satisfactory overall.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

How effective is the provision?

Strengths in the majority of lessons include effective questioning, a good level of challenge and a brisk pace to learning. Learning support assistants are well trained 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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proactive and make a very strong contribution to teaching and to supporting groups' and individuals' learning. Staff provide many opportunities for pupils to share ideas and are alert to those who need extra help or challenge. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are fully included, very well taught and provided with tasks that are well matched to their needs. Similarly, the small number of pupils new to learning English are very well supported. Teachers use a good range of techniques for assessing pupils' learning in lessons and set regular targets for them.

The curriculum makes a good contribution to pupils' progress and personal development. It caters well for different ability groups. Teachers are beginning to link work in different subjects together effectively to make learning more enjoyable. This was evident, for example, in Year 3 when pupils combined letter writing with developing their skills in using computers. In Year 6, as part of their history work on the Second World War, when pupils made film clips and wrote about 'Life As An Evacuee', they empathised with the characters and produced high-quality writing.

The curriculum is enriched well by a good range of visits, visitors, themed weeks and after-school activities. The school's partnerships with sporting associations and their links with local secondary schools enable pupils to benefit from staff's expertise and use external sports facilities. The input from the local college has contributed well to enabling pupils to learn Latin and more able pupils to reach high standards in mathematics.

Care, guidance and support are good. Pupils' well-being is given a high priority. Staff respond to any concerns promptly and support vulnerable pupils and their families especially well. Children really appreciate opportunities to talk over their problems with staff, including the staff in the 'place to be'. Child protection procedures, risk assessments and systems to track and encourage regular attendance are all robust.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
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	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Since the last inspection the headteacher and senior leaders have successfully focused on strengthening teaching, raising staff's expectations of pupils and improving standards. Middle leaders make a positive contribution to developing work in their subjects but have had relatively few opportunities to observe lessons and therefore influence day-to-day teaching.

Governors are very proactive and well informed. They challenge and support the school

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to do their best for the pupils and have been a driving force in bringing about improvements. Safeguarding procedures are good and meet current government requirements.

The school is rigorous in its efforts to promote equality, tackle inequality and remove any barriers to learning. As a result, those groups who underperform nationally are performing well at St Joseph's, often reaching and sometimes exceeding nationally expected standards by the time they leave. The school has developed strong partnerships with a range of agencies, other schools and institutions that pupils benefit from directly. It makes a good contribution to community cohesion, especially at the local and wider community levels. Links with schools in Derbyshire and Tanzania have also been established.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
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	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Attainment on entry to Nursery is below typical expectations and standards in communication, language and literacy and children's personal development are particularly low. That said, children settle into school and start learning very quickly because of the very warm welcome and good levels of care that staff provide combined with the many exciting activities on offer. Children in both Nursery and Reception make good progress across all areas of learning. They are very engaged in activities, establish firm friendships, develop confidence, independence and good patterns of behaviour.

Teaching and learning are good. Staff place a strong emphasis on developing children's enjoyment and their language skills. They provide a good mix of adult-led activities and

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learning opportunities that children create for themselves, both indoors and outside. Staff have a very good understanding of how young children learn best. They interact very well with children to support them, extend their thinking and speaking skills and move their learning on.

During lessons, children in Nursery learned well when they were very busy painting pictures, building structures, sharing books, working in the 'doctor's surgery' or outside. Children in Reception were engrossed in a wide range of activities linked to their topic on caves.

Staff keep a good overview of children's learning and keep their families up to date with their progress. Good leadership has helped to ensure the unit is well resourced to raise standards, develop good teamwork and a common approach. This ensures that work in Reception builds well on the firm foundations laid in the Nursery.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

As the table below shows, the vast majority of parents are very pleased with all aspects of the school. Parents especially appreciate the way the school ensures that their children are safe and happy in school and the way that staff keeps them informed about their children's progress. A small number of parents are concerned about behaviour.

The inspection team agrees with parents' positive views of the school. They recognise that a small minority of pupils' inappropriate behaviour sometimes distracts other pupils.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Joseph's RC Primary 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 69 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 217 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	30	68	13	30	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	32	73	12	27	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	16	36	25	57	3	7	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	24	55	18	41	1	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	25	57	15	34	1	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	18	41	22	50	1	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	20	45	21	48	1	2	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)	13	30	24	55	5	11	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	22	50	20	45	1	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	18	41	21	48	0	0	1	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	21	48	21	48	0	0	1	2
The school is led and managed effectively	33	75	10	23	1	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	30	68	13	30	1	2	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.



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24 March 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Joseph's RC Primary School, London SW15 2QD

Thank you very much for making us welcome when we came to your school. We found that St Joseph's is a good school that helps you to make good progress and reach average standards by the time you leave.

We really enjoyed talking with you in class, in the playground and around the school. We noticed how very proud you are of your work and your school. You get on really well with each other and the staff. We found that you are polite, well behaved and hardworking. You really help the school to run smoothly. It was good to see you enjoying playtimes and lunchtimes, being active and eating healthily.

When we visited lessons and looked at your work we noticed that the staff teach you well and find interesting things for you to do and learn. Teachers explain what you are meant to be learning. They encourage you to take responsibility for checking your own learning and correcting your work. You told us how well the staff look after you and listen to your views and concerns.

Your headteacher and other managers lead the school well and are always keen to make improvements. We have suggested ways in which the school can help pupils in Years 1 to 4 to reach better standards in writing. For example, we have asked them to give you more feedback through marking and to remind you to use the skills that you were taught previously. We have also suggested how the school can help to make some lessons even better. You can help by doing your best and continuing to take good care of each other, so that your school continues to be a happy and positive place to be.

Yours sincerely

Kathryn Taylor

Lead inspector

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