

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

York Avenue, London, W7 3HU

Inspection dates 24–25 October 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Pupils make good progress overall. They do especially well in reading and mathematics and reach above average standards in these subjects by the time they leave the school.
- All the different groups of pupils make at least good progress, including those with disabilities and special educational needs.
- Pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium make exceptional progress because of the additional support provided.
- Teaching is good overall and of high quality in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 2.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and feel safe. The school is very effective at promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This is reflected in their exemplary behaviour and high attendance.
- The quality of teaching and pupils' achievement are improving as a result of the strong leadership of the headteacher.
- Other school senior leaders have contributed very effectively to the process of improvement, whereas the contribution of the governing body has been more limited.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The attainment in writing across the school, although improving, is not high enough.
- The role of the governors in monitoring and evaluating the impact of the school's work is not yet fully developed.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 22 lessons, of which six were joint observations with members of the senior leadership team. They also listened to pupils reading and made short visits to classrooms.
- The inspectors were involved in the scrutiny of pupils' work, and looked at the school's documentation, including policies, records of monitoring, progress data and governing body minutes.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior leaders and the Chair of the Governing Body, and there were discussions with groups of pupils. A telephone discussion was held with a local authority representative about the school's work.
- Inspectors received and took account of 51 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View). Inspectors also had informal discussions with parents and carers at the beginning of the school day and several parents came to see inspectors individually in the inspectors' base-room.
- Inspectors also took account of the 37 completed questionnaires from staff.

Inspection team

Avtar Sherri, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Clementina Olufunke Aine	Additional Inspector
Steven Cartlidge	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger than average-sized primary school. In September 2012, the school admitted a bulge class into the Reception Year.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs who are supported by school action plus or with statements is above the average, while the proportion supported at school action is below average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional funds allocated by the government) is below average.
- The numbers of pupils from ethnic backgrounds other than White British and those who speak English as an additional language are well above the national average.
- The school does not offer a breakfast club but there is a facility for parents and carers to drop off their children early in the morning.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in writing across the school by providing pupils with further opportunities to write at length in different subjects.
- Develop the skills of governors so that they are able to ask leaders searching questions about the school's performance.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils make good progress overall, irrespective of their ethnic background.
- Almost all pupils start in the Nursery and their attainment on entry is below age-related expectations. They make good progress in the Nursery and Reception Years. As a result, by the time they enter Year 1, their attainment is above average in all areas of learning.
- The rate of pupils' progress slows somewhat in Key Stage 1 because of some weaknesses in the quality of teaching.
- Progress picks up again in Key Stage 2, but is more rapid in Years 5 and 6 than in Years 3 and 4, reflecting differences in the quality of teaching. Attainment is above average by the end of Year 6 but is higher in mathematics and reading than in writing. Girls do better than boys in writing, but the gap is closing.
- Attainment in writing throughout the school, although improving, has not risen quickly enough. This is because teachers offer pupils only limited opportunities to develop their writing skills across the curriculum.
- Pupils with disabilities and special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language make good progress overall because of the effective individual support and care they receive and because of the good links with parents. These pupils are extremely well integrated in the life of the school.
- Pupils known to be eligible for funding through the pupil premium do exceptionally well, with attainment above the school and national averages. This is because the pupil premium is used well for deploying staff and using targeted interventions.
- Parents and carers say that their children make good progress at school and that the school prepares their children well for their next stage of education.
- Pupils enjoy reading and their achievement in reading is good throughout the school because their skills in linking letters and sounds are developed well and systematically in Reception and in Years 1 and 2. They are encouraged to read and become confident readers as they move across year groups.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good overall. It is consistently strong in Nursery and Reception and in Years 5 and 6. This is the key reason why pupils make particularly rapid progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and at the top end of the school.
- In Nursery and Reception, there is good outdoor provision, with children moving between the classroom and outside area freely and enjoying and learning from the interesting activities provided for them. This ensures continuity and enjoyment of learning, for example when pupils used autumn colours to print on the leaves they collected.
- In Years 5 and 6, pupils are given good opportunities to work independently and to interact and learn from each other through modelling and assessing each other's work. For example, in one lesson, pupils used their own work to explain to each other the correct use of speech marks and then invited comments on their work. This engagement of pupils in their own learning, together with the good pace of teaching, secured good progress for all learners.
- Sometimes in Years 1 to 2, teachers do too much talking, limiting opportunities for all pupils, including the more able, to be able to think for themselves and to be involved in individual and group work. This was also evident in Years 3 and 4, but to a lesser extent.
- Marking is generally good, with teachers making comments on pupils' work on how to improve. However, it is better in some year groups where pupils are encouraged to take note of the comments made by the teacher by responding to them. Teachers are good at using praise when pupils have done well.

