

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Devizes

St Joseph's Place, Devizes, Wiltshire SN10 1DD

Inspection dates

15–16 March 2017

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Inadequate

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders at all levels have transformed the school, bringing about the rapid improvements needed.
- The executive headteacher and the head of school have very successfully shared their drive and ambition so that it is understood by all.
- Highly effective systems are now in place that ensure that leaders know what works well in the school and what needs improving. Leaders deal swiftly with areas of concern.
- Relationships with parents are strong and they value the efforts that leaders and teachers make to welcome them into school.
- All groups of pupils, including the most able, achieve well across the school. Progress is good for most pupils in a wide range of subjects.
- Governors are highly skilled and passionate about the school. They challenge leaders well to ensure that the school continues to improve.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school and it is threaded very effectively through the school's curriculum.
- Occasionally, some pupils do not do as well as they could, especially the most able pupils in their mathematics.
- Teachers use information about their pupils to plan lessons that match work to pupils' needs. As a result, most pupils are challenged to do their best and learn well.
- Behaviour is good in and around school. Pupils say that bullying is rare; however, when it does occur, the teachers deal with it very effectively.
- Disadvantaged pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, make good progress across the school.
- Pupils say that learning is fun and they take pride in their work and school. The presentation of work in pupils' books is of high quality.
- In the early years, children get off to a very strong start. They enjoy a wide range of learning experiences, particularly in the new outside learning area.
- Pupils use their phonic skills well to read words they do not know. They enjoy reading and have a good understanding of what they read.
- While some middle leaders know about the strengths and weaknesses of their areas of responsibility well, and have made a positive impact on pupils' learning, this is not yet the case for all.

Full report

In accordance with section 13(4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen the teaching of mathematics so that pupils, including the most able, make better progress by ensuring that:
 - pupils are consistently set challenging tasks that deepen their learning
 - teachers check pupils' understanding more closely and move them on quickly to more demanding tasks as they are ready.
- Further develop the skills of middle leaders so that they have a greater positive impact on the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and standards in their area of responsibility.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The executive headteacher and head of school have been instrumental in improving the school at all levels. Their high expectations and aspirations for the whole school community are shared by staff and governors. As a result, leaders have made the rapid changes needed.
- Leaders check the quality of teaching and standards very well. Senior leaders collect a wide range of information about pupils' performance from a variety of sources. They are relentless in their drive to ensure that every pupil does well. They know the strengths of the school and the areas that need to be addressed and they take swift action. Information is shared among leaders at all levels to improve outcomes for pupils and the quality of teaching.
- Leaders have rapidly improved the quality of teaching by targeting training that is closely linked to teachers' needs. Support from other schools and organisations has proved highly effective and the whole school team has valued the positive impact that this has had on the quality of teaching. As a result, teaching across the school is now consistently good.
- The school has a robust system for holding teachers and leaders to account for the work they do in school. Senior leaders are very effective at identifying what teachers do well and areas for improvement.
- Middle leaders are committed to improving pupils' learning and there are good systems in place which enable them to check on pupils' progress and standards. They have been well supported by senior leaders and have received highly effective training to help them in their roles. They are committed to improving the pupils' learning and most middle leaders have already begun to see a significant positive impact on standards. However, some leaders are new to their roles and are still developing a full understanding of their responsibilities.
- Senior leaders and governors make sure that the money spent on disadvantaged pupils makes a difference. Leaders are clear that all pupils are entitled to a good quality of education and that the school has to meet both the academic and emotional needs of the most vulnerable pupils. This is what drives their targeted support. As a result, disadvantaged pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, make good progress and previous gaps in learning are rapidly diminishing.
- The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum with a wide variety of extra-curricular activities and cross-curricular links. Teachers use these links to set challenging tasks which enable pupils to apply their writing skills in their topic work. For example, pupils in Year 4 used a topic on the water cycle to write some high-quality explanation texts. Displays around the school celebrate the pupils' work from across the curriculum, including art, religious education, French, geography and history. These displays are a strong feature of the school's ethos of high expectations and pupils' high-quality work.
- The school works hard to prepare pupils for life in modern Britain. Pupils understand about democracy and displays around the school and work seen in pupils' books

celebrates the diversity of cultures in the UK and around the world. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is a strength of the school, with many cultures and faiths woven into the fabric of the school's curriculum.

