

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Carterton

Lawton Avenue, Carterton, Oxfordshire OX18 3JY

Inspection dates

15–16 November 2017

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- Safeguarding in this school is ineffective because leaders have not established a culture where all staff routinely follow the school's policies and procedures to keep children safe.
- The directors of the Dominic Barberi Multi Academy Company (DBMAC) have not provided school leaders, including those responsible for governance, with the training and support they need to carry out their roles effectively.
- Leaders do not have an accurate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses across the school. They have not taken appropriate action quickly enough to tackle underperformance.
- Governors do not yet have the skills to perform their duties effectively and have not held school leaders to account for the quality of education provided.
- Leaders' and teachers' aspirations of what pupils can achieve are not consistently high enough. They do not routinely challenge pupils sufficiently in their learning.
- Teaching of writing and mathematics across the school is variable and children are not making strong progress in these key skills.
- Teachers, including in the early years, do not use their knowledge of pupils' attainment to plan teaching and learning that challenge pupils to make strong progress.
- The provision in the early years is inadequate because children are not well supervised and their behaviour is not managed effectively. Leaders do not have a clear vision for provision in the early years and have not identified plans for improvement that are focused on learning.

The school has the following strengths

- Leaders promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.
- The teaching of reading across the school has improved so that pupils attain well.
- Pupils' conduct around the school is calm and orderly.
- Older pupils have opportunities to take on roles of responsibility in the school and they take great pride in doing so.
- Pupils are polite, friendly and welcoming. They have established strong friendships with one another and positive relationships with the adults in school. Attendance is improving.

Full report

In accordance with section 44(2) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Establish a robust culture of safeguarding throughout the school.
- Improve the effectiveness of leaders at all levels by:
 - ensuring that the DBMAC provides support and training for all leaders and governors so that they can fulfil their roles effectively
 - sharpening leaders' evaluation of the effectiveness of the school so that focused targets and actions can be identified
 - raising expectations of all staff for what children can achieve.
- Improve the quality of provision for the early years by:
 - ensuring that safeguarding and risk assessment procedures are implemented speedily and effectively to keep children safe
 - establishing effective assessment procedures so that teachers and leaders have a clear understanding of the children's progress and can plan learning opportunities to meet their needs
 - developing a clear vision and plan for improvement that is focused on learning.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning so that pupils make strong progress by:
 - ensuring that accurate assessment information is used to plan learning opportunities that challenge pupils to make rapid progress
 - quickly putting in place appropriate, effective support for those pupils who need it.
- Improve outcomes in writing and mathematics so that pupils make rapid progress and achieve the standards of which they are capable.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

An external review of the use of pupil premium funding should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Inadequate

- The effectiveness of leadership and management in the school is inadequate because leaders have not established a secure culture of safeguarding throughout the school and expectations of pupils are too low.
- Leaders' self-evaluation of the school's effectiveness and their planning for improvement are weak because they have not been given the support and training to do so effectively. Leaders have not focused their evaluation on the impact that their actions are having on outcomes for children. Where actions are planned to address weaknesses, they are not specific enough to measure whether they have been successful.
- Leaders do not check the quality of teaching, learning and assessment rigorously enough. As a result, leaders do not have an accurate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses across the school.
- Leaders have not taken the necessary steps to address underperformance in teaching. They have not provided effective feedback, training and support to improve the quality of teaching. Any actions they have taken to improve pupils' attainment and progress in writing and mathematics have been implemented too slowly.
- Additional funding is not used effectively to improve the outcomes of disadvantaged pupils in the school. Leaders have not clearly identified how the funding has been spent. They have not measured the effect of the support provided on the attainment and progress of pupils and do not have clear plans for how future funding will be spent.
- Some pupils are taught a well-balanced curriculum that enables them to develop important skills in a variety of subjects, but leaders do not ensure that there is a consistent approach to curriculum planning for all pupils in the school.
- Some aspects of fundamental British values are covered well in the curriculum and most pupils have some understanding of how these impact on their lives. For example, pupils spoke positively about their opportunity to democratically vote for their school council representatives.
- Leaders ensure that the primary physical education (PE) and sport premium funding is effectively targeted to provide pupils with high-quality teaching and learning. Pupils speak positively about the opportunities they have to participate in a wide range of sports and in competitive sports with other schools.
- Leaders and teachers promote the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. They have established a culture where most pupils feel happy in school. For example, one parent said, 'When my children have been unhappy, they have gone above and beyond to support them.' Across the school, pupils learn to celebrate one another's differences, and to be kind and caring towards each other.

