

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School (Dewsbury)

Healds Road, Dewsbury, West Yorkshire WF13 4HY

Inspection dates

13–14 February 2018

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	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders and governors have not been fully effective in ensuring that the quality of teaching improves so it is consistently good.
- The monitoring and evaluation of the school's work is not sharp enough for leaders and governors to make accurate judgements about how well pupils are achieving and the impact of school initiatives.
- Not all teachers have high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve. The progress of disadvantaged pupils is variable. Too few of the most able pupils achieve higher standards.
- Expectations of pupils' spelling, handwriting and the presentation of their work are inconsistent across the school. Some younger pupils learn incorrect letter formation.
- There are too few opportunities for pupils to practise their writing skills in a range of subjects across the curriculum.
- Despite pupils saying that they enjoy reading, many older pupils cannot talk in any depth about their preferred author, or explain differences in genres. Their choice of books is not sufficiently well monitored by teachers.

The school has the following strengths

- The school is effective in supporting the welfare of its pupils and their families. There are good procedures to ensure the safety and well-being of pupils. Pupils feel safe in school.
- Children get off to a good start in the Reception class. They make good progress and this prepares them well for key stage 1.
- The provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is good and this ensures that these pupils make good progress.
- Pupils are keen to achieve and have good attitudes to their work. They behave well in lessons and conduct themselves well around school and in the playground.
- The school places a great emphasis on tolerance and respect for each other and towards those from different backgrounds. Pupils have a good understanding of different cultures and religions. This effectively develops their spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, so that it is consistently good or better, to raise pupils' attainment in reading and writing by ensuring that:
 - teachers raise their expectations of what pupils, including the most able and the disadvantaged, can achieve
 - teachers' questioning probes pupils' deeper understanding in reading lessons
 - pupils' choice of reading books is monitored so that they read from a range of genres
 - pupils use correct grammar and punctuation in their writing
 - there is a consistent approach to the correcting of pupils' spelling
 - pupils' written work is tidy and well presented
 - younger pupils form their letters correctly when handwriting
 - pupils are given opportunities to apply their writing skills in a range of subjects across the curriculum
 - activities planned for children in the Reception class have a clear purpose for learning based on what they need to learn next.
- Improve leadership and management by:
 - swiftly addressing the remaining weaknesses in teaching
 - ensuring that the systems for assessing pupils' progress and attainment are fully embedded
 - evaluating the impact on pupils' achievement when monitoring the quality of teaching and the effectiveness of leaders' actions
 - developing governors' strategic role in monitoring the school's work.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- The headteacher has established a positive climate for learning. Pupils, staff and parents are proud of their school and the changes that have been introduced to provide a safe and calm place for adults and pupils to work. However, senior leaders have not secured consistently good teaching across the school. There has been significant staff turnover and this loss of continuity has contributed to a lack of pupils' progress by the time they reach the end of key stage 2.
- Some of the systems and processes to check the quality of teaching and measure rates of pupils' progress have only just been introduced and are not fully embedded. There has been insufficient detailed monitoring to ensure that all teachers are consistently adhering to the minimum expectations for the quality of teaching. Strategies to tackle weaker teaching have been too slow to take effect.
- The school has been active in seeking support for professional development and external verification of its own judgements. Despite this, the monitoring of the school's work has lacked precision. Although there are regular checks on the work in pupils' books, there has been insufficient emphasis on judging whether pupils' work is showing secure evidence of progress.
- The school development plan identifies accurately what needs to be improved. However, evaluation tends to lack quantifiable evidence to provide a clear steer for middle leaders and governors.
- Leaders have addressed some of the points for improvement following the last inspection. There continues to be good-quality learning in the early years, and good outcomes in key stage 1 have been maintained. There have been significant improvements in pupils' behaviour and attendance. There is still work to do in helping pupils catch up after a legacy of weak teaching. This is more evident in key stage 2, where progress is variable because teaching is still not consistently good.
- Changes to the teaching of mathematics are having a positive impact on raising teachers' expectations and providing a clear structure for delivering lessons. By the time pupils reach the end of key stage 2, their progress is now in line with the national average.
- The recent introduction of changes in the teaching of reading and writing has had a positive impact on engaging pupils and is reflected in their enjoyment of reading. Boys in particular are keen to read and write because the subject matter appeals to them. The teaching of writing provides a tight structure to support pupils' learning of grammar and punctuation. However, pupils' independent work shows that their knowledge and skills are not securely embedded.
- The school has introduced a thematic approach to teaching the curriculum. It has become a 'polar expedition school' and has established links with a school in Finland. Discussions with pupils confirmed high levels of engagement in a range of 'their favourite' subjects. However, their knowledge and skills in some subjects, such as geography and history, are not secure. Work in their books shows that they are not applying what they have learned in their English lessons to their writing in other

subjects.