- The teacher who works with pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is highly effective at making sure that pupils make as much progress as possible from their starting points. Whole-school training has ensured that pupils are identified quickly and support is put in place.
- The sport premium additional funding is spent effectively, with the school employing specialist teachers to support teachers and pupils. Funding arrangements have been restructured and recent improvements are beginning to impact positively on pupils' day-to-day school life.
- Equality of opportunity is important to the school and all staff and leaders work hard to make sure this happens. Pupils know that everyone is welcome and respected at St Joseph's, no matter who they are or where they are from.

Governance of the school

- Governance has been transformed since the time of the previous inspection. Governors share a drive and desire to continue to improve the school and the outcomes for all pupils.
- The governing body have been very focused on rapidly improving the school. They know the school well and have highly effective systems for finding out about the school's performance. With this information, they waste no time in making sure that senior leaders are challenged and deal with any areas of concern that they find.
- Governors keep their skills up to date with a wide variety of training, making sure that they have the knowledge to do their role extremely well.
- Governors and senior leaders have worked hard to build confidence with parents in their leadership of the school. Parents appreciate the steps that have been taken and welcome the new, open approach.
- Governors are very knowledgeable about how additional funding is being spent to support disadvantaged pupils, and for the additional sport premium.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. They are thorough, timely and monitored by leaders, including governors.
- Staff are well trained in child protection procedures and know what to do if they have a concern about a pupil's welfare. Many staff are first aid trained and are available across the whole school day.
- The safer recruitment of staff is well organised and leaders carry out all the necessary checks to make sure that all staff are appropriately vetted.
- The school works well with external agencies to make sure that they support pupils and families. In addition, they employ a specialist person who works with families who need additional support or help with improving attendance.

- Risk assessments are in place for every aspect of life inside the school and the school's grounds. School leaders and pupils are also clear about how to stay safe when outside school.
- Pupils say they feel safe and the vast majority of parents agree that they are safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The quality of teaching has improved significantly since the time of the previous inspection as a result of the relentless drive of leaders and all staff to improve outcomes for their pupils.
- Leaders at all levels have made improvements to teaching a key priority and all the staff have risen to the challenge. Leaders regularly check on the quality of teaching and offer clear and accurate feedback to teachers on how to improve. As a result, teaching is consistently good across the school.
- Teachers have an accurate understanding of what pupils can achieve as a result of the clear and robust system the school uses to check on pupils' progress. From this, teachers plan lessons that match pupils' learning very well.
- Teachers set high expectations and plan lessons that challenge pupils to do their best. As a result, the presentation of work in pupils' books is of a high quality of which pupils are rightly proud. Strong subject knowledge ensures that pupils are taught to a good standard. From this, teachers plan activities and learning opportunities that enable pupils to make good progress.
- Teachers plan cross-curricular links enabling pupils to apply subject skills across subjects. For example, during a geography lesson in Year 3, pupils enthusiastically used their computing skills to carry out research to good effect, alongside well-structured support from the class teacher. Opportunities to develop pupils' writing across all subjects are a strength.
- Pupils use feedback and guidance in lessons to improve their work and be challenged. Teachers consistently follow the school's feedback and marking policy.
- Most parents agree that they get good information from the school to help support their child at home, including homework.
- Teaching assistants are well trained and are very effective at supporting learning, particularly for the most able pupils and those requiring additional support. They are given clear guidance by the class teacher and skilfully ask questions to help pupils learn.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are good, especially when learning is challenging. They enjoy learning and say lessons are fun. Pupils work hard and listen to the teachers and each other, ensuring that little valuable learning time is lost.
- Mathematics lessons are focused on helping pupils understand key skills and mathematical ideas. However, in some lessons, the most able pupils are not challenged quickly enough to apply skills to more complex problems.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are very good and this contributes to the pupils' engagement within school. The school is very effective at addressing pupils' personal and social needs. Leaders and teachers know their pupils well and this enables highly effective support to be provided at a very personal level, which parents really appreciate.
- School leaders work hard to ensure that pupils feel safe, and parents agree that their children feel safe. Pupils know where they are safe around school and where they are not allowed to go. Pupils understand how to stay safe online and what to do if they are concerned.
- Pupils say that bullying is rare and that they feel confident that adults in school will sort it out if it happens.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good in and around the school. Pupils are polite, kind to one another, and welcoming to visitors.
- Attendance is broadly in line with national averages for all pupils and for most groups. Leaders monitor attendance stringently and swiftly follow up any absences. Rigorous steps are taken by leaders to chase up poor attendance and support is offered through a specialist staff member to work with families. As a result, disadvantaged pupils are now attending school more frequently, which is helping them to catch up on previous lost learning.
- Leaders in school have improved behaviour since the time of the previous inspection and pupils have risen to the new expectations that leaders have set. As a result, there have been no exclusions since the new leadership team has been in place. Many parents, governors and visitors to the school spoke of the vast improvements in behaviour around the school and in lessons since the previous inspection.
- Derogatory or racist language is not tolerated and it is very effectively dealt with by all.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- As a result of leaders' relentless drive to raise standards, most pupils across the school are making consistently good progress from their different starting points in English and mathematics. This prepares pupils well for the next stage of their education.
- Standards in writing have risen since the previous inspection. Evidence gathered from across the school demonstrates that pupils, including boys and girls equally, make at least good progress in writing.