Governance of the school

- Leaders of the DBMAC have not provided the representatives of the school committee with the training and support that they need to carry out their roles effectively. For example, due to the lack of training, one representative used internet search engines to find out what the roles and responsibilities involved and how to better fulfil the role.
- The representatives of the school committee are very enthusiastic and are committed to their roles. Due to the lack of training and support, however, they are not yet skilled enough in checking the impact of their own policies and leaders' actions with any rigour. Prior to this inspection, they did not have a full understanding of the school's ongoing poor academic performance, especially in writing and mathematics. They do not yet challenge school leaders sufficiently where there is underperformance.
- Directors of the DBMAC have historically been preoccupied with significant financial issues in the company. This has had a negative impact on the capacity of leaders at St Joseph's to deliver change and improvement. Some staff and parents also raised a concern that it reduced the capacity of leadership at the school. Directors are now providing a greater level of support and challenge, but it is too early to see the impact of these changes.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.
- Although leaders worked hard to improve site security and safeguarding processes following an audit last year, they have not yet established a secure culture of safeguarding throughout the school. Staff do not routinely follow the procedures for making sure that pupils are kept safe.
- Leaders, including governors, do not rigorously monitor the implementation of their safeguarding policies and procedures to ensure that all staff fully understand their responsibilities and follow the agreed protocols. Leaders have not established a sense of urgency among adults when it comes to following up incidents relating to safeguarding.
- The statutory requirements for checking that adults are suitable for working with children are met.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching and learning is inconsistent. Some teachers and leaders do not have high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve. The amount of work that pupils produce is sometimes limited because teachers do not challenge pupils to produce their best work. As a result, not enough pupils are making the progress that they could, particularly in writing and mathematics.
- Teachers do not routinely use assessment information to plan carefully what they need to teach the pupils next so that they make good progress. Pupils are sometimes set work that repeats what they already know and therefore does not challenge them to apply or develop their learning. At other times, teachers do not address pupils'

misunderstandings and move on instead to harder work that pupils are not yet ready to tackle.

- The teaching of mathematics and writing requires improvement. Some teachers use strong subject knowledge to give clear explanations, employing accurate subject vocabulary which enables pupils to learn well. However, this quality is not consistent across the school.
- At times, teachers' lack of challenge and low expectations of what pupils can achieve mean that many pupils have not yet developed the resilience to persevere when faced with difficult work.
- The quality of support provided for pupils who require additional assistance with their learning is variable. Some teachers and teaching assistants skilfully coach, guide and prompt pupils so that they can tackle their learning with confidence and success. At other times, the support that pupils need, particularly for those pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities, is not identified and provided quickly enough. As a result, these pupils make slower progress in their learning.
- Pupils have a positive attitude towards the homework that teachers set them weekly. They find the range of tasks appealing and enjoy tackling them. For example, one parent said that homework 'is always fun, creative and encourages family time'. The impact that this is having on pupils' learning and progress over time, however, is not yet evident.
- The positive, caring relationships that teachers have established with their pupils mean that the majority of pupils have a good attitude to their learning.
- Some teachers and teaching assistants use questioning effectively to challenge pupils' thinking. Pupils respond well to this, extending their ideas and giving carefully thought-through explanations.
- The teaching of phonics has improved in recent years and pupils develop a secure understanding of the phonic sounds. In key stage 1, teachers and teaching assistants skilfully support pupils to sound out words so that they are able to spell unfamiliar words and apply them in their independent writing.
- Reading is taught well. Most pupils have positive attitudes to reading. Pupils read often, both in order to improve their skills and for enjoyment. Younger pupils can work out unknown words using their secure knowledge of phonics. Older pupils read with fluency and are confident to give their opinions about characters and events in the books they have been reading.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Inadequate

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is inadequate because the arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.
- Many pupils do not yet have high aspirations for themselves and a desire to learn from their mistakes. They are not focused on making improvements to their learning, using

their own reflections and teachers' feedback.

- Pupils are polite and welcoming to one another, and to adults and other visitors to the school. They talk fondly of the friendships that they have established in the school. They understand how to keep themselves and each other safe, for example when online.
- Pupils say that incidents of bullying are rare, but when they do occur, they are dealt with quickly and appropriately by staff. As a result, the pupils in this school feel safe and happy.
- Pupils value the opportunities that they are given to serve their school, for example as prefects and Catholic ambassadors. They take great pride in these roles, for which they have to apply, enjoying the challenges and rewards they offer. For example, one pupil talked about how much he enjoyed having the opportunity to act as a role model for the younger pupils in the dining hall at lunchtime.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- In too many classes, pupils are easily distracted and low-level disruption is not managed effectively by teachers and teaching assistants. As a result, pupils' learning is affected and this limits the progress they are making over time.
- The majority of pupils conduct themselves in a safe, calm and sensible manner around the school and throughout the school day, including when walking the short distance to the local church.
- Leaders have taken robust action to tackle the previously high rates of absence across the school. As a result, the attendance rates of pupils are improving towards national averages, including for those pupils who are disadvantaged.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- For the last three years, the progress that pupils have made in writing and mathematics has been lower than the national average. This is not improving quickly or consistently enough. Overall, current pupils in the school are not making rapid enough progress in these subjects to catch up.
- Pupils' books show that many pupils continue to make the same, or similar, errors in their writing and mathematical calculations over time, for example in their use of punctuation, spelling rules and sentence structure. Pupils make stronger progress when teaching is more effective.
- The most able pupils are not consistently performing to their potential. Across the school, the proportion of children who achieve above the expectations for their age is low, particularly in writing and mathematics.
- The outcomes for disadvantaged pupils in the school are variable. Many are making similar progress to their peers and therefore are not catching up quickly enough to achieve national expectations.

