

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Watford Way, Hendon, London NW4 4TY

Inspection dates

7–8 December 2017

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- The school has suffered from weak leadership since an amalgamation of the infant and junior schools in 2014.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment, including in the early years, is inconsistent.
- Middle leaders are at an early stage of their development. Their evaluation of the school's work is overgenerous.
- The school's mathematics curriculum is not fit for purpose. Teachers demonstrate poor subject knowledge and do not provide opportunities for pupils to apply their skills.
- Provision in the wider curriculum is variable. Pupils' knowledge and understanding in geography lacks depth. Pupils' opportunities to explore different forms of bullying, including homophobic bullying, are limited.
- In the past, leaders and governors have not been rigorous in checking the safety of the site. Newly appointed governors and leaders have taken recent action to address potential risks to pupils' safety.
- Pupils' progress in writing and mathematics, particularly at the end of key stage 2, is below the national average.
- Disadvantaged pupils make weak progress in reading, writing and mathematics, particularly at the end of key stage 2. Very few achieve the national expectations.
- Planning and provision for the most able pupils and for those pupils who speak English as an additional language do not take account of their needs. As a result, these pupils make limited progress.

The school has the following strengths

- Recently appointed governors have taken difficult decisions to restructure the governing body and the school's leadership. As a result, governors and leaders are well placed to secure further improvements.
- Pupils' attendance, including those from vulnerable groups, is strong.
- The recently appointed interim executive headteacher has empowered a senior team to have an accurate understanding of the school's priorities, and has raised staff morale.
- Pupils are friendly and welcoming. They show respect to each other and adults in school.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - leaders and governors maintain rigorous checks on site safety
 - middle leaders have an accurate understanding of their areas of responsibility
 - the mathematics curriculum is enhanced to give pupils opportunities to develop their reasoning and problem solving skills
 - teaching is strengthened so that pupils in all year groups, particularly disadvantaged pupils, make sustained progress in their reading, writing and mathematics
 - the proportion of disadvantaged pupils achieving at least the national expectations in reading, writing and mathematics, at the end of key stage 2, is similar to other pupils nationally
 - pupils have opportunities to develop their understanding of all forms of bullying, including homophobic bullying
 - pupils benefit from sustained opportunities to learn about geography.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by:
 - sharing and building upon the good practice that can be found in the school
 - ensuring that all adults who teach mathematics receive appropriate training and guidance to address any weaknesses in their subject knowledge
 - providing work for the most able pupils which challenges them and enables them to make sustained progress
 - providing work for pupils who speak English as an additional language that develops their speaking and listening skills
 - ensuring that all adults support pupils' learning effectively with questioning that deepens their knowledge and understanding
 - ensuring that pupils can confidently explain their learning.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Standards at the school have dropped significantly over the last few years. An amalgamation of the junior and infant school led to a period of instability. The expansion to additional forms of entry has not been managed well. Consequently, the effective running of the school still suffers.
- In the past, leaders and governors have not been rigorous in ensuring that the site has been safe from potential risks to pupils' safety. Governors have recently ensured that these potential risks have been rectified. During the inspection, concerns around the safety of the site were raised by inspectors. Leaders took immediate action to ensure that these concerns were addressed.
- Leaders have not been rigorous in sustaining good teaching across the school over the past few years. There was a high level of staff turnover at the end of the last academic year. Teachers' morale was very low and the progress of pupils has suffered. As a result, there are significant differences between the achievement of disadvantaged pupils compared to their peers, and other pupils nationally.
- Leaders have not prioritised the development of all areas of the curriculum. There has been an overemphasis on resolving past issues around the development of writing. As a result, pupils do not benefit from opportunities to develop their mathematical and geographical skills effectively.
- Middle leaders demonstrate great enthusiasm to improve the school but are overgenerous of the school's strengths. They have not been in post long enough to make a sustained difference on teaching quality and pupils' outcomes.
- Additional funding for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and or/disabilities has not been spent well. The quality of identification and support provided for these pupils is too variable. As a result, pupils do not make good progress from their starting points.
- The recent appointment of a motivational interim executive headteacher has already led to several improvements. He has empowered determined senior leaders to begin making positive differences in their areas of responsibility. They are given strategic direction for school priorities through 'motivation meetings'. Staff morale has improved and they feel well supported.
- The sport premium is used adequately to enhance pupils' opportunities to access high-quality coaching. Pupils told inspectors that they value the use of a sports coach to develop their skills in physical education.
- Leaders have thought carefully about how to spend the pupil premium funding to accelerate rates of achievement for disadvantaged pupils. However, the progress and attainment of these pupils is low because of variability in the quality of teaching.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well. Pupils have opportunities to visit a range of places of worship such as temples and synagogues. Pupils benefit from a number of planned activities built around the wider curriculum.

For example, they learn about Egyptian dancing as part of their history topic on Ancient Egyptians, and Spanish culture as part of studying the Spanish language.

