

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100729
Local Authority	Lewisham
Inspection number	354877
Inspection dates	14–15 October 2010
Reporting inspector	Glynis Bradley-Peat

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	222
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Henry Sullivan
Headteacher	Patricia Chantery
Date of previous school inspection	15 October 2010
School address	Crossfield Street London SE8 3PH
Telephone number	020 86924836
Fax number	020 86946421
Email address	pchantrey1.209@lgflmail.org.uk

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Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

T: 0300 1234 234

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 19 lessons, observed nine teachers and held meetings with the headteacher, senior leadership team, teaching staff, governors and pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at pupils' exercise books. They checked documents including the school improvement plan, systems for tracking the pupils' progress, safeguarding documentation and school policies. They analysed information from the 35 questionnaires from parents and carers, in addition to those received from staff and pupils in Years 3 to 6.

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

- What current attainment and progress was like in Years 2 and 6.
- What impact the strategies to improve writing were having.
- Whether the quality of teaching was improving.
- How well leaders have tackled the areas for improvement since the time of the last inspection.
- How well the new senior leadership team were embedding their ambition for the school and driving forward improvements.

Information about the school

St Joseph's is an average-sized primary school but the roll has fallen over time. There is provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage Reception. Pupils come from predominantly Black African, Black British and Caribbean heritages with the remainder coming from a variety of other backgrounds. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is very high. About one in five pupils has special educational needs and/or disabilities, which is average. Their needs are mostly related to moderate learning difficulties, autism and behavioural, emotional and social needs.

The school has gained Healthy School status.

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

The effective leadership of the headteacher and her recently appointed deputy headteacher has ensured that the school has made a clear improvement in the standard of education pupils receive. The rate of improvement has been accelerating over the last year. Staff are proud to be members of the school, share in the drive for improvement and feel involved in what leaders are trying to achieve, contributing effectively to the school's self-evaluation.

Attainment in mathematics has improved significantly because staff training has been particularly effective in changing the way the subject is taught. The focus on using and applying mathematics in different contexts ensures that pupils are able to tackle problems presented to them in different formats. More recently, writing has started to improve. This is evident in the school's own tracking data, work in pupils' books and observations by inspectors, which all show that pupils' progress in writing is accelerating. However, there is still some way to go before it catches up to the standards attained and progress made in reading.

The headteacher has worked tirelessly to eliminate inadequate teaching and has been largely successful, although a small proportion still remains. She has had an unrelenting focus on holding teachers responsible for the progress that their pupils make. Shortcomings have not been tolerated and weak practice has been eradicated. Several new teachers joined the school in September. These improvements are clear evidence of the school's satisfactory capacity to improve. Leadership and management are good at senior level but many subject leaders are new to the school and also new to their role within it. Although some are already involved in monitoring activities, new and existing staff are not yet sufficiently knowledgeable about how to gauge the quality of teaching in their areas of responsibility. In addition the time allocated for the management of the provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is insufficient.

The youngest children in the school make a good start to their education in the Early Years Foundation Stage. This is because the teaching is animated and adults relate well to children and extend their learning well through effective questioning. As a result, children make good progress in their learning. Although they have only been in school for a few weeks, children are settled and enjoy attending. Throughout the rest of the school, rates of progress vary considerably across different year groups. This is because the teaching in some classes is not as effective as in others. Overall, teaching is stronger in Key Stage 2 than in Key Stage 1. In some classes, work is not prepared well enough to meet the needs of all pupils. As a result, the most able spend too long marking time before any new learning takes place whereas the least able struggle and become too reliant on help from teaching assistants. In some of the younger classes, pupils start to lose interest and become restless. Teachers have made many improvements to the way they teach writing,

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but some still do not model writing effectively in lessons. As a result, pupils do not know clearly the processes writers go through to produce text and do not always have a clear enough reference point for their own writing. In addition, they do not always have sufficient opportunity to practise their writing skills in other subjects across the curriculum.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment and accelerate progress in English, particularly in writing by:
 - improving the quality of teaching from satisfactory to good in Key Stage 1 by July 2011
 - ensuring that teachers regularly model good writing in lessons
 - increasing the opportunities for writing for a purpose across other subjects
 - ensuring that all teachers provide work to match the needs of all pupils.
- Ensure that the quality of leadership and management of middle leaders improves by:
 - providing bespoke training so that they can lead and manage developments in their areas of responsibility and monitor the quality of provision effectively
 - increasing the time available for the leadership and management of special educational needs and/or disabilities.increasing the time available for the leadership and management of special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

