

St Joseph's RC Primary School

Cadogan Street, London, SW3 2QT

Inspection dates 26–27 November 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- This is a rapidly improving school. The new headteacher is building strongly on the improvements begun under the interim headteacher. Together they have brought rigour to school management and kept everyone focused on teaching and learning.
- Supported by well-targeted training, the strong team of subject leaders is now making a significant contribution to improvement.
- The governing body contributes considerably to the school's development. Governors plan for the long term, ask challenging questions and make sure necessary resources are available.
- The very considerable improvement in teaching is testament to strong teamwork and the desire of staff to make the school better. Teaching is imaginative and matched very closely to the next stages in each pupil's learning.
- The pupils' progress has accelerated and their attainment has risen to a high level in all subjects.
- The organisation of subjects into topics means pupils study a theme in great depth and have many opportunities for developing their writing.
- The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted exceptionally well in all that the school does. Particularly strong is their respect for other cultures.
- Children make rapid progress in the Nursery and Reception particularly in their language skills and also in developing the qualities that enable them to be successful learners.
- The rigorous tracking of each pupil enables the school to put in place carefully planned support if pupils look as if they might be falling behind.
- The pupils' exemplary behaviour in lessons and around the school contributes to the warm, happy and calm atmosphere. They make a considerable and much-valued contribution to the life of the school.
- Pupils want to succeed. They work very hard at all times and continually try to do their best.
- Pupils feel very secure because of the way staff and governors take great care to safeguard their welfare.
- More-able pupils are suitably challenged in lessons and many reach levels above those expected for their age.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 21 lessons, 10 of which were seen together with the headteacher or deputy headteacher.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, school staff and members of the governing body, including the Chair of the Governing Body. A telephone discussion was also held with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 14 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and held informal discussions with parents and carers at the start of the school day. Inspectors also took into account the results of a survey undertaken by the school during October 2013.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents including the school's own information on the pupils' current progress, planning and monitoring documentation, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and documents relating to safeguarding. Inspectors also took account of the 23 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors listened to the reading of a sample of pupils in Year 2.

Inspection team

Martin Beale, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Kanwaljit Singh

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the majority of primary schools.
- The proportion of pupils from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds is high.
- Three-quarters of the pupils speak English as an additional language. Many are at the early stages of learning English.
- The school receives pupil premium funding for an average proportion of pupils. The pupil premium is extra government funding given to schools to support pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, those in local authority care and those from service families.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is broadly average, as is the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- Generally, the majority of children who enter Reception have not attended the school's Nursery and have little pre-school experience.
- The headteacher took up her post in September 2013 following a year when the school was led by an interim headteacher.
- 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?

- Provide more opportunities for more-able pupils to investigate and explore ideas so they become confident about learning from their mistakes.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- Pupils make rapid and sustained progress now that more teaching is outstanding. Increasing numbers are making accelerated progress and reaching levels above those expected for their age in reading, writing and mathematics. There are no significant differences in the achievement of boys and girls or of pupils from different ethnic backgrounds.
- Year 6 test results rose in 2013 to a high level in all areas. Almost all pupils reached the nationally expected Level 4 and large numbers reached Level 5 or higher. Inspection evidence shows that this improvement is being sustained.
- Children enter the Nursery or Reception at levels of development below those expected for their age and often with limited English. Helped by high-quality teaching in a stimulating environment they make rapid progress in all areas of learning.
- Pupils' progress in writing is rapid and much improved, partly because pupils continually develop their writing within topics. Their writing is often creative and imaginative. Grammar and spelling are of a high standard. Pupils use increasingly interesting vocabulary as they move through the school.
- The pupils' understanding of phonics (the sounds that letters make) develops quickly through small-group teaching of pupils at similar levels of development. Pupils show a genuine enjoyment of books and read widely, often using the texts they study as a class to stimulate their writing.
- The pupils' outstanding progress in mathematics is based on accurate calculating including the rapid recall of number facts. Problem-solving is increasingly a feature of lessons.
- Pupils speaking English as an additional language make rapid progress once they are confident and fluent in English. This is because all adults focus on developing language through speaking. They become many of the school's highest attaining pupils by the end of Year 6.
- The school makes very effective use of the pupil premium to raise the achievement of eligible pupils. They were two terms ahead of others in the Year 6 class in 2013 in writing, at a similar level in reading and less than two terms behind in mathematics. This represents a considerable improvement in pupils' reading and writing since the previous inspection.
- Robust initial assessments, the expertise of outside agencies and well-planned support in lessons or small groups all contribute to the rapid progress of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs.

