

Inspection of a school judged outstanding for overall effectiveness before September 2024: St Joseph's RC Junior School

Woodend, London SE19 3NU

Inspection dates:

17 and 18 December 2024

Outcome

St Joseph's RC Junior School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud to attend this school. They describe it typically as a friendly and welcoming place to be, where they have lots of friends and staff who help them. Pupils care for each other. For example, pupil 'well-being leaders' check the 'buddy bench' in the playground and help others to make friends. Staff look after pupils well and help them with their emotional and mental health.

Pupils' conduct reflects the school's high expectations for behaviour. They display excellent behaviour in lessons and around the school, creating a harmonious environment. Pupils take on responsibility through roles such as house captains and the pupil senior leadership team. This helps them to develop initiative and leadership skills. The school offers an extensive range of extra-curricular activities so that pupils can explore different interests. These are accessible to all pupils and there is a high take up.

The school has high aspirations for pupils' achievement. It has made some recent changes to ensure that pupils achieve well and are fully prepared for their learning at secondary school. These are having a positive impact. Pupils work hard and are keen to learn. They enjoy various educational trips and workshops that enhance their learning.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

The school has designed a broad and well-rounded curriculum. It sets out what pupils need to learn so that pupils' subject-specific knowledge builds over time. Staff are very positive about working here. They feel well supported with their workload and well-being. Staff have many opportunities to develop their teaching skills and subject knowledge. For

example, they receive training to ensure that they are confident in delivering the new mathematics curriculum. Staff follow a consistent lesson structure in mathematics. For instance, they make sure that pupils apply their learning through problem-solving activities. This helps pupils to develop secure mathematical knowledge and skills.

Reading for pleasure is promoted well across the school. Pupils enjoy time each day to read independently or to listen to a story. Events such as 'Book Week', including the 'bedtime read', and poetry recitals encourage pupils to read widely. Weaker readers have intensive support to help them catch up quickly.

In general, staff explain concepts clearly and help pupils to understand new learning. They use a range of different strategies to check what pupils remember and understand. At times, however, staff do not pick up and address pupils' mistakes. This results in some pupils having misconceptions, which affects how well they learn. The school has put in place systems and additional staff training to strengthen the identification of special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils with SEND receive a range of additional support, and much of this helps pupils to access the learning. However, sometimes, the support for pupils with SEND is not effective. Where this is the case, pupils struggle with their work and are not helped to develop independence.

Staff follow a consistent approach to managing behaviour, such as using the 'behaviour ladder'. Pupils understand and follow their 'class charter' rules. Staff help them to develop empathy. Pupils know, for example, that unkind comments and isolating others can hurt people. The school values are at the heart of pupils' personal development. Pupils are encouraged to be tolerant and kind. They accept people's differences. Through class debates, for example, pupils learn about respecting opposing views. Attendance at school is consistently high.

Leaders have acted promptly to address the dip in pupils' outcomes in national tests in 2024. For example, they have identified pupils at risk of falling behind and put in place a range of additional support to plug gaps in knowledge. This is working well, and pupils' work is at a high standard. Many of the school's initiatives are new. Leaders know there is further work needed to embed these. The governing body is committed to supporting and challenging school leaders to drive further improvements. While many governors are new in role, they understand their responsibilities well.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, there is some variability in curriculum implementation. This includes, for example, approaches to checks on pupils' learning and support for pupils with

SEND. Where this is the case, some pupils do not achieve as well as they could. The school should ensure that the curriculum is implemented consistently well to help pupils achieve high standards in all subjects.

- Over the past year, the school has made many changes to strengthen aspects of its work, including the curriculum, staff development and governance. Much of this work is still new and initiatives are not firmly embedded. This means that it is too early to see the full impact of these changes. The school should make sure that these new approaches are firmly embedded and check carefully that they are having the desired impact.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024 graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be outstanding for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be outstanding for overall effectiveness in June 2018.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	101795
Local authority	Croydon
Inspection number	10323293
Type of school	Junior
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	196
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Patrick Shields
Headteacher	Danielle Ashley
Website	www.stjosephsfederation.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	13 and 14 June 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the St Joseph's Federation along with St Joseph's RC Infant School. The leadership team and governing body have responsibility for both schools.
- The school has undergone significant changes in leadership since the previous inspection. The headteacher took up post in September 2023. There have also been recent changes in governance, with a new chair of governors appointed in November 2024 along with several other new governors.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the school.

- The inspector held discussions with the headteacher, other school leaders, teaching staff and groups of pupils.
- The inspector met with five members of the governing body, including the chair, and met with a representative from the local authority. The inspector also had a telephone discussion with a representative from the diocese.
- The inspector visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector evaluated a range of documentation provided by the school.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- The inspector considered the responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and to the staff survey.

Inspection team

Jude Wilson, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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