The vast majority of pupils have good attitudes to learning, work hard in their lessons and achieve satisfactorily. During periods of teacher questioning they are enthusiastic to contribute ideas and share their answers. In many cases pupils work well together in pairs and groups to solve problems, especially in mathematics. In a good Year 6 lesson, some pupils talked together about why data were grouped in a certain way. As a result they were able to compare their grouped frequency tables with pictograms depicting the same information. They chatted together constructively, explaining their reasoning, which resulted in good learning. This approach to learning is not consistent across all year groups or subjects. In a small number of lessons, pupils did not make the progress of which they were capable. Sometimes this was because teachers did not take account of the different starting points of the pupils. At other times, young pupils were given work which was too formal with insufficient practical or visual resources to support their learning.

Provisional results in national tests in Year 6 this year demonstrate above average attainment in mathematics, a huge improvement on last year's results, but below in English, predominantly writing. Historically, results have been significantly below average. In Year 2, targets were missed and too many pupils underachieved, especially in reading and writing. Boys and girls perform similarly except in writing where boys lag behind a little. Those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress, but this also varies from class to class. Preparation for the next stage of education is adequate, supported by pupils' good attendance.

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The large majority of pupils say they feel safe but a few have concerns about behaviour, especially in the playground, since the area is now restricted because of building work. The school is fully aware of this and has put in effective measures to help, for example, staggered, shorter lunch breaks and more adults on patrol. During the inspection the vast majority of pupils behaved well in lessons and around the school. Pupils have a good understanding of how to lead healthy, fit lives. This reflects work carried out to gain the Healthy Schools Award. Pupils play a satisfactory role in the school community. The school council is not yet fully active in making improvements although discussions about this take place at weekly meetings. Pupils develop a satisfactory understanding of spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues and know right from wrong. A strength is the good understanding of other cultures, which are celebrated in school.

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	4
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	3
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	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

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

How effective is the provision?

Teaching is rapidly improving. The small proportion of inadequate teaching is being tackled well and satisfactory teaching is moving to good. There is good practice evident in the school. In a Year 4 literacy lesson the teacher employed a tactic of deliberate mistakes. This ensured that pupils learnt the importance of editing their work and fostered high levels of concentration and engagement. The good use of questioning promoted pupils' thinking and, as a result, they offered well-thought-through responses about the quality of different story openers. Science and some writing lessons were taught less well.

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Long periods of time spent on the carpet listening to the teacher talk led to a degree of disengagement, especially among younger boys. Lack of practical equipment and use of worksheets in science mean that some pupils do not learn as well as they can.

Trips and visits enhance learning and enrich the satisfactory curriculum. The school takes full advantage of being close to central London. Parents and pupils often comment about how much they value these experiences. There are opportunities to

attend a good range of after-school activities from drama and cookery to film-making. Sports activities contribute well to healthy lifestyles, and are well attended. There is evidence of the beginning of cross-curricular working. However, the school realises that there is insufficient opportunity for pupils to develop their information and communication technology (ICT) and writing skills in other subjects.

Satisfactory care, guidance and support ensure that pupils are safe. The school offers a welcoming environment for pupils where they feel supported. The school tries hard, with some success, to support pupils and their families who are potentially vulnerable due to their circumstances. A satisfactory range of catch-up programmes and support from teaching assistants ensure those with moderate learning difficulties, autism or behavioural and emotional needs are sufficiently catered for. In addition the school liaises effectively with agencies involved with supporting looked-after children, and governors have appointed a champion especially responsible for this. Systems in the school to promote good attendance are very effective and ensure that pupils attend well.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The areas for improvement set at the time of the last inspection have been tackled satisfactorily. Self-evaluation focuses closely on achievement and this reflects well in the actions indicated in the school development plan. Consequently, teachers now provide clear targets for pupils about how they can improve their work and improvements in marking show that comments are beginning to be noted more regularly by pupils. Better teaching at Key Stage 2 is also ensuring that the level of challenge for pupils is improving. Senior leaders are very well motivated to drive through further improvement.

