

Inspection of a good school: St Jude's Catholic Primary School

St Jude's Close, Maypole, Birmingham, West Midlands B14 5PD

Inspection dates:

29 and 30 September 2021

Outcome

There has been no change to St. Jude's Catholic Primary School's overall effectiveness judgement of good as a result of this initial (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a full inspection were carried out now. The next inspection will therefore be a full (section 5) inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a warm and welcoming school. Pupils enjoy their lessons and play together sensibly at social times. Teachers are positive role models and have strong relationships with pupils. The school's mission of 'we live, love and learn together joyfully in Jesus' name' is evident throughout.

Leaders have high expectations for behaviour. Pupils behave well and are polite and courteous to visitors. Bullying is not tolerated at the school. Pupils say that if bullying does occur, this is dealt with quickly by their teachers. Pupils feel safe and are well supported by staff.

Leaders have made improvements to how reading and mathematics are taught. This has been successful. However, there is still work to do in order to improve what pupils learn in the wider curriculum. This has not yet been fully developed.

Pupils can participate in many different experiences while at school. The 'St Jude 48' includes activities such as first aid training and a visit to the Houses of Parliament. Staff also run successful after-school sports clubs.

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

The school has gone through a period of transition since its last inspection. A new headteacher and leadership team have been appointed. They have taken action to improve how pupils learn to read. They have ensured that there is greater consistency in how mathematics is taught. However, work to improve non-core subjects is still at an early stage.

Leaders have focused on strengthening their teaching of phonics. Teachers have carefully sequenced the sounds they want children to know in the early years. This has been built on in key stage one. Staff have received training to ensure that all phonics lessons follow a similar structure. Teachers check pupils' knowledge of sounds regularly and quickly identify those that require extra support. This includes those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Teachers make sure that reading books are matched to the sounds that pupils know. Leaders have recently bought new, high-quality books to support guided reading sessions. They ensure that pupils read a variety of different texts. As a result, pupils learn to read quickly and enjoy reading.

Leaders have ensured that the mathematics curriculum is sequenced effectively so that pupils are able to build on what they know. Teachers revisit topics each year so that pupils develop their knowledge in greater depth. There are planned opportunities to enhance pupils' fluency, reasoning and problem-solving skills. Teachers check what pupils can remember through activities at the start of lessons and at the end of each topic. Staff receive ongoing training to help improve their delivery of the mathematics curriculum. Routines and resources in mathematics are similar in all year groups. Consequently, there is greater consistency in how the subject is taught, and pupils are more secure in what they know.

This is not the case for all subjects. In history, for example, leaders have set out the topics they want pupils to cover in line with the national curriculum. However, leaders have not identified the key knowledge or ideas they want pupils to know and remember. This does not help pupils retain information or make connections in their learning.

In the wider curriculum, teachers do not always check on pupils' learning effectively. Sometimes, teachers give pupils a quiz at the start of a topic on things that pupils have not yet been taught. This does not help teachers to identify where pupils have gaps in their knowledge. Teachers have not had sufficient training in the wider curriculum to develop their teaching of some subjects and enhance their subject knowledge.

Pupils have many experiences to extend their learning beyond the classroom. Leaders are aware of the community they serve and the high number of disadvantaged pupils. Pupils have a 'special experience' each term, for example a ride on a vintage bus and a visit to Birmingham's 'Think Tank'. Pupils in Year 6 also attend a residential trip to Alton Castle. The school's relationships, health and sex education curriculum is structured in an age-appropriate way to help pupils gain the knowledge they need to live a happy and healthy life.

In discussion with the headteacher, the inspector agreed that history, geography, science and art may usefully serve as a focus for the next inspection.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Policies and procedures for safeguarding are all fit for purpose. Staff receive regular safeguarding training to understand the various local risks that are posed to pupils. Staff are clear about what they should do if they have a concern about a child. Leaders work closely with the local authority and external agencies to ensure that pupils and parents get the support they need. Leaders regularly analyse safeguarding logs to spot any patterns and trends and report all information to governors. The school curriculum helps to keep pupils safe through activities such as road safety week.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have not identified the key knowledge and concepts they want pupils to remember in the wider curriculum. This means that pupils struggle to build on prior learning and make connections in what they are studying. Leaders should ensure that the wider curriculum is developed further so that it is clear what pupils need to know and remember in each subject.
- Assessment of non-core subjects is not always used as effectively as it could be. Some assessments attempt to check understanding of a topic before it has been taught. This does not help teachers accurately identify gaps that pupils have in prior learning or what knowledge needs to be built on. Leaders should ensure that all assessment procedures check effectively what pupils know and remember.
- Teachers have not had sufficient training in how to teach aspects of the wider curriculum confidently. This means that teachers are not as well prepared as they could be to teach new topics. Leaders should ensure that teachers are given sufficient training in the wider curriculum to enhance their own subject knowledge and improve their teaching.

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, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, 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 deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in September 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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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	103463
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	10200053
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	210
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Dawn Thompson
Headteacher	Bernadette Smith
Website	www.stjuderc.bham.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	20 September 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- St Jude's Catholic Primary School has a Catholic ethos. It had its last section 48 inspection in November 2016. The school's next inspection is due by November 2021.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

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 school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- The inspector focused on the following subjects: reading, mathematics and history. The inspector examined leaders' plans, visited lessons, looked at pupils' work and talked with pupils about the way these subjects are taught.
- The inspector reviewed a range of school documents. These included information about behaviour, attendance, the school curriculum and improvement planning. The school website was also checked.
- The inspector talked to staff and leaders about safeguarding arrangements. He examined how leaders make employment checks on staff and scrutinised further

safeguarding records. He also asked how incidents reported by pupils are recorded and analysed.

- The inspector observed informal times of the day to evaluate safeguarding and pupils' behaviour.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher, senior leaders, subject leaders, teachers and pupils. He also talked informally to pupils and staff to gather general information about school life.
- The inspector considered 24 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and 23 free-text comments. He also considered 72 pupils' questionnaires and 14 responses to Ofsted's survey for staff.

Inspection team

Mark Howes, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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