- The pupil premium funding provides additional learning support and extra-curricular activities for disadvantaged pupils so that they enjoy equal opportunities alongside their peers. Their progress is monitored closely and when this slows they are given additional teaching. However, their varying rates of progress reflect the inconsistencies in the quality of teaching they receive.
- The primary physical education and sport funding has been used to improve the skills of teachers to deliver good-quality physical education lessons. The use of a sports coach to provide specialist support has raised the profile of sport and healthy lifestyles. Pupils benefit from participating in a range of extra-curricular activities.
- The funding for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities is used effectively to ensure that they receive good support for their welfare needs and academic learning. Individual support plans ensure that these pupils make good progress and their needs are well met.
- The promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong and reflects the school's ethos and Catholic principles. Pupils show respect for people from all backgrounds and faiths, and have a good understanding of fundamental British values.

Governance of the school

- A recently appointed chair of the governing body brings to the governing body a sharper focus and commitment in addressing weaknesses. Governors regularly check for themselves that what they are being told by leaders is actually happening. While they are party to considerable detail about how well pupils are doing, they are still developing their skills to stand back and take a strategic role in evaluating the impact of expenditure on school improvements.
- Governors have been generous in their support to improve weaker teaching. They have provided mentoring and coaching, and funded external support. However, they have been slow to hold leaders to account in taking effective action which would swiftly bring about the necessary improvements to ensure that pupils achieve well.
- Governors monitor the use of the pupil premium. They have sought parents' views on whether they feel the additional support and teaching are having a positive impact on their children. Some vulnerable families have expressed their appreciation for the pastoral support they have received from the school. Nevertheless, academic progress for this group of pupils is inconsistent.
- Governors are fully conversant with their statutory duties for safeguarding, ensuring that pupils are safe and staff are recruited with careful consideration.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders have created a safe culture to take care of their pupils and ensure that procedures are implemented to protect them. Staff understand their obligations for

safeguarding and this is emphasised throughout the school's work, including in lessons.

- Leaders and staff take appropriate action when necessary. They liaise with outside agencies and this provides pupils and families with the support they need. Procedures and policies are fit for purpose. All members of staff are checked for their suitability to work with children. Accurate and up-to-date records of these checks are maintained.
- The school is highly vigilant in ensuring that pupils attend school regularly. There are robust systems in place to follow up absences on the first day and, where necessary, involve external agencies to ensure that pupils are safe when not in school.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe in a variety of situations and say they feel safe in school. They are confident that the school deals with incidents of any bullying, but they add that such incidents are rare.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teaching across the school is inconsistent. While there is some high-quality teaching across the school, not all teachers have high expectations of what pupils can do. Too little is expected of the most able pupils. They are not always clear what they need to do to achieve a higher standard, particularly in reading and writing.
- Additional teaching in smaller groups is provided for pupils who are falling behind, including any disadvantaged pupils. This is productive when support mechanisms are replicated back in the classroom, but this is not always the case and, as a result, these pupils make variable progress.
- Pupils' work throughout the school is sometimes untidy because teachers do not consistently adhere to the school's presentation policy. There is an inconsistent approach to the correcting of pupils' spellings.
- The teaching of phonics is effective in ensuring that pupils have grasped the basic sounds that letters represent. Pupils are moved on quickly to learn more complex letter combinations and this means that most pupils make good progress in early reading.
- The school's handwriting policy is not adhered to. Younger pupils sometimes form their letters incorrectly and this is not always addressed by teachers. The books of older pupils show that many pupils do however develop their own legible style of handwriting.
- Recent changes to the teaching of reading mean that lessons are now better planned and this has particularly benefited the older pupils. This mostly results in high levels of engagement and pupils' genuine pleasure in reading. Even so, not all teachers use questioning well to deepen pupils' understanding of the author's intention or their style. This slows down pupils' progress in reading. Although pupils are given opportunities to read a book of their choice, this is not monitored closely by all teachers to ensure that pupils are reading from a wide range of genres.
- The teaching of writing has also been reviewed. This has resulted in pupils' eagerness to write and teachers' choice of subject matter appealing to boys as well as girls. There are signs that the new approach is having a positive impact on pupils' work. For example, some pupils are keen to use some of the new words they have learned in their reading lessons. The teaching of grammar and punctuation is not having the

