

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231  
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27 May 2022

James Lane  
Executive Headteacher  
St Joseph's Catholic Primary School  
Watford Way  
Hendon  
London  
NW4 4TY

Dear Mr Lane

### **No formal designation inspection of St Joseph's Catholic Primary School**

Following my visit with Sam Hailey, Her Majesty's Inspector, to your school on 27 April 2022, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave me and the time you took to discuss your school.

This inspection was conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 and in accordance with Ofsted's published procedures for no formal designation (NFD) inspections. The inspection was carried out because Her Majesty's Chief Inspector wished to determine the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements at the school as concerns had been raised with Ofsted.

We do not give graded judgements on NFD inspections. However, if we find some evidence that overall standards may be declining, but where no serious concerns have been identified, then the next inspection will normally be a section 5 inspection and will be brought forward. If we have serious concerns, we will deem the NFD inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

### **Evidence**

We scrutinised the single central record and other documents relating to safeguarding and child protection arrangements and met with the executive headteacher, groups of pupils and staff. We also held telephone discussions with the chair of the governing body and a representative of the local authority. We met with the leader responsible for special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). We conducted a tour of the school with leaders and observed pupils at breaktime. We also looked at records of meetings held by

governors, checks on the school premises and the school's own analysis of its safeguarding arrangements. We considered the views of parents and carers who have responded to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View.

Having considered the evidence, I am of the opinion that at this time:

## **Safeguarding is effective.**

### **Context**

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School is larger than the average primary school. There are 528 pupils between the ages of three and 11 on roll. The school has a Roman Catholic religious character. There have been no significant changes in staffing since the last inspection. At the time of this inspection, the deputy headteacher was absent from school.

### **Main findings**

Leaders make sure staff are aware of and can use the school's systems for recording safeguarding concerns. Child protection records are detailed and demonstrate effective collaboration with other professionals. Leaders have recognised and acted on the need for additional staff training to ensure these systems are used to their full potential. Staff say they feel confident and well supported when reporting concerns. Senior leaders help them understand what has been done to follow these up. Leaders also make sure there is support for temporary and supply staff in understanding and using the school's safeguarding systems.

Leaders are open and willing to learn from lessons when dealing with safeguarding concerns. For example, they have recently focused on strengthening pupils' confidence to speak up if they feel they have been the victim of abuse from one of their peers. Leaders have also made it a priority to understand recent changes to local guidance on responding to a parent or carer's decision to educate their child at home.

Leaders maintain records of inappropriate behaviour, including sexualised behaviour. However, these are recorded using a different method to that used for other safeguarding concerns. There are only a few exclusions due to poor behaviour. Exclusions are recorded. However, these records do not provide much detail about efforts to reintegrate pupils on their return to school or to make sure poor behaviour does not reoccur. There are gaps and inconsistencies in the recorded details of how concerns were followed up. This means that opportunities for staff to become curious about changes in behaviour and identify potential safeguarding concerns may be missed. Leaders and governors have recognised this and are providing further training for staff. However, this training is not complete, and its impact is yet to be seen.

Leaders make sure that safeguarding training covers common concerns and takes account of changes to statutory guidance. Governors also take part in this training. However, the lack of a systematic approach to recording and checking on the impact of this training

makes it harder than it should be for governors to make sure safeguarding duties are met and to hold leaders to account.

Pupils who spoke with us say they feel safe. They describe the school as 'a friendly place' and say 'staff are here to protect us'. They remember what they have been taught about different kinds of bullying. Some pupils say bullying happens in school but also feel sure that staff deal with it straight away.

Pupils can give examples of how they are taught to stay safe, including when using the internet. Leaders offer popular, well-attended workshops for parents to understand the school's approach to e-safety. Leaders make sure pupils develop a curiosity about the diversity in British culture. This is effective in helping pupils understand different types of relationships between people and in preparing them for their future lives.

Leaders make sure adaptations are made to help pupils who have SEND communicate how they are feeling. They offer prompt help to families of pupils who are poor school attenders.

Pupils behave calmly and sensibly in lessons and at breaktimes. Staff are vigilant in supervising pupils. Leaders manage the complex school site competently.

Staff responsible for managing checks on the suitability of staff are knowledgeable about the pre-employment checks that should be undertaken, including where a risk assessment is required.

The systems for managing medicines, first aid and information on pupils' medical needs are well understood and used consistently. Staff are appropriately trained in first aid. Leaders are now focusing on offering training for some staff to become mental health first aiders.

### **Additional support**

The local authority is providing support to leaders and governors. Together they have identified the school's strengths in relation to safeguarding and those aspects that leaders and governors need to do more work on. Staff say they value and understand recent training which helped them understand how to make the most of the record-keeping systems to analyse information and pursue their curiosity. The inclusion advisory team is helping staff develop the support they offer pupils with social, emotional or mental health needs in managing and expressing their feelings.

### **Priorities for further improvement**

- Leaders should develop a more systematic and consistent approach to recording and analysing safeguarding information and training. This is so that leaders can evaluate the impact of their actions to safeguard pupils more thoroughly and governors can hold leaders more closely to account.

- Leaders should complete and evaluate the impact of the work they have begun on helping staff understand how being curious about changes in behaviour can be a powerful aid in the early identification of concerns and risks.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the director of education for the Archdiocese of Westminster, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Barnet. This letter will be published on the Ofsted reports website.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Wright  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**