

Inspection of St Joseph's RC Junior Infant and Nursery School

Oldham Road, Shaw, Oldham, Lancashire OL2 8SZ

Inspection dates: 11–12 February 2020

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

The previous 'outstanding' judgement reflected the school's overall effectiveness in November 2006 under the relevant inspection framework at that time.

The new judgement of 'good' reflects the current inspection framework as well as any changes at the school since the last inspection.

The school has not been inspected for 13 years, which is longer than the five-year maximum interval between inspections. Changes in school effectiveness may have happened at any point in that period. The long time between inspections is because the law changed in 2011; it made outstanding schools exempt from routine inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Staff teach pupils that 'we are stars'. Pupils learn that they each have a special part to play in the school and local community. For example, older pupils planned, organised and ran fundraising stalls at the school's valentine disco. Pupils develop as considerate and helpful individuals.

Staff help pupils to achieve their best. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils told us they value the range of support that helps them with their learning. They said that learning is fun.

Everyone knows that reading is important. Pupils read lots of books in all subjects. They enjoy sharing books with their parents and carers during the 'brew and a book' club.

Pupils we spoke with said that staff listen to any of their concerns. Pupils use the school's worry boxes to alert staff to their worries. Pupils appreciate the help that staff give them for their well-being. If pupils are feeling anxious or unhappy, staff encourage them to share their feelings.

Some parents raised concerns about pupils' behaviour. Most pupils behave well. Pupils said that staff deal with any misbehaviour effectively. They told us that on the rare occasions that bullying happens, it is dealt with well.

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

Leaders have planned a broad and engaging curriculum. In 2019, the proportion of pupils who reached the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics fell to below national averages. The headteacher has high ambitions for all pupils. He identified the reasons which caused this drop in outcomes and took immediate action to remedy them. Pupils currently in the school are now achieving well.

Leaders ensure that pupils understand the importance of reading. Teachers share a wide range of books with pupils. The proportion of pupils who met the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check was above the national average in 2019. Children start learning phonics as soon as they start in the Nursery class. Teachers make regular checks on how well pupils are learning. They make sure that teaching builds on the letters and sounds that pupils already know. Pupils falling behind in their reading are given a range of support to help them catch up.

Leaders are taking effective steps to enhance curriculum planning. The curriculum planning that leaders are developing reflects their ambitions for all pupils to achieve well. Staff, including those new to teaching, have received a wide range of effective training. This has increased their expertise in teaching a wide range of subjects.

The revised curriculum planning helps pupils to develop a secure understanding of topics and concepts by building on their previous learning. Teachers have identified what knowledge they want pupils to know and remember. The revised planning is detailed in subjects including mathematics and science. For example, in mathematics, pupils develop their written calculation skills across different year groups. This starts in the early years. During our visit, children in the Reception class were using an abacus to help them add numbers. They wrote their calculations accurately. In science, pupils use their scientific knowledge in their investigations. They can describe their learning in detail.

The planning that leaders have put in place is still developing in some subjects. For example, in art and design leaders have ensured that pupils learn about different artists. Pupils told us about the work of Van Gogh. Pupils develop their drawing and painting skills over time. Leaders are revising their art and design planning to ensure that pupils revisit and build on their previous learning. Another example is geography, where pupils learn about a range of different countries and places. The subject leader is adding more detail to the planning to ensure that pupils' mapping skills develop step by step.

In some subjects, leaders are improving the checks that they make on pupils' learning within that subject. This is to improve the knowledge that staff have about how well pupils are learning. Leaders are using these checks to ensure that the changes to curriculum planning are helping pupils to remember more about their learning.

In the early years, staff plan interesting opportunities for children to play and explore. Children develop their knowledge and skills. They achieve well. However, the activities that staff plan in the indoor and outdoor classrooms do not always build on what children already know.

Pupils enjoy a wide range of activities which develop their character. This includes pupils with SEND. For example, pupils represent the school in sports events and competitions. Older pupils enjoy a residential trip, with exciting activities such as ghyll scrambling. The school choir sings for the local community. Pupils take pride in their leadership roles, including as school councillors and pupil chaplains.

Leaders make sure that the curriculum develops pupils in different ways. Staff plan regular visits to museums and places of interest. Pupils have time for reflection and prayer. They learn about other religions. For example, pupils have visited a mosque to support their learning about Islam. They learn that all are equal.

Pupils behave well. In the Nursery class, children listen with rapt attention to adults. During our visit, children in the Reception class were happily engaged in their learning. In lessons, pupils are keen to contribute to classroom discussions. Pupils told us that they receive additional support to help them behave well when required. For example, pupils know they can find a quiet space to help them calm down, if needed.

Governors know the school well. They check the effectiveness of the curriculum across different subject areas. Governors make sure that staff have regular training to enhance their teaching skills.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff receive regular training so they know how to check for signs that a pupil may be at risk. Leaders work with professionals to ensure that pupils get support when needed. Leaders check the staff recruited to work in school to ensure that they pose no threat to pupils.

Staff and visitors to school teach pupils about the risks that they might face. Pupils learn how to stay safe when using technology. They learn about road safety and the dangers of alcohol. Pupils know that they should speak to an adult in school if they are concerned about anything.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, the sequencing of the curriculum is being developed by leaders. This is because in some subjects pupils do not deepen their skills and knowledge over time. Leaders need to make sure that the changes they make to the planning of the curriculum lead to pupils knowing more and remembering more.
- Systems to check pupils' learning are not developed in some curriculum areas. This means that leaders do not have detailed information about the effectiveness of teaching and learning in some subjects. Leaders need to ensure that effective checks are in place which can be used by teachers to develop pupils' learning.
- In the early years, activities do not always build on children's prior learning. This means that staff miss opportunities to deepen children's knowledge and understanding. Leaders should ensure that staff use the information they have about children's previous learning when planning activities.
- The school's curriculum is not yet sufficiently coherently planned and sequenced in some subjects. However, it is clear from the actions that leaders have already taken that they are in the process of bringing this about.

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

Unique reference number	105719
Local authority	Oldham
Inspection number	10110866
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	240
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Michael Pemberton
Headteacher	Garry Needle
Website	www.st-josephs.oldham.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	15 November 2006

Information about this school

- A new headteacher has been appointed since the previous inspection.
- The school had a section 48 inspection on 4 December 2018.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We deemed the inspection a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

- We met with the headteacher and senior leaders.
- Art and design, reading, mathematics and science were considered as part of this inspection. Inspection activities included: discussions with leaders; visits to lessons; discussions with teachers; scrutiny of pupils' work; and discussions with pupils about their learning. In reading, we observed members of staff listening to pupils read.
- We also met with the subject leaders for geography, history and music. We scrutinised work in geography and history.
- We held a meeting with five governors.

- We met with the coordinator of the provision for pupils with SEND.
- We checked the school's safeguarding policies and procedures and the school's single central record. We met with leaders, staff and pupils to check how effective safeguarding is in school.
- We met with a representative of the local authority and a representative of the diocese.
- We met with parents at the school gate to seek their views. We also considered 107 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents, including free-text responses.
- During the inspection, we met with groups of pupils, including pupils with SEND, and we observed lunchtime.
- We examined a range of documents. These included: the school's development plans and self-evaluation documents; minutes of the governing body meetings; and safeguarding documentation.
- We met with leaders to discuss pupils' attendance and behaviour.

Inspection team

Elizabeth Stevens, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Joan Williamson

Ofsted Inspector

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