- Pupils are taught good phonic skills and use them well to read a wide range of books. Pupils enjoy reading and acquire more complex reading skills well as they move through the school.
- Disadvantaged pupils achieve well and the additional support helps them very effectively. Leaders have worked hard to put focused support in place, as well as clear expectations for teachers. As a result, most disadvantaged pupils are now making good progress. Many of the most able disadvantaged pupils are working well above their age-related expectations.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported to make good progress from their different starting points. Many are making very good progress as a result of the well-organised support and timely interventions by teachers.
- Pupils' work, in a wide range of subjects, shows that they reach a good standard and make good progress in many areas. Occasionally, the most able pupils are not challenged as much as they could be.
- The most able pupils have not always done as well as they could, especially in mathematics. However, many are now catching up. Evidence from across the school shows that teachers are now offering additional challenges for pupils who finish tasks quickly, but this has not yet had time to become standard practice for all teachers.

Early years provision

Good

- Leaders of the early years have undertaken a successful journey of improvement since the previous inspection. They have an accurate view of the strengths and weaknesses and have used this knowledge to rapidly improve the provision. For example, the new outside learning space is now an inspiring space for children to learn.
- Children enter school with skills that are broadly typical for their age but with a wide variety of needs within that range.
- Teaching is highly effective and well planned, meeting the needs of children extremely well. The teacher and teaching assistants work together very supportively. Information about children's learning is used to plan engaging and exciting lessons. As a result, progress is now good across a wide range of areas of learning, especially in writing, and children are well prepared for Year 1.
- Writing is a strength and there are many opportunities for children to write. For example, many children were very excited by a pair of magic shoes they found that transported them to a magical land. The teacher's skilful questioning encouraged the children's development of imaginative language which they then used very well in some creative writing.
- Disadvantaged pupils benefit from having their needs closely met from an early stage.
- Children are very well behaved and take care of their classroom and outside space. They enjoy learning and respond well to the stimulating environment. Children show great resilience and curiosity, persevering with tasks until they are satisfied with what they have done.

- Transition into school is smooth and effective due to the strong partnerships that the leaders have developed with parents and pre-school settings.
- Sometimes work in mathematics is not as challenging as it could be for the most able children, but leaders are already aware of this and have taken action to remedy this.

School details

Unique reference number	137371
Local authority	Wiltshire
Inspection number	10033095

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	193
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Colette Culligan
Executive headteacher	Mike O'Keefe
Telephone number	01380 723084
Website	http://www.stjosdevizes.wilts.sch.uk/
Email address	secretary@stjosdevizes.wilts.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	18–19 March 2015

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- St Joseph's is smaller than the average primary school. Pupils are taught in single year group classes.
- The majority of pupils are of White British backgrounds and few pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The number of pupils supported by the additional pupil premium funding is lower than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils receiving support for their special educational needs and/or disabilities is below the national average.

Information about this inspection

- Pupils' learning was observed in 14 lessons or part lessons, including some jointly with the executive headteacher. The work of pupils in all classes was scrutinised. Many pupils were spoken to about their work during lessons and informally around school. The inspectors listened to pupils read from different year groups and gathered views about their experiences in school.
- Discussions were held with the executive headteacher, other leaders, governors and members of the teaching and support staff.
- The inspector took into account 63 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. Discussions were held with parents as they brought their children to school.
- A range of documentation was considered, including information on pupils' attainment and progress, the school's improvement planning, records of monitoring of teaching and learning and information on the management of teachers' performance. Procedures for safeguarding pupils, including information relating to attendance, behaviour and referrals to social services, were examined.

Inspection team

Richard Lucas, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Non Davies

Ofsted Inspector

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