same impact on pupils' progress and the standards they reach. Pupils' independent writing is often incorrectly structured. Older pupils resort to using repetitive sentences and simple punctuation when writing in subjects other than in English lessons.

- The teaching of subjects other than English and mathematics engages pupils' interests. However, pupils' work in history, geography, and some in science, shows that the learning intention and activity are not clearly based on the skills and knowledge pupils need to learn in these subjects. For example, older pupils had enjoyed building a boat as part of the school's polar project but had difficulty explaining the scientific knowledge or the design and technology skills they had learned as a result of this work.
- Improvements in the teaching of mathematics mean that most teaching in this subject is good and the pace of pupils' progress is now accelerating. Pupils have good opportunities to apply their mathematical skills to problem-solving questions and show some good reasoning for their solutions.
- The needs of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are well met through the deployment of teaching assistants. Provision is well organised with specific programmes of learning planned, based on each individual pupil's needs.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- The school's ethos promotes effective reflection on faith, culture and personal choices. Pupils are very well informed about how people might choose to lead different lifestyles. Pupils have a good understanding of British values and are accepting and welcoming of people's differences, which prepares them to be good citizens in modern Britain.
- Assembly themes to develop pupils' personal skills are used well to promote the school's vision and ethos and to create a strong sense of community. Pupils respectfully participate in the acts of collective worship, taking time for reflection and prayer.
- Pupils have a good understanding of bullying, including bullying related to race and gender. They say there is little or no bullying in school and any misbehaviour is dealt with quickly. Pupils respect the school rules and know there are consequences to bad behaviour.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe in a variety of situations. They talk about all the things they learn in school about safety. Pupils understand how to manage risk, and understand the risks of using the internet and social media.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Since the previous inspection, behaviour has improved considerably. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning. Conduct in class is good, although a few pupils lose concentration and go 'off task' when teaching is less engaging.
- Pupils are proud of their school and this is reflected in their good attendance. They are courteous and well mannered. They listen well to adults and their peers, and show respect for the views of others.
- Nearly all pupils who responded to the inspection survey agreed that pupils' behaviour is good most or all of the time. This positive view is supported by parents who responded to the inspection survey. Parents value the school's improved approach to behaviour management and discipline.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- The rate of pupils' progress in reading and writing, particularly in key stage 2, is variable and reflects the inconsistencies in teaching.
- Pupils leave key stage 1 with reading attainment in line with or above the national average. However, by the end of key stage 2, pupils have not built on this good start to make the progress they should. Pupils' progress in reading at the end of key stage 2 has been in the bottom 20% of all schools for the last two years.
- Recent changes to the teaching of reading are now starting to increase pupils' enjoyment of books and improve their skills in reading. However, older pupils still do not have the skills they need to read at an age-appropriate standard. For example, they cannot distinguish between the styles of different authors and characteristics of books.
- Younger pupils are keen to write. They have good pencil grip, although too many do not form their letters correctly when handwriting. By the end of key stage 1, pupils achieve above the national average and pupils' books show that they apply their phonics well to spell words.
- From this secure starting point, pupils do not make good progress in key stage 2. The skills pupils are taught to improve their spelling and punctuation are not consistently applied to their written work. This is particularly evident when pupils write in subjects other than in English lessons.
- The school's new approach to improving the teaching of mathematics is now resulting in raising standards, particularly for the most able pupils. By the end of key stage 2, the progress pupils make in mathematics is similar to that made by other pupils nationally.
- The teaching of phonics is effective. Pupils consistently reach the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check. The securing of the early reading skills to decode unfamiliar words gives young readers the confidence to tackle a range of books.
- The most able pupils do well in writing at the end of key stage 1. They do less well in reading. By the time they leave key stage 2, the most able pupils have made progress in line with the national average in reading, but slow progress in writing.

