

Inspection of St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Coombeshead Road, Highweek, Newton Abbot, Devon TQ12 1PT

Inspection dates: 4–5 February 2020

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy and feel safe. They say that there is always someone to talk to if they have any worries. Pupils say that they sometimes fall out with each other and this is mistaken for bullying. Staff take bullying seriously. There have been very few incidents in recent years.

The quality of education pupils receive is not as good as it should be. Not all staff hold the expertise they need to ensure that pupils learn enough. The curriculum does not secure the knowledge and skills pupils need to prepare them well for their next stage of education. Many pupils behave well in lessons and during social times. However, older pupils do not show good attitudes towards their learning. Some pupils do not try their best. A number of parents and carers also share this view.

The school provides many opportunities for pupils to develop as individuals. Pupils enjoy the extra responsibilities they have, for example as pupil chaplains. Pupils support many local and international charities. They are proud of their work in the local community and beyond. Pupils love the broad range of after-school clubs on offer. Pupils relish the opportunities they have to broaden their horizons and experiences to achieve the 'civic award'.

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

The headteacher and the trust know that the quality of education that pupils receive needs to improve. Since the last inspection, there have been many staff changes. This has hampered leaders' plans for improvement. Throughout this challenging period, the headteacher has led the staff with grit and integrity.

In some subjects, curriculum plans are not effective enough. Curriculum goals are not ambitious enough. In some year groups, the curriculum content is not well organised. Teachers do not check pupils' understanding well enough across sequences of learning. This has left pupils with patchy knowledge and skills.

The leadership of English has changed hands many times in recent years. This has had a detrimental impact on the rate of improvement. The current leader is passionate and wants to develop the subject further. Leaders have recently agreed on a systematic approach to teaching phonics and early reading. However, some new staff have not been trained yet. The teaching of phonics in the early years is not good enough. Pupils do not read books matched to the letters and sounds they know. These shortcomings mean that pupils do not become confident readers as quickly as they should.

Beyond the teaching of phonics, the reading curriculum is not yet in place. Nevertheless, most older pupils enjoy reading. Pupils have a varied 'diet' of different types of books. Pupils are familiar with a range of authors.

Senior leaders work well with external agencies to ensure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive support. However, teaching for these pupils in some subjects is not well planned. There is a lack of ambition for these pupils in some year groups and subjects.

The headteacher has worked hard to improve pupils' behaviour. Over time, fixed-term exclusions have reduced significantly. There have been no exclusions in the last academic year. All staff expect pupils to behave well. Pupils understand the behaviour system and the expectations placed upon them.

Senior leaders have not been as successful in improving pupils' attendance. Disadvantaged pupils, in particular, do not attend school regularly enough. This means they miss important parts of the curriculum. As a result, teachers are not able to comprehensively build upon what pupils already know, and these pupils do not learn enough.

Pupils speak positively about their development as citizens. In lessons, pupils learn about local and global issues. Pupils are particularly proud of their charitable work with a school in Kenya.

The new early years leader and staff are working successfully to implement improvements to the quality of early years education. The leader has thought carefully about what children should learn and when. Curriculum plans are progressive and demonstrate how children build a bank of knowledge and skills. Children enjoy learning in the early years. Children work well with each other and their adults. However, children are not always guided to appropriate activities. This means that children gain more knowledge in some areas of learning than others.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All staff receive regular training. They know how to spot signs that a child might be at risk. Staff know how to report any concerns they have. The trust conducts regular audits to ensure that systems and processes are stringent.

Leaders know the needs of vulnerable pupils and their families well. They work well with a range of external agencies to ensure that pupils get the support they need. Any concerns are addressed swiftly. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe in a variety of situations, including when they use the internet.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Many curriculum leaders are new to the school and their roles. They have not yet received sufficient training and support. This has hindered their ability to deliver a well-organised curriculum. Leaders, including governors, need to ensure that all

curriculum leaders develop the expertise to lead their subjects well so that the quality of education improves to be good.

- Phonics is not taught well enough in the early years. This means children cannot remember the sounds that letters represent. This limits children's development of early reading skills. Leaders need to make sure that all staff access the training they need in order to teach phonics effectively.
- Teachers do not ensure that pupils' reading books are matched to their abilities. Pupils have reading books that are either too difficult or too easy. Leaders need to ensure that words in reading books match the sounds that pupils already know so that more pupils read accurately and become confident readers.
- The curriculum is not as well organised as it needs to be. In some subjects, the content is not well planned. Leaders need to ensure that curriculum plans for all subjects are well designed and implemented.
- Teachers do not use their assessments well enough to identify what pupils already know and understand. In some subjects, teachers do not plan work that meets pupils' needs well enough. Leaders need to ensure that teachers use their assessments well so that pupils learn the depth of knowledge they should and achieve consistently well.
- The overall attendance for the school has improved. However, disadvantaged pupils do not attend school regularly enough. This means pupils miss out on learning essential curriculum knowledge. Leaders need to ensure that pupils' attendance improves so that pupils have maximum opportunity to take part in school life and learn well.

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 Ofsted Parent View information 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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

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

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.

School details

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| Unique reference number | 140765 |
| Local authority | Devon |
| Inspection number | 10122343 |
| 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 | 138 |
| Appropriate authority | Board of trustees |
| Chair of trust | John Burnett |
| Headteacher | Kelly Dunne |
| Website | www.st-josephs-primary.devon.sch.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 3–4 October 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 |

Information about this school

- St Joseph’s Catholic Primary School is part of the Plymouth Catholic and Anglican Schools Trust. The trust was formed in April 2014. The work of the trust is overseen by a board of directors. The trust is responsible for one nursery, one first school, 33 primary schools and two secondary schools across seven local authorities in the south-west region.
- Since the previous inspection, the school has experienced a significant period of staff turnover.
- The school was graded good in the last inspection of denominational education under section 48 of the Education Act 2005 in April 2018.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- We met with the headteacher, the leader with responsibility for pupils with SEND, the early years leader and the educational standards manager from the trust. I also took into consideration the nine responses to the staff survey.

- I had a telephone conversation with the chief executive officer from the trust.
- I met with the chair of the local governing body.
- We examined a range of documentation provided by the school, including leaders' self-evaluation, improvement plans and documentation relating to the attendance and behaviour of pupils.
- A significant proportion of the inspection focused on ensuring that pupils are safe. We scrutinised records, checked staff's safeguarding knowledge and spoke with pupils. I met with the designated safeguarding leader and members of the inclusion team.
- We considered the 27 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View. I met with parents at the end of the first day of the inspection.
- We took into account the 37 responses to the pupil survey.
- We did deep dives in these subjects: reading, science, physical education and mathematics. This included visiting lessons, looking at pupils' work, meeting with senior and subject leaders, and having discussions with teachers and pupils. I looked further into the quality of education in modern languages and geography.

Inspection team

Matt Middlemore, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Matthew Shirley

Ofsted Inspector

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