

Inspection of St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Harrogate, A Voluntary Academy

Coppice Rise, Harrogate, North Yorkshire HG1 2DP

Inspection dates: 3–4 March 2020

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

What is it like to attend this school?

This school's Catholic ethos is at the heart of its work. Leaders and staff teach pupils about gospel values and virtues. They are successfully developing pupils' good character. All staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and conduct. They ask pupils to show virtues in the way that they treat others. There is hardly any bullying. When it does occur, leaders mostly resolve any issues quickly.

Parents really value the Catholic ethos. One parent said, 'You can't fault the vision.' Parents have noticed that the school is a very kind and gentle place for their children to be. This is one of the reasons that pupils want to come to school. One parent said that teachers 'go above and beyond' to make sure that pupils are happy and safe.

Parents and pupils are a bit disappointed that there are not many after-school clubs on offer. When there are after-school clubs, there are often very few places. Pupils say that when there are only eight places, they are taken up straight away. Trustees changed the rules about the arrangements for after-school clubs. Leaders are trying to find new ways to offer pupils wider opportunities to develop their interests, skills and talents.

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

Children get off to a flying start in the early years. Leaders want children to love reading. Teachers use children's literature when they plan each week's learning. They make sure that children practise their communication and language skills while they are playing.

Children enjoyed rescuing mini-beast toys that were frozen inside little ice blocks. They have a good understanding of the world, so they knew how to make the ice melt. Children used their technology skills to draw 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar' using simple software. The images they created were so good that other children could immediately recognise the character from this week's story.

Teachers in Year 1 successfully build on this strong start. Leaders make the teaching of early reading and phonics a priority. They have made sure that teachers are well trained. Teachers are very skilful when they teach phonics.

Leaders make sure that pupils have the right books to read. This helps pupils to grow in confidence and fluency. Pupils were giggling with glee when the teacher asked them to say new sounds in different voices. Pupils were particularly excited and proud to say their sounds 'in a posh voice'.

All this hard work is paying off. Pupils in Year 1 consistently achieve results that are well above the national standard. In 2019, 93% of Year 1 pupils met the standard in the phonics screening check. This is typical of the results that Year 1 pupils have achieved in the phonics screening check in recent years.

Once pupils move through the school, their achievement begins to tail off. The results that Year 6 pupils achieved in reading, writing and mathematics were broadly in line with the national average in 2019. Leaders know that when pupils have such high starting points, they could achieve much more. At the higher standard, pupils' results were below those achieved nationally. Not a single Year 6 pupil achieved the higher standard in reading, writing and mathematics last year.

Teachers often give pupils work in mathematics that is below the age-related expectations of the national curriculum. Teachers know that they need to recap on earlier learning so that it is secure, but they do not plan learning so that pupils build quickly on this knowledge.

The most-able pupils are confident and capable mathematicians. They can solve simple calculations automatically, either mentally or using formal written methods. Teachers still require pupils to provide a visual model in their books, such as a hundred square. The most able pupils say that they would prefer to skip this step. They prefer having to think harder. Teachers allow less time for this, so pupils are not as prepared as they should be for the more difficult content within the curriculum that is intended for their age group.

Leaders have been much more successful in designing the wider curriculum. Teachers have good subject knowledge. Pupils can recall what they have learned in a range of subjects. They take great pride in their work. Pupils have consistently positive attitudes to their learning in all subjects.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The multi-academy trust takes the lead in ensuring that health and safety audits are undertaken in schools within their trust. The trust collates information about recruitment checks that are made when leaders appoint staff.

Leaders maintain comprehensive training records. Trustees delegate responsibilities to the local academy council that include safeguarding. The local academy council discusses safeguarding in every one of their meetings. Leaders are aware of specific safeguarding issues that affect their school community directly.

Leaders are reviewing their curriculum for teaching pupils about the risks of criminal exploitation through county lines in Harrogate.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The curriculum is not planned well enough to ensure that pupils make good progress across key stage 2. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum in core subjects is sufficiently demanding. Leaders should ensure that teachers use

assessment to identify more accurately when pupils have achieved automaticity in mathematic domains. Teachers should adjust the sequence of learning to make sure that earlier knowledge is not revisited unnecessarily once it is completely secure. Leaders should ensure that teachers allow enough time to cover the more challenging content for each age group within the national curriculum. This will ensure that Year 6 pupils' performance in national tests is a more accurate reflection of their ability.

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	142159
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	10121912
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	202
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Caroline Hyde
Headteacher	Alison Ashworth
Website	www.stjosephsharrogate.org
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- This school converted to academy status in July 2015. This school belongs to the Bishop Wheeler Catholic Academy Trust.
- The current executive headteacher and head of school were appointed in 2016.
- The website is not compliant with statutory requirements because the multi-academy trust has not published its scheme of delegation to the academy council. Representatives from the trust say that this is because the scheme of delegation is currently under review.
- There is a much smaller proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities in this school than the national average.

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.

- During the inspection, we met the executive headteacher, the head of school, the interim chief executive officer representing trustees, the chair of the academy

council and middle leaders. We also met a representative from Leeds Diocese who is the chair of directors in the multi-academy trust.

- We undertook deep dives in: reading, mathematics, science and geography.
- We spoke to pupils about their learning and heard pupils read. We visited lessons and discussed pupils' work with the headteacher, the head of school and subject leaders. We discussed pupils' learning with teachers following visits to their lessons.
- We spoke to pupils at lunchtime and in focus groups. We spoke to parents before school.
- We evaluated documentation including the school improvement plan, minutes of meetings of the academy council, records of behaviour and exclusions and safeguarding records. We reviewed complaints made by parents and evaluated leaders' response to these complaints.

Inspection team

Tracey Ralph, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Janet Keefe

Ofsted Inspector

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