Attainment is rising and progress is accelerating in some year groups, although inconsistencies remain; despite the school's firm commitment to promoting equality of opportunity, this aspect is satisfactory. Some subject leaders require further training. The time allocated to the leadership and management of support for children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities requires further attention. Governance is satisfactory

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and improving. Statutory responsibilities are met, ensuring good safeguarding procedures. The school realises the importance of engaging a larger proportion of parents and carers in the work of the school. Pupils have a satisfactory understanding of the community in which the school sits because an audit has produced an appropriate action plan for community cohesion. This ensures that local community links and those further afield grow and benefit learners.

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	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Individual children's emotional and academic needs are known and are planned for well so all make good progress in all areas of their learning. Children enjoy their time in the Reception class, which is characterised by lots of bubbly laughter. As a result they achieve well and become independent learners. They are increasingly able to focus on activities for prolonged periods, for example when sorting letters on the electronic whiteboard. Generally, children are articulate and confident with adults; they initiate conversation and show a curiosity about visitors.

Behaviour is very good and children are polite to each other and share well. They are aware of how to stay safe. Children understand how to stay healthy and when to wash their hands, and are provided with opportunities to get fresh air and exercise. The outside area is limited because of building works, but also lacks protection against inclement weather. Children make a positive contribution to their own learning and their views are taken into account in teachers' planning. The play area called the 'X Factor studio' is a result of their request. Children are able to select what they would like to do quickly and are provided with a good choice of literacy-based activities. This promotes the development of good basic skills.

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Accurate assessment is ongoing and used well to highlight next steps in learning. Extensive notes and photographic evidence are kept for tracking progress and mapping children's learning journeys. Leaders have clear understanding of strengths and areas for development. Good links have been established with parents and carers through visits and workshops. This helps children to settle quickly into school. There has been good improvement since the last inspection in relation to teaching, progress and the leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

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

A small minority of parents and carers returned the questionnaires but most were very positive about the school overall and all of them said their children enjoyed attending. All parents believe that their children are encouraged to lead a healthy lifestyle and the vast majority feel that their children are kept safe. Most said they are happy with the experience their children have in the school, that unacceptable behaviour is managed effectively and that the school is led and managed effectively. A small minority of parents and carers made additional comments. A few parents and carers feel that their children do not make enough progress. Inspectors found progress to be at least satisfactory in the majority of lessons for most groups of 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 Catholic 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 35 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 222 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	24	69	11	31	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	16	46	18	51	1	3	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	16	46	18	51	1	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	15	43	16	46	4	11	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	11	31	23	66	1	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	16	46	18	51	1	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	17	49	18	51	0	0	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)	9	26	22	63	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	14	40	17	49	1	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	16	46	17	49	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	7	20	24	69	2	6	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	10	29	23	66	1	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	17	49	15	43	3	9	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 all 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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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 pupils' 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.



18 October 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Joseph's Primary School, Deptford, London, SE8 3PH

Thank you so much for welcoming us to your school recently and telling us your opinions. Your views, along with everything else that we saw, helped us form a clear picture about how well your school works. We think your school is giving you a satisfactory education which prepares you for the future and the next stage of your learning. Your school ensures that you are safe and adults care about your welfare. You certainly know how to be healthy and stay fit. We found you to be polite and well behaved, although we understand that sometimes this is difficult while the new building is taking place. You enjoy the after-school clubs and the trips and visits organised for you by the school.

Your school does some things well, but improvements are required in some areas of its work. Your headteacher and her deputy headteacher do a good job and have made improvements to teaching and to how well you do in some national tests. Your mathematics has improved in particular. Well done! The youngest children in your school receive a good start to their education and make good progress. We have asked your school to work on these things.

- We would like the school to do better in English, particularly in writing. We have asked that teachers show you exactly how to write more effectively and that you get the chance to do this in a variety of subjects, not just literacy. We have asked your headteacher to work alongside some of your teachers to help them with their planning and to ensure that you all always receive work that makes you think hard. You can help by always trying your hardest to write carefully and thoughtfully.
- We would like the school to provide some of the newest teachers and those who look after particular subjects with some training to help them lead and manage more effectively. Also we think your school would benefit from making additional time available for the special educational needs coordinator.

We wish you all the best in the future.

Yours sincerely

Glynis Bradley-Peat

Lead inspector

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