- Teaching assistants are well deployed and are effective in supporting the learning of different groups of pupils, particularly those with disabilities, those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language. As a consequence, these groups of pupils make good progress along with their peers.
- The skills-based curriculum promotes good speaking and listening opportunities for pupils, supporting the development of their communication skills. For example, in an English lesson on myths and legends, pupils were organised into groups for discussions and the teaching assistant created a bank of new words from a story to increase pupils' vocabulary.
- Pupils say that they enjoy their lessons and all parents and carers agreed that teaching is good and that their children make good progress.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils from all backgrounds get on extremely well with each other and pupils say they feel very safe in school. Pupils say that bullying is very rare and when incidents do happen, pupils are confident that they are taken seriously and dealt with.
- Attendance is above the national average and, during the last year, no pupil has been persistently absent.
- Pupils are friendly, courteous and respectful. One boy who was a new arrival said that he was 'a bit lonely' when he started school, but then said 'now I have hundreds of friends'. Pupils' respect for all adults in the school was summed up by one pupil who said, 'We treat dinner ladies just like our teachers.'
- Almost all parents and carers who responded to the Parent View questionnaire strongly agreed that the school keeps their children safe, and almost all strongly agreed that behaviour is good and that the school deals effectively with bullying. In the staff questionnaire, almost all staff strongly agreed that pupil behaviour is good in the school. There were no responses from either parents or staff that indicated that behaviour was less than good. Inspectors judged behaviour to be outstanding over time. The exclusion rate is extremely low.
- The school has a strong commitment to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This is demonstrated by pupils showing exemplary behaviour in the classroom, corridors and outside in the playground. They continue to behave exceptionally well, even when they are required to sit for long periods without active involvement. Pupils show respect for the rich cultural diversity represented in the school.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe; for example, they are aware of e-safety, cyber-bullying and fire safety through school rules and fire drills.
- Pupils' enjoyment of school is clearly reflected in their good punctuality and above average attendance.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has a real presence in the school, knows his pupils, staff and parents well and provides inspirational leadership. He is effectively supported by the leadership team and a cohesive team of staff who share his ambition to raise achievement and drive improvements.
- Since the previous inspection, the headteacher and the leadership team have been successful in addressing the areas for improvements by improving the provision for individuals and groups of learners across the curriculum and extending the outdoor learning for pupils in the Nursery and in Reception.
- Monitoring information and the feedback from staff, both through discussions and responses to the staff questionnaires, indicate that there are good professional development opportunities for staff to enhance their skills in the classroom and develop their areas of responsibility. They are highly appreciative of the support they receive from the headteacher and the leadership team.

- The spreading of leadership responsibilities throughout the staff enables staff to see themselves as leaders and to work in teams to bring about improvements. Staff are very supportive of each other and there is high morale in the school.
- There are effective systems in place for performance management, linked closely to challenging individual pupil targets. As a result, the quality of teaching, and consequently pupils' achievement, are steadily improving, although relative weaknesses in teaching remain in some year groups.
- Staff value the performance management system, particularly its link to the formal half-day yearly observation involving book scrutiny and pupils' opinions. Year group leaders also have the opportunity to observe teaching in their teams.
- The pupil premium has been very effectively used to retain a school counsellor and an additional teaching assistant and for ensuring pupils have full access to extra-curricular activities. As a result, pupils supported by the pupil premium make exceptional progress. One parent commented on how valuable she found the school counsellor at a difficult time. Parents and carers also find the headteacher to be very approachable, caring and supportive.
- The school's self-evaluation is accurate and is effective in providing leaders with a clear picture of linking outcomes with school strengths and areas for improvement.
- The local authority provides a light touch approach to school improvement and believes that the school has an outstanding capacity to improve. The local authority will be providing further training for governors to develop their skills in monitoring and evaluating the work of the school.
- The curriculum is good, although lack of computers in the information and communication technology suite sometimes limits opportunities for hands-on experience for pupils when they work in pairs. The skills-based curriculum and the creative journey capture pupils' interest, and promote their speaking and listening skills and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, which is a strength of the school. However, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to write at length across different subject areas to enhance their writing skills.
- Pupils participate in a range of extra-curricular activities, clubs and visits, including the Year 6 journey. In line with its commitment to equal opportunities, the school ensures that these activities are accessible to all.
- The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet statutory requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors share the senior leaders' high expectations and ambition to drive improvements and raise standards. They are proud of the school's achievements, its standing and its popularity in the community. Governors ensure that financial resources are managed efficiently and that the pupil premium is used effectively to raise the achievement of the pupils it is intended to support. However, they do not yet have sufficient skills and expertise to challenge school leaders about the performance of the school.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	123214
Local authority	Ealing
Inspection number	402869

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	450
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Gerard McMahon
Headteacher	Benedict Cassidy
Date of previous school inspection	30 April–1 May 2008
Telephone number	0208 5676293
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