

Inspection of St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

St Joseph's Close, Ombersley Way, Droitwich, Worcestershire WR9 0RY

Inspection dates: 28 and 29 June 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Good

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Following a devastating fire in January 2021, staff and pupils are counting down the days until building work is complete. Leaders, governors and staff have pulled together. They have ensured that pupils have continued with their learning, as well as clubs and visits within restricted buildings and grounds. However, leaders do not provide enough opportunities for pupils to revisit and secure their learning.

Pupils have mixed views on behaviour across the school. Inspectors agree. Pupils understand what bullying is. They know that there is a 'big difference between falling out and bullying'. A few pupils said that bullying happens, but adults sort it. Pupils are safe.

Leaders provide several extra-curricular opportunities for pupils to experience or take part in. Pupils enjoy these. They are proud to share their achievements. This includes their recent successes in a swimming gala and Reception children bursting into song following their visit to a music festival.

Older pupils like the responsibilities they have, such as 'sports leaders'. For example, they value the rota in place to set up and play games with younger pupils. Parents and carers appreciate the 'family feel' to the school and that older pupils help the younger pupils.

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

The displacement by the fire, plus COVID-19, have caused significant disruption to school life. They continue to do so. However, leaders, including governors, have recently refocused on school priorities, especially around the curriculum. Governors follow up on external advice. They ask leaders specific questions if they feel that improvements are not seen.

Leaders prioritise reading. Recent purchases of reading books are helping to improve the match of books to pupils' reading needs. Lower-attaining pupils use phonics to read, but not with confidence or fluency. Pupils who have learned to read can talk about a few books they have read and authors they know. However, their discussions are at a surface level with little depth or passion for reading shown.

This year, leaders have concentrated on helping middle leaders to review their curriculum subject and develop plans to improve it. Subject leaders have set out what teachers need to teach and in what order. Most subjects now have this curriculum structure in place. Teachers say it has helped improve their confidence and reduce their workload. This supports pupils to achieve well in what they are learning at that moment in time. However, pupils do not recall their learning over time with sufficient depth to help them grasp new concepts that are taught. Not all staff are secure in how to best help pupils with special educational needs and/or

disabilities (SEND). As a result, some pupils with SEND do not get the help they need to be successful learners.

Subject leaders have provided guidance to teachers on a range of teaching strategies to support pupils' progress. For instance, in geography, leaders have promoted ways to help pupils better organise their geographical knowledge. In mathematics, recall quizzes are now in place. However, not all teachers use these strategies regularly in their lessons. This inconsistency means that some pupils do not build up what they know and remember well enough. Subject leaders' checks do not always focus on the right things. This means the varying teaching approaches, some less effective, have not been addressed.

Inconsistent also describes the management of pupils' behaviour. Children in the early years behave well. They are respectful, listen well and follow instructions. Pupils say, and inspectors saw, that this is not the case throughout the school, especially for the oldest pupils. Pupils that inspectors spoke with shared a strong sense of injustice about the way staff manage and deal with poor, unkind or discriminatory behaviour.

Pupils know a few school rules, but not very well. They know they sometimes make decisions by voting, but do not make links to fundamental British values such as the rule of law or democracy. Pupils experience many visits and sporting opportunities throughout the year.

Leaders have worked hard to ensure that children in the early years have classroom and outside spaces that promote learning across the curriculum. This is a credit to them as this is where the fire has had the biggest impact. Children are settled and happy learners, ready for what comes next. They are keen to do their best. Children in Reception apply their phonics skills well to produce writing of a high standard. Work displayed shows that children get better at using tools for a purpose and can create using their own thoughts and ideas.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders check that adults are safe to work with pupils. Leaders work closely and effectively with a range of external agencies.

Leaders provide training to staff that ensures staff know what to keep an eye out for in their daily work. Records show that staff share concerns in the right way. Leaders follow up these concerns. For example, reports of inappropriate sexualised language are recorded and addressed through assemblies and lessons.

Pupils learn about keeping safe in different situations. For example, they learn about water safety in swimming lessons. They apply this knowledge when they go bellboating on the nearby canal.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Staff do not consistently adapt the delivery of the curriculum or provide targeted support for pupils with SEND. This means that pupils with SEND do not always get the help they need, causing them to struggle or switch off from their learning. Leaders need to ensure that staff receive training on how to break learning into smaller steps and to use a range of strategies that will help pupils with SEND to achieve well.
- Not all staff follow, with consistency, the policies or practice that subject leaders have set out for their subject. This means that pupils are not accessing the best teaching that helps them to regularly revisit their learning. In some instances, teachers' expectations of what children can achieve are not high enough. Leaders need to ensure subject leaders check on the quality of education in their subject and address any identified issues so pupils make good progress in every subject.
- Leaders do not provide pupils with enough opportunities to develop a secure and deep understanding of fundamental British values. This means they cannot explain these well or give examples of how they are lived out within school life and beyond. Leaders should review the curriculum to identify and maximise every opportunity to promote pupils' understanding of British values within and across subjects.
- Not all staff reinforce high expectations of respectful behaviour when pupils' behaviour falls short of the mark. In addition, some staff do not adopt a consistent approach to managing behaviour that pupils may perceive to be as unfair. As a result, behaviour is not consistently good across the school. Leaders need to revisit and refresh the behaviour policy and provide additional training to all staff so that behaviour management is fair, consistent and continually upholds leaders' vision and values.

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	116876
Local authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	10212249
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	191
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Steven Atkins
Headteacher	Catherine Bryan
Website	www.stjosephsdroitwich.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	3 April 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school has pre-school provision for three- and four-year-olds.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.
- A section 48 inspection to evaluate the distinctiveness and effectiveness of St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School as a Catholic school took place on 15 and 16 February 2022.
- The school has a breakfast club and an after-school club operating on the site. This provision is managed by the school.
- The school suffered significant damage and destruction in a fire in January 2021. Building works were ongoing at the time of the inspection.
- Year 6 pupils were on a transition day to their secondary school on the second day of the inspection.

Information about this inspection

The inspector(s) 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. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher and a range of senior leaders, including the special educational needs coordinator.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, physical education and geography. For each deep dive, they discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The lead inspector spoke with a representative from the local authority and the Deputy Director for School Improvement for Birmingham Diocesan Education Service.
- The lead inspector met with four members of the governing body.
- Inspectors listened to a sample of pupils read.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school, including at breaktimes. They spoke formally with groups of pupils as well as talking to pupils in lessons and around school.
- The lead inspector reviewed responses to Ofsted's online parent and staff surveys.
- An inspector visited the after-school club.
- Inspectors met with leaders about the school's safeguarding procedures. They reviewed policies and records relating to safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.
- The lead inspector reviewed a range of documentation, including the school's improvement plans, minutes of governing body meetings and information on the school's website.

Inspection team

Kirsty Foulkes, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Sally Noble

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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