- Themed assemblies promote the school's teaching of Catholic values well. Pupils told inspectors that these values taught them to 'love and respect each other no matter what a person's background.' They have a strong understanding of right and wrong to help them become respectful British citizens. However, pupils' opportunities to learn about different forms of bullying, particularly homophobic bullying, and diverse types of families in modern Britain are limited.
- Parents are supportive of the new interim executive headteacher and share that they are beginning to notice positive changes.

Governance of the school

- The chair of governors, who took up her post in October 2016, has an accurate understanding of the challenges that have faced the school community since its amalgamation in 2014.
- The governing body has taken important steps to remedy previous instability and steer the school towards the right direction. Governors have rightly taken difficult decisions to restructure the governing body and the school's leadership. As a result, leaders and governors are suitably experienced and knowledgeable in securing further improvements.
- Governors have prioritised finding solutions to vulnerabilities around the site security. They have liaised with other providers on the multi-user site and implemented tangible changes. For example, they have ensured that the previous ease of accessibility by non-school adults has been limited. As a result, there is now a clear distinction between members of school staff and visitors, keeping pupils safe from potential risks.
- The governing body has ensured that safeguarding procedures are tight. They have initiated a safeguarding audit and ensured that record keeping of staff's files is organised and that all pre-employment checks are up to date.
- Governors provide challenge to the senior team. They have a clear understanding of the information that should be provided to them. For example, governors have challenged the interim executive headteacher around the tightening of the attendance policy, and asked probing questions about the progress that disadvantaged pupils are making.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Staff receive up-to-date training reflecting the latest safeguarding guidance including the 'Prevent' duty. They have a clear understanding of the school's procedures and referral systems.
- Leaders follow up any concerns with the relevant external agencies in a timely manner. Safeguarding is an agenda item on regular senior leadership team meetings where they discuss potential concerns.
- Pupils have a good understanding about online safety. They speak confidently about

what actions to take should they feel concerned.

- During the inspection, inspectors raised concerns around unlocked cleaning cupboards and other rooms with potentially hazardous chemicals and tools. Leaders were swift to correct these but need to develop clear procedures to ensure that this is not repeated.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is inconsistent, which hinders pupils' progress.
- The teaching of mathematics is not effective because adults' subject knowledge is variable. Pupils have limited opportunities to discuss their strategies or to solve problems. Adults use a variety of resources to attempt to support pupils' understanding. However, teachers' explanations and opportunities for pupils to practise using visual and practical aids are limited. Consequently, pupils make mistakes that teachers do not correct in time.
- Pupils lose interest in their work when work set for them is not challenging. They begin to talk among themselves about non-learning related matters. In some classes, pupils, who need the next level of challenge wait for support from adults for too long. Pupils' opportunities to discuss their work are uncommon and teachers' expectations of their spoken responses are too low. As a result, pupils' understanding of what is required of them is confused and their progress is weak.
- The most able pupils finish tasks too quickly as the work set for them is too easy, particularly in mathematics. Pupils told inspectors that work in mathematics was not as demanding as that in other subjects.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language receive inconsistent support because teachers' expectations of them are not as high as they could be. These pupils participate well in lessons but adults miss opportunities to develop their spoken and written language. As a result, these pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities receive variable support because they do not receive work that meets their needs. Plans for these pupils do not identify strategies that enable adults to support pupils and their specific needs.
- Teaching assistants' support to develop pupils' learning is variable. In stronger lessons, teaching assistants ask probing questions that deepen pupils' thinking. However, too often, teaching assistants do not provide pupils with adequate guidance in their learning.
- Leaders have ensured that the teaching of writing has started to improve. Pupils write at length on interesting themes linked to other subjects, particularly history. For example, pupils use interesting vocabulary to write about themes linked to the Second World War. They develop their understanding of myths and legends alongside their learning about Ancient Greece. However, standards of presentation vary and teachers do not address misconceptions in pupils' grammar and spelling. This limits pupils' progress, particularly the most able.
- Teachers encourage pupils to read widely. As a result, pupils have secure reading skills. However, the development of pupils' reading comprehension, particularly the use

of challenging texts for the most able pupils, is not as strong.