- Work in pupils' books shows that pupils' progress across the wider curriculum is varied. Some pupils are applying their writing skills well to communicate their developing knowledge and understanding, for example in their writing about the Victorians in history. However, this is inconsistent and some pupils' progress is limited.
- Pupils' reading skills have improved due to the stronger teaching and support they receive. They now make good progress from their starting points. The majority of pupils read fluently and with enjoyment. They use their strong phonics knowledge to support them. By the time they leave St Joseph's, most pupils attain the expected standards for reading.
- The proportion of pupils who achieve the expected standard in phonics has improved over the last three years. In 2017, pupils performed close to the provisional national average in the phonics screening check.

Early years provision

Inadequate

- The provision in the early years is inadequate because safeguarding procedures and practices are not effective. Inspectors observed staff leaving children unsupervised, potentially putting them at risk of harm.
- Leaders do not have high enough expectations of the children and the progress they can make. Staff do not monitor and support children's behaviour closely enough. Consequently, too many children are not developing the necessary skills to manage their own behaviour and to develop positive relationships with one another.
- School leaders do not have an accurate picture of the strengths and weaknesses of the early years provision because they are not monitoring and evaluating this area of the school rigorously enough. The early years leader does not have a clear vision and plan for improvement that are focused on learning and improving outcomes for children.
- Teachers have not yet established effective routines to support the children's behaviour and learning. As a result, transitions between activities throughout the day are disorganised. The children are not well prepared and ready for what they need to do next.
- Many children do not engage with purpose and enthusiasm in the activities that have been planned to support their learning, and are easily distracted. Many children do not listen to explanations and do not participate well in class or group activities. Staff do not manage this behaviour appropriately and, as a result, behaviour is not improving.
- Leaders and teachers have not yet established effective, robust assessment practices in order to assess what the children can do and to monitor the progress that the children make. Although, historically, outcomes for children in the early years have improved over time, leaders and teachers have not assessed what current children can do and what activities and learning will support their next steps. Therefore, leaders do not have a clear understanding of the current attainment and progress of the children in the early years provision.
- Phonics teaching is weak because teachers do not routinely use the correct sounds. They have not adopted a clear approach to support children's acquisition of these important skills.

- In the Nursery, teachers and teaching assistants have established positive relationships with the children, where they are nurtured and well-supported in their learning and play. Teachers plan activities well and make use of effective questioning to develop children's key skills.
- Leaders have established good relationships with parents, some of whom were very positive about the communication that they have with teachers and leaders. For example, parents like the 'wow' cards displayed on a tree in the classroom where they can share and celebrate children's achievements at home.

School details

Unique reference number	139532
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	10037824

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	165
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Michele Heath
Principal	Lisa Smith
Telephone number	01993 841240
Website	www.stjosephsprimarycarterton.co.uk
Email address	principalsjc@dbmac.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	4–5 July 2013

Information about this school

- St Joseph's Catholic Primary School is sponsored by the Dominic Barberi Multi Academy Company (DBMAC), having joined the company in April 2013. DBMAC delegates local governance to a committee of representatives in the school.
- This is smaller than the average-sized primary school, with an increasing number of pupils on roll. Some pupils are taught in split year groups.
- Since the previous inspection, the school has opened a Nursery provision. The school also provides a breakfast club.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is in line with the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards. These standards set the minimum expectations for pupils' outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics by the

end of year 6.

- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information about the curriculum and the articles of association for its governance structure on its website.
- The school does not comply with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish about the curriculum and the articles of association for its governance structure.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils' learning in 17 sessions across a range of subjects and year groups. One of these sessions was observed jointly with the principal. Inspectors looked at pupils' work during lessons and through a focused analysis of books.
- Inspectors held meetings with senior leaders, other staff, representatives of the school committee and representatives of the DBMAC, and held a telephone conversation with a representative from the diocese.
- Inspectors took into account the views of the 14 staff who completed Ofsted's online survey, including four free-text comments, and the views of four staff who completed a paper survey.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and spoke with pupils in lessons and around the school. They also met formally with groups of pupils.
- Inspectors spoke with parents during the inspection and considered the 27 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online parent survey, including 17 free-text comments.
- Pupils' behaviour was observed during lessons, around the school, on the walk to church and during breaktimes and lunchtimes.
- A wide range of documentation was reviewed, including information available on the school's website and records relating to pupils' attainment, progress, attendance and behaviour. Information on governance, including minutes of the school committee, was examined. The school's self-evaluation summary, school development plan and supporting evidence were scrutinised.
- Inspectors reviewed safeguarding records and the central record of recruitment checks on staff.

Inspection team

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Ofsted Inspector

Clare Beswick

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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