

# Inspection of St Joachim's Catholic Primary School

Shipman Road, Custom House, London E16 3DT

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Inspection dates: 15 and 16 September 2021

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Outstanding</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected

Ofsted has not previously inspected St Joachim's Catholic Primary School under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. However, Ofsted previously judged St Joachim's RC Primary School to be outstanding, before it opened as St Joachim's Catholic Primary School as a result of conversion to academy status. From then until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between inspections.

Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened in St Joachim's RC Primary School's effectiveness before it closed. Changes in the effectiveness of St Joachim's Catholic Primary School may have happened at any point since it opened.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils enjoy coming to this school. Staff have high expectations for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils achieve well in their learning. One parent and carer said, 'My child really wants to be here.' This comment was typical of parents' positive views on the school's work.

Leaders' work is guided by the school's Catholic ethos. Pupils learn about other faiths and are respectful of people who have different beliefs. Pupils and parents said that staff really care for everyone in the school.

Pupils study a broad and well-planned curriculum. Beyond the classroom, staff provide pupils with a range of clubs and trips to widen their experiences. Leaders seize opportunities to enrich and inspire pupils' learning. For example, pupils spoke enthusiastically about how much they enjoyed the 'myths and legends' projects, which culminated in a medieval-themed day.

Pupils feel safe at school. They said that bullying is rare. If there are disagreements, pupils know that staff will help them to resolve these problems. Pupils behave well, including outside of lessons. On occasions, some pupils become distracted in class, but teachers are quick to bring them back to their learning.

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

Leaders have designed an ambitious curriculum. They have thought about the knowledge they want pupils to know in each subject. They have also considered the needs of pupils who attend. Trips and visits are planned to introduce new experiences and further develop pupils' understanding of subject content. For example, Year 6 pupils had recently returned from a science camp. They spoke enthusiastically about investigating habitats and practising geography fieldwork skills. They also said they enjoyed trying out canoeing and archery.

The reading curriculum is well planned. Staff make sure that pupils learn to recognise the different sounds that letters make. Pupils become fluent readers quickly. Younger pupils have books which are precisely matched to the sounds that they have been taught. However, in Year 3, pupils who find reading challenging do not always have reading books that are as closely matched to their ability. This reduces these pupils' confidence with reading.

Leaders and staff encourage pupils to read often and for pleasure. At lunchtimes, Year 6 pupils help younger pupils enjoy books in the library. Pupils also have dedicated time to read and share books every morning in their classrooms. Pupils were keen to discuss the types of books they like to read.

Other subjects, such as French, mathematics and music, are also well organised, including in the early years. Pupils learn new ideas and concepts in a sensible sequence. They revisit and practise what they have been taught. In mathematics,

for example, Reception children counted objects accurately using their knowledge of number. Staff check pupils' understanding and address any gaps swiftly.

Leaders support staff well to improve their subject knowledge. This develops teachers' confidence to teach new subject content. In music, for example, training for staff has prepared them well to teach about a range of contemporary and historical music styles. In a few subjects, however, teachers' expertise in following and adapting curriculum plans is less secure. This means that teaching is not as focused on the knowledge that leaders want pupils to remember.

Many subject leaders are new in post. They have not checked how well the curriculum in their subject is planned and taught. That said, experienced leaders are supporting subject leaders to get up to speed quickly. Subject leaders also benefit from working with other schools, for example via the local mathematics hub. As a result, subject leaders are beginning to identify how they can strengthen the curriculum further.

Pupils with SEND are well supported. Staff understand these pupils' needs. They know how to break down an activity so that pupils can learn subject content in manageable pieces.

Across all subjects, leaders are keen that pupils' learning continues beyond the classroom. There are many opportunities for pupils to attend enrichment activities, such as a local music festival, the 'Festival of Voices'. Staff organise over 40 weekly clubs which aim to support pupils' interests and learning. Pupils take an active role in selecting charities for which to fundraise. Pupils are taught about the needs of others beyond the local community.

Pupils understand expectations for their behaviour. Systems to manage behaviour are clear and used in all classes. Pupils said that this supports them and others to recognise when they are not following the rules.

Leaders are mindful of staff's well-being. Leaders do not overburden staff with unnecessary workloads. Staff who are new to the school spoke about how welcoming the school community is. They appreciate the guidance leaders provide, which helps them feel confident in their new roles.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders are vigilant about pupils' safety. They look out for early possible signs that pupils' welfare is at risk. Leaders work in partnership with external agencies. They provide early help or put in place more intensive support for pupils who may be vulnerable.

Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe. For instance, they learn about risks such as being bullied online. Pupils know that if they have a worry or concern they can speak to their teachers.

Leaders provide regular training so that staff are clear about their responsibilities. Recruitment checks are complete and managed effectively.

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

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

- Leaders have adopted a well-structured system for teaching phonics. This means that pupils get off to a strong start in learning to read. However, in a few instances, older pupils' reading books include sounds that they have not been taught. This holds pupils back from reading as accurately as they could. Leaders need to ensure that pupils practise with books that only include the sounds they have been taught and know securely.
- Some subject leaders are new to their roles. With support from senior leaders, they are beginning to check and further improve the curriculum. Subject leaders need to develop a firm understanding of curriculum planning. They should ensure that all staff benefit from well-targeted support and strengthen their expertise in using curriculum plans.

## **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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	141927
<b>Local authority</b>	Newham
<b>Inspection number</b>	10204498
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	289
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Mick Coleman
<b>Headteacher</b>	James Allen
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.st-joachims.newham.sch.uk/">www.st-joachims.newham.sch.uk/</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- St Joachim's Catholic Primary School converted to become an academy school on 8 April 2015. The school is part of the Our Lady of Grace Catholic Academy Trust.

## Information about this inspection

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

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, deputy headteachers and members of staff. Inspectors also met with members of the academy trust and the governing body.
- Inspectors did deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, music, art and design, and modern foreign languages. For each of these subjects, inspectors held discussions with subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke with staff and pupils and looked at pupils' work. Inspectors also considered the curriculum for other subjects.

- Inspectors spoke with parents and considered the 84 responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses from parents.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils and staff about the school's work to keep pupils safe. Inspectors also considered safeguarding records, documentation and the school's single central record of staff suitability checks.

### **Inspection team**

Adam Vincent, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Tim McLoughlin

Ofsted Inspector

Dawn Titus

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
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