

# Inspection of a good school: St Joseph's Catholic Primary School Castleford

Pontefract Road, Castleford, West Yorkshire WF10 4JB

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Inspection dates:

30 June and 1 July 2021

## Outcome

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School Castleford continues to be a good school.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils thrive at St Joseph's Catholic Primary School. They feel well looked after by staff and say that other pupils are kind to them. Pupils enjoy coming to school. They behave well and work hard. Bullying is rare and is sorted out quickly if it does occur.

Staff have high expectations of pupils. Pupils make a particularly strong start in the early years and when learning to read. Teachers explain new learning clearly and check that pupils have remembered the important things they need to know before moving onto new work. Pupils achieve well.

The school's Catholic virtues underpin all aspects of the school's work. Pupils strive to demonstrate these qualities. They talk about inspirational people and how they want to be like them. For example, one girl in Year 3 told an inspector that she could be anything she wanted to be if she demonstrated courage and diligence, like Amelia Earhart.

Pupils play a part in helping each other to learn about risks to their safety. They get involved in developing school policies. This helps them to understand the actions they can take to stay safe.

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

Leaders have developed an environment in the early years which is a nurturing and inspiring place to learn. Staff's focus on developing children's language and vocabulary helps to prepare them for their next stage in learning. Routines for learning are quickly established and no time is wasted. Children talk enthusiastically about their learning, often making connections with things that they have learned previously.

Leaders have made sure that pupils learn to read well. Staff have received training so that they have the skills they need to teach children to read. Teachers give pupils lots of opportunities to practise the sounds they are learning. This helps pupils to remember them. The small number

of pupils who need help to catch up in reading receive this quickly. As a result, pupils are achieving well and developing fluency and confidence in their reading.

Leaders have established an ambitious curriculum for all subjects. For example, in subjects such as science, leaders have carefully identified the subject knowledge that they want all pupils to learn. Leaders have ensured that this is organised so that pupils build on their prior learning. Pupils are able to talk knowledgeably about their work in science. For example, pupils in Year 4 were keen to explain their learning in relation to how the human body works.

Leaders have strengthened the curriculum planning for mathematics. The subject leader has provided highly effective training and coaching for teachers. This has ensured that they have the subject knowledge they need to teach the curriculum effectively. Pupils are achieving well in mathematics as a result of these improvements.

In a few subjects, the subject content is not set out precisely enough in curriculum plans. This is the case in history. While topics are organised in a logical order, not enough consideration has been given to the specific knowledge that needs to be taught. For example, curriculum plans state that pupils will learn important facts about Sir Francis Drake, but it is not clear for teachers which information is considered by leaders to be important and relevant for pupils to learn and remember.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well supported. The school's special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) works with teachers and parents to create plans that show how pupils with SEND should be helped in class. The SENCo has arranged specialist training for staff so that they have the expertise to meet the needs of pupils with SEND. As a result of well-planned support, pupils with SEND achieve well.

Pupils behave well in lessons. Classrooms are industrious and calm. Pupils generally move around school sensibly, greeting their friends with a smile and a wave. Occasionally, behaviour at lunchtime can be unsettled and this is not managed consistently in line with the school's behaviour policy. School councillors have recently ordered play equipment for pupils to help to make lunchtime more purposeful.

A small number of parents expressed concerns that bullying is not handled well in the school. Inspectors looked closely at this area. Leaders record bullying incidents carefully and follow up on them appropriately. They speak to the pupils and parents involved. Leaders check with pupils to make sure that bullying has stopped. Bullying is rare, but pupils told inspectors that when it does happen adults sort it out quickly.

Leaders are rightly proud of the ways in which the school supports pupils' personal development. Pupils are provided with a broad range of opportunities to develop their talents and interests. For example, all pupils in key stage 2 are taught dance by Northern Ballet. Pupils have a deep understanding of equality. They know about different types of relationships and that people may have a different faith to them, or no faith. They believe that all people should be treated the same. One pupil told inspectors that, 'We all look the same on the inside. What matters more is our hearts, and how much we believe in each other.'

Most staff are proud to work at the school and say that leaders consider their well-being. They appreciate the professional development opportunities they receive. One comment from a member of staff reflected the views of many when they said that 'We are one big family where everyone supports each other.'

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are clear about the signs that pupils may be at risk of harm. Staff know what to do if they have concerns about a pupil or adults in the school. Leaders act quickly when they are alerted to risks to pupils. Leaders work effectively with external agencies to ensure that families are well-supported. Leaders keep thorough records which detail their actions to keep pupils safe from harm.

Leaders involve pupils in developing the curriculum to raise awareness of the risks they may face. The school council has written a pupil-version of the school's safeguarding policy and introduced this in an assembly. This has helped pupils understand what to do if they are worried or they do not feel safe.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- In a few subjects, curriculum plans do not identify precisely enough the specific knowledge that leaders want pupils to learn in each topic. Consequently, there is not a clear and shared understanding about what needs to be taught. Leaders should continue their ongoing work to ensure that curriculum plans for all subjects in the wider curriculum detail precisely what knowledge pupils will learn.
- Some lunchtime staff do not manage occasional poor behaviour according to the school's behaviour policy. From time to time, pupils' behaviour can be unsettled at lunchtime. Leaders should ensure that lunchtime staff manage pupils' behaviour positively and in line with the school's behaviour policy.

## **Background**

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that a good school could now be better than good, or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the predecessor school, St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, to be good in November 2011.

## **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 [here](#).

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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	138949
<b>Local authority</b>	Wakefield
<b>Inspection number</b>	10195718
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	205
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Mrs Patricia Holmes
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Sarah Spencer
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.stjosephscastleford.webeden.co.uk">www.stjosephscastleford.webeden.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	14 June 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school is part of The Bishop Konstant Catholic Academy Trust.

## Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school, and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- Inspectors did deep dives in reading, mathematics and science. This involved meeting with curriculum subject leaders, visiting lessons, looking in pupils' books and talking to pupils and teachers. Curriculum leaders were involved in all activities alongside inspectors. Additional curriculum plans were reviewed for other subjects.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read to a familiar adult.
- The inspection team met with representatives from the trust, including the chair of governors. A meeting was also held with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour throughout the school day, including at lunchtimes. Inspectors reviewed records relating to behaviour, including bullying incidents, and spoke to pupils about behaviour and bullying.

- Inspectors reviewed safeguarding documents, including policies and school records. Inspectors spoke to staff across the school about how they keep pupils safe.
- The inspection team spoke with a number of parents at the start of the school day. Inspectors considered 43 responses that were received through Ofsted’s online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, including 29 free-text responses. Inspectors also considered 19 responses to Ofsted’s questionnaire for staff and 88 responses to Ofsted’s questionnaire for pupils.

### **Inspection team**

Tim Scargill-Knight, lead inspector

Her Majesty’s Inspector

Marcus Newby

Her Majesty’s Inspector

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