The quality of teaching is outstanding

- A key feature of lessons is the calm manner in which teachers manage behaviour so that learning proceeds without disturbance. Because lessons are so interesting pupils become quickly engrossed. Displays strongly support learning and pupils are seen regularly referring or adding to them during lessons.
- Teachers expect much from the pupils. Their expert and confident teaching is seen in skilled questions that probe pupils' understanding and continually check their learning. Teachers adopt interesting methods to capture the pupils' imaginations such as when using film and texts, often linked closely to the topics being studied, to stimulate writing. Teachers match questions and activities closely to the next steps in each pupil's learning. The more-able pupils are challenged to reach higher levels, but at times are not given enough opportunity to deepen their thinking by exploring ideas and learning from their mistakes.
- Marking is highly effective in helping pupils to improve rapidly and take responsibility for their learning. Pupils are continually expected to assess their work against clear criteria so they can see how to improve. Teachers identify what pupils need to do next or set additional challenges to which they regularly respond.

- Support staff work very skilfully with individual pupils and groups, whether this is to support their learning or language needs. They have formed a strong bond with those they support, but they make sure that pupils do not become overly dependent on them.
- The wide range of exciting activities in Nursery and Reception stimulates the children's curiosity, and provides many opportunities for their language development. Activities are carefully designed to meet the children's needs and encourage their independence. There are plentiful opportunities for developing literacy and numeracy as these have been identified as the children's weakest areas on entry. Adults observe children's developing abilities closely and use the information carefully to plan the next steps in their learning.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Children develop very positive attitudes and good learning skills in the Nursery and Reception, which are then built on across the school. They learn to work together and become independent. Children show high levels of imagination and concentration.
- Pupils move very sensibly around the buildings and play happily together outside. They are exceptionally polite and well mannered at all times. They are very kind and show adults and each other great respect.
- Pupils are determined to do well. They are very attentive in lessons, keen to answer questions and concentrate for long periods on activities. Pupils collaborate well in discussions, when working on tasks or when constructively assessing each other's work. Their attendance is broadly average and rising.
- Pupils are always happy to support each other and willingly help newcomers understand school routines. Pupils exercise their responsibilities as representatives on the school council and house captains with pride.
- The school helps pupils to understand the different forms of bullying and how they are not to be tolerated. Pupils say incidents are very rare and any problems are usually when friends fall out. Peer mediators help them to resolve their problems quickly. Pupils know, should this fail, adults are always there to turn to for help.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher has already established her high expectations by setting ambitious targets for all pupils. Staff are fully behind her drive and morale is high. Tackling vigorously weaknesses identified by the last inspection has led to rapid improvements in teaching and the pupils' achievement. The school is well placed to improve further.
- Subject leaders now have the tools by which they can evaluate standards in their areas. Training, particularly in understanding assessment data, means they are now able to check more closely the impact of planned actions. This has led to greater consistency across classes.
- The continual focus on improving teaching has reaped dividends. Rigorous systems are in place for checking each teacher's performance and tailoring training to meet teachers' individual targets. Financial incentives are used to reward only good or better teaching.
- Equality of opportunity is successfully achieved by the very sharp focus on checking the progress of individuals and groups. All teachers focus on the progress of pupils eligible for support through the pupil premium in order to put in place additional individual and group teaching where necessary.
- The school's engagement with the local authority has been effective in supporting leadership development and giving the school an external view of how well it is doing.
- Parents and carers are encouraged to become genuine partners in their children's learning. 'Book worm' sessions help parents and carers to support learning at home as do regular literacy and numeracy workshops.
- Subjects are organised to ensure a very sharp focus on basic skills. Breadth and interest are

added through imaginative topics where pupils study an area in depth and seek answers to questions they have posed. Pupils reflect on literature in English and in their topics to stimulate their imaginations. The Year 6 topic, 'War and Peace', included a visit to the Jewish museum, which has left a lasting impression. Pupils have been finding out about the role of Martin Luther King as a peacemaker. During 'One World Week' pupils looked in depth at various countries including 'Africa – A continent of contrasts'.

- Sports funding is primarily being used to increase teachers' expertise as well as extending sporting activities from January 2014. Year 4 pupils are now being trained to lead younger pupils in playing games at lunchtime. While training for staff is underway it is too early to see its impact.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body has supported the school very well through a period of transition in leadership over the last year. Governors have made sure everyone understands their raised expectations. Governors are very strategically minded as shown by their decisions to engage an interim headteacher before making a new appointment and making sure the new headteacher is supported by an experienced mentor. Training in understanding assessment data has enabled them to interrogate the school's performance in order to spot patterns and question with greater authority the action being taken. They are quite clear what is being done to improve teaching and how financial rewards are used as an incentive for teachers. Governors have introduced greater oversight of financial management and continually check the impact of spending decisions, including the pupil premium. They are rigorous in ensuring that their safeguarding policies are rigorously implemented and their impact monitored.

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	100496
Local authority	Kensington and Chelsea
Inspection number	428820

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	218
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Canon Stuart Wilson
Headteacher	Karen Wyatt
Date of previous school inspection	24–25 April 2012
Telephone number	020 7589 2438
Email address	info@stjosephs.rbkc.sch.uk

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