

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

Mather Lane, Leigh WN7 2PW

Inspection dates:

11 and 12 January 2022

Outcome

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

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are immensely proud of their school. They eagerly welcome visitors. Pupils are keen to talk about how much they enjoy being part of the school family. Diversity is celebrated. Pupils said that they are accepted for who they are.

Pupils are happy and safe. They were unanimous in their view that bullying of any kind is not tolerated. Teachers successfully help pupils to resolve any rare friendship or bullying issues.

Teachers' expectations of pupils' behaviour are high. In lessons and when socialising, pupils behave well. They are kind to each other. On the playground, older pupils look after younger pupils and children in the early years.

Pupils said that the best thing about this school is how much they learn. Pupils appreciate teachers' high expectations for what they should achieve. Children and pupils benefit from a well-thought-out curriculum. Across the school, pupils spoke enthusiastically about how much they know. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), achieve well.

Pupils relish the opportunity to take on leadership responsibilities. They value being part of the school council, being a prefect or being a reading buddy for children in the early years. Pupils have a strong sense of community. They support many charities.

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

Leaders and governors are aspirational for all children and pupils at this school. They have recently reviewed the curriculum to ensure that pupils, including those with SEND, develop a rich body of knowledge across a broad range of subjects. By the end of key stage 2, pupils achieve highly in many subjects. They are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

The curriculum is well planned. Leaders have thought carefully about the knowledge that they want pupils to learn at each key stage. They have successfully organised the curriculum to enable children and pupils to build on their prior learning. Subject leaders have ensured that the curriculum in the early years prepares children for the demands of key stage 1. Across the school, pupils' knowledge is secure. They spoke confidently about what they have learned over time.

When beginning new topics, teachers choose activities that encourage pupils to make links with previous learning. This helps pupils to apply their knowledge effectively so that they can learn new concepts in depth.

Teachers use assessment strategies purposefully to check how well pupils have learned the curriculum. They build in opportunities for pupils to revisit and consolidate their learning. Pupils value this. Teachers ensure that pupils' knowledge is secure before they move on to something new.

Adults deliver the curriculum well in the early years. Children in the Reception Year benefit from opportunities to develop their speech and vocabulary. This helps them to access all other areas of learning. Staff are knowledgeable. They provide children with a wealth of opportunities to practise and consolidate their learning.

All staff foster a love of reading. In the early years and key stage 1, teachers read to children and pupils daily. In key stage 2, pupils appreciate the time that teachers devote to independent reading. Older pupils spoke enthusiastically about the recommendations for books that they receive from staff.

Leaders have recently implemented a new phonics programme. They have ensured that all staff are trained to deliver this programme. In the Reception Year and key stage 1, most staff use consistent approaches to teach children and pupils new sounds. As a result, most children and pupils are gaining the knowledge that they need to increase their reading fluency. However, a small number of staff are at the early stages of knowing how best to deliver the new phonics programme. This means that a few children and pupils who find reading more difficult are not catching up as quickly as they should.

Leaders identify the needs of pupils with SEND in a timely and accurate way. The detailed information that leaders share about SEND means that staff are well equipped to support these pupils effectively. Pupils with SEND progress well through the curriculum.

Pupils are keen to acquire knowledge. Their positive attitudes to learning, together with their respect for each other and staff, mean that they can learn without disruption.

Leaders' contribution to pupils' wider development is vast. Pupils spoke positively about leaders' promotion of physical and mental health. They welcome what they learn about relationships and different types of families through the religious education curriculum.

Leaders and governors manage the school well. Staff appreciate leaders' strategies to support their workload and well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure a strong culture of safeguarding. They are acutely aware of the safeguarding risks that pupils may face online and within the local community. As such, leaders make sure that all staff are well trained to be alert to the signs of potential abuse or neglect.

Leaders and staff know pupils and their families well. Staff are vigilant when reporting concerns so that leaders can deal with safeguarding issues quickly and appropriately. Leaders' effective communication and collaborative work with staff and external agencies mean that children and pupils get the timely support they need.

Pupils learn how to stay safe online and in the community.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some staff do not have the confidence to deliver the new phonics programme as intended. On occasions, a few children and pupils who are behind in their reading do not catch up as quickly as they should. Leaders should ensure that all staff become confident in delivering the new phonics programme so that those pupils who have fallen behind in their reading catch up quickly with their peers.

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 June 2012.

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	106501
Local authority	Wigan
Inspection number	10211002
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	205
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Alison Raines
Headteacher	Michelle Daley
Website	www.saintjosephs.wigan.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	9 November 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School Leigh is a Roman Catholic voluntary-aided primary school. The previous section 48 inspection took place in November 2017.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection that the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, the senior leadership team, middle leaders and a range of teaching and support staff. The inspector spoke with three members of the local governing body, including the vice-chair of governors.
- The inspector also met with a representative of the Archdiocese of Liverpool and representatives of the local authority.
- As part of this inspection, the inspector carried out deep dives in early reading, history and science. The inspector met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited

some lessons, looked at pupils' work and spoke with pupils and teachers. The inspector observed individual pupils reading to their teachers.

- The inspector met with groups of pupils from Years 1 to 6. The inspector also observed breaktimes.
- The inspector checked the school's safeguarding procedures and the checks made on staff. The inspector met with leaders, staff and pupils to evaluate the culture of safeguarding.
- The inspector reviewed a range of documentation, including that relating to safeguarding, the school development plans, self-evaluation documents, curriculum plans, minutes from meetings of the governing body, and behaviour records.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff and the responses to Ofsted's online survey for pupils.
- The inspector also considered the views of the parents and carers who responded to Ofsted Parent View. This included the comments received via the free-text facility.

Inspection team

Rachel Goodwin, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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