- Pupils talk with enthusiasm about the topics they learn and enjoy a range of different subjects. In science, they can explain the concept of a 'fair test' and the significance of using a scientific control. In some subjects, such as geography and history, pupils' knowledge and understanding are superficial. The standard of pupils' written work in such subjects is weaker than in their English books. They do not consistently apply the grammar and punctuation skills they have been taught.
- Although the school has a number of pupils on roll who speak English as an additional language, with the exception of the Reception class, few join the school with little or no English. Their needs are well met by the school with additional teaching where it is needed. As a result, these pupils make good progress in English.
- The progress disadvantaged pupils make is inconsistent. Leaders track how well these pupils are doing in English and mathematics and have provided additional teaching time, but the effect of this is variable.
- The achievement of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is good. Work is well planned to meet the needs of these pupils. Those with specific learning difficulties benefit from specialised support and this, alongside good support from teaching assistants, ensures that they make good progress.

Early years provision

Good

- Children start in the Reception class with skills and knowledge that are broadly typical for their age. There is an increasing number of children who enter the early years with little or no English. The good teaching of early language skills ensures that these children quickly learn to communicate with their peers and the adults in the setting.
- By the end of Reception, children have made good progress. The proportion of children who achieve the required good level of development is in line with the national average. They are well equipped for key stage 1.
- Children confidently enter the school happy, motivated and ready to learn. They fully engage in reciting the days of the week, months of the year and learning the time, as well as discussing the features of three-dimensional shapes using the correct mathematical language.
- Children develop good relationships with adults as well as with each other. Children's behaviour is good, both in the classroom and in the outside area. They show a good degree of independence and confidence, and sustain interest and concentration. They work happily, chatting to each other and adults about what they are doing.
- The teaching of phonics is effective. Children quickly learn the basic skills of reading and apply the sounds they have learned to their writing. This is particularly beneficial for those pupils who speak English as an additional language. Although teachers provide opportunities for writing in the classroom as well as outside, children do not always choose to write, and this is not always picked up by adults. The early years leader is well informed about the children's initial assessment on entry to school. Ongoing assessment does not always sharply inform the next steps children need to take in their learning.
- Relationships with parents are good. Parents are happy with the provision in the early

years. They are given the opportunity to contribute to their child's learning journey, recording their children's achievements observed at home.

- Transition arrangements are good. Staff visit pre-school providers or offer home visits prior to children starting school, to ensure that they quickly adapt to school life. The school works with external agencies and specialists to support children with specific needs so that they are able to participate fully in school life.
- The leader of the early years ensures that the welfare and safety of children are given high priority. All health and safety requirements are met and the school is a safe place for children.

School details

Unique reference number	107733
Local authority	Kirklees
Inspection number	10042158

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	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	219
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Elizabeth Stanley
Headteacher	Robert Barraclough
Telephone number	01924 462 053
Website	www.stjosephsdewsbury.co.uk
Email address	head.stjosephsdews@kirkleeseducation.uk
Date of previous inspection	2–3 February 2016

Information about this school

- St Joseph’s Catholic Primary is an average-sized primary school. There has been significant staff turnover since the school’s previous inspection.
- Just over half of the pupils are White British and speak English as their first language. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups, and who speak English as an additional language, is above average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities, and who have statements of special educational needs or education, health and care plans, is above average.
- The school receives support from a national leader of education, and the Learning Unlimited Teaching School Alliance, Sheffield.
- The school meets the government’s current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited lessons in all classrooms and some together with the headteacher. In addition, inspectors observed small groups of pupils being taught.
- Inspectors scrutinised pupils' work and listened to pupils read. They spoke with pupils about their enjoyment of school and their opinions of behaviour and safety. Inspectors considered the 24 responses to Ofsted's pupil survey.
- Inspectors held discussions with staff and governors and took into account the 15 responses from Ofsted's staff survey.
- Inspectors considered a wide range of school documents. These included the school's self-evaluation report, development plan, behaviour and attendance records, governing body documents, and documents relating to safeguarding and the monitoring of teachers' performance.
- Inspectors talked to parents to seek their views about the school. They took into account the responses of those parents who submitted their views to the inspection team, as well as the 40 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View.

Inspection team

Karen Heath, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Michael Tull

Ofsted Inspector

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