- Phonics teaching is a strength of the school and pupils apply their phonics skills well in reading. Teachers encourage pupils to use their learned phonics sounds in their writing.
- There are pockets of strong teaching where teachers demonstrate high expectations. In these lessons, pupils are focused and collaborate well. Teachers check their understanding and provide them with challenging work. In particular, pupils' learning in history captivates them and enables them to develop their reading and writing skills well.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school. They work alongside their peers well and show utmost respect to adults. They have a strong understanding of different faiths and cultures, alongside taking pride in their own Catholic faith. Pupils benefit from caring adults to support them and the sense of community in the school is a strength. Pupils demonstrate humility while partaking in daily prayers.
- Pupils have a good understanding of keeping themselves safe online. They are mindful of potential risks out of school and mature about their own personal safety.
- There are very few incidents of serious misbehaviour. Pupils play and learn well together, including on the playground. Pupils state that bullying is very rare and they have well-developed skills to ignore low-level disruptive behaviour.
- The school's actions to support pupils with behavioural needs are positive. Behavioural plans for pupils with additional needs are understood well by adults. Pupils respond well to adults' guidance to promote their positive behaviour.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils behave well in class. Even when work set by teachers is not challenging, their off-task chatter does not prevent others from learning. They have built good relationships with their peers. Pupils are courteous and have positive attitudes to their learning. They move around the school in an orderly manner.
- The school's behaviour systems are clear and pupils respond well to rewards. In particular, a recent 'S.P.A.R.K.' behaviour initiative is effective in ensuring that pupils demonstrate positive behaviours. Teachers use this consistently. As a result, low-level disruptive behaviour has decreased.
- Pupils are punctual and have strong attendance. In the past, pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities had poor attendance. Leaders' actions to promote attendance have been successful and the attendance of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities has risen to be similar to the national average.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics across classes is not high enough and varies due to inconsistent teaching.
- The progress of pupils in writing at the end of key stage 2 has fallen considerably over the last few years. In 2017, it was below that of all pupils nationally.
- In 2017, disadvantaged pupils' progress in writing and reading was well below that of other pupils nationally. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils who met the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 2 was significantly below the national averages.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language make weaker progress compared to those with English as a first language. Teachers do not correct these pupils' misconceptions around the use of spoken and written English.
- Pupils' progress in mathematics at the end of Year 6, in 2017, fell significantly compared to the previous year. The proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard was similar to the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who met the expected and highest standards in reading in 2017 at the end of key stage 2 was above the national average.
- In 2017, the proportion of pupils meeting the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check was in line with the national average.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching in the early years provision requires improvement. This is because adults responsible for teaching pupils lack the necessary skills.
- There are many missed opportunities for children to develop their early speaking and listening skills because adults do not ask probing questions. Most adults' interaction with children is about managing behaviour rather than enhancing children's learning. As a result, children are not confident in understanding what they are learning about, and they make limited progress.
- Adults spend time in ensuring that children benefit from a range of activities such as practical mathematics equipment and opportunities for early mark making. However, teachers do not encourage children to take advantage of these opportunities to develop their basic skills. For example, children showed great interest in an activity to make cookies but adults missed opportunities to discuss this with children effectively to develop their early language and measuring skills.
- Adults are vigilant in keeping children safe in the Nursery and Reception classes. Pupils behave well and have well-set routines. The learning environment is welcoming and reflects the different areas of learning. There are many opportunities for pupils to develop their writing, including in the outdoor environment. However, adults do not encourage pupils to use them independently.
- Additional funding for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is beginning to be used to identify pupils with specific needs. However, variable quality of teaching means

these children do not make the progress they are capable of making.

- Leaders are beginning to make a difference in the early years. For example, activities to engage the boys more in their learning have led to their outcomes improving. Leaders recognise that links with parents about their pupils' learning are not as strong as they could be.
- Outcomes at the end of the early years in 2017 rose to above the national average. This means that children are well prepared for the Year 1 curriculum.

School details

Unique reference number	101337
Local authority	Barnet
Inspection number	10031652
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	564
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Lisa Sturley
Interim executive headteacher	Dr James Lane
Telephone number	020 8202 5229
Website	www.stjps.org
Email address	office@stjosephs.barnet.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6.
- The junior and infant school were separate schools on the same site. They amalgamated into a primary school in 2014. The site is a multi-user facility and used by external agencies.
- St Joseph's Catholic Primary School is larger than the average primary school. Children in the early years and key stage 1 are taught in three classes. There are currently two classes for each year group in key stage 2. The school will expand each year as new pupils enter the school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils who are eligible for pupil premium funding is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above the

national average.

- Pupils come from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds. The largest groups come from White British and any other White backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below the national average.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in all year groups at least two times. Observations were undertaken jointly with senior leaders.
- Leaders and members of the governing body met with inspectors to discuss the impact of their work.
- The lead officer from the local authority met with an inspector.
- Inspectors scrutinised books in all classrooms, across a range of subjects.
- Pupils took an inspector on a tour of the school and shared their views.
- Inspectors heard pupils read and talked to pupils informally throughout the inspection.
- A range of documentation was considered, including the school's self-evaluation, school development plan, records of pupils' behaviour and attendance, assessment information, safeguarding procedures and minutes from governors' meetings.
- Inspectors took account of the 44 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and of information gathered from discussions with parents during the inspection. They also took account of the 37 staff responses and 2 pupil responses to the online surveys.

Inspection team

Noeman Anwar, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Helen Bailey	Ofsted Inspector
Simon Webb	Ofsted Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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