

Inspection of a good school: Holy Family and St Michael's Catholic Primary School, A Voluntary Academy

Cobblers Lane, Pontefract, West Yorkshire WF8 2HN

Inspection dates:

27 and 28 September 2022

Outcome

Holy Family and St Michael's Catholic Primary School, A Voluntary Academy continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a warm and welcoming school. Staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Pupils respond positively to these expectations. They feel safe and report any worries to staff. Staff deal with any concerns pupils have quickly and effectively. The school's values of respect, courtesy, patience and forgiveness are demonstrated by the majority of pupils. Behaviour at social times is usually calm and positive. Bullying is rare. Occasionally, some boys do not let some girls join in with football.

Staff know pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) well. They are nurtured and thrive with the support they are given. Children in the early years are well cared for. They learn to read quickly. Their learning in early mathematics is also strong.

A variety of extra-curricular clubs are available. These cover various sports as well as chess, comic club and singing. Leaders update the extra-curricular clubs on offer each term. Pupils apply to be a part of 'Mini-Vinnies', the pupil version of the church charity, within school eagerly. They undertake charitable activities regularly, including a recent visit to share lunch with older residents in the community. Pupils contribute to the active school council willingly.

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

Leaders recently introduced a new curriculum across a range of subjects. The new curriculum is designed well. Important knowledge is revisited so that pupils remember their learning over time. Subject leaders are very knowledgeable and well trained. In most subjects, teachers have a deep knowledge of the curriculum. They know how the curriculum supports pupils to make connections between topics. However, in one or two subjects, class teachers' knowledge is less secure. Subject leaders have not had sufficient

time to train and support them. Leaders have a plan to address this identified area for improvement over the coming months.

In lessons, teachers think aloud as they work through examples with pupils. This helps pupils to understand the planned learning and have a go themselves. Pupils remember their learning about the current curriculum. However, in some subjects pupils' do not remember some important aspects of their prior learning. This means there are gaps in their knowledge and some misconceptions, particularly in history and geography. Leaders and staff are working to address this shortcoming.

Pupils with SEND get the right help and support. Most pupils with SEND access the same curriculum as their peers. Where pupils are following a different pathway, this is appropriate to their needs. There is high ambition for all.

Children in the early years are nurtured and learn well. Routines are established. Children know what to expect, for example, when moving from one activity to another. This helps them to feel safe. Activities are purposeful and support children's learning in teacher-led sessions. Staff are very knowledgeable about how to teach early reading. Their work is highly effective. Pupils learn to read quickly. Those who struggle with reading are well supported to stay on track and catch up with their peers.

Leaders provide pupils with a range of extra-curricular opportunities. There are regular trips, which are deliberately planned to support pupils' learning of the curriculum. For example, pupils visit a local sculpture park as part of learning about sculpture in art lessons. Pupils have opportunities to take on responsibilities. For example, some pupils read with younger children. Pupils also participate in setting up for mass and welcoming guests.

The curriculum for personal, social and health education is well designed to prepare pupils for life in modern Britain. Pupils have absorbed the main messages of the curriculum. They treat each other with respect. Pupils know that treating people fairly is important. Pupils know how to eat healthily and stay fit. However, pupils struggle to recall some of the knowledge in the curriculum. For example, they have limited knowledge of other cultures and faiths.

Governors and trustees are committed to the school. Trustees have invested heavily in training subject leaders and developing the new curriculum. They are committed to ensuring all staff have access to ongoing training, particularly in curriculum design.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff understand local risks to children. They report all concerns, large or small. Leaders work well as a team. They gather and share information effectively so that concerns about pupils are followed up straight away. They have established good relationships with families. Parents and carers feel able to share information to help keep their children safe. Leaders keep detailed logs of the actions they take in response to safeguarding and child

protection incidents. They make timely referrals to other agencies, including children's services, where necessary. Pupils feel safe at school.

Checks are carried out to make sure staff and visitors are appropriately vetted and safe to be in school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have recently introduced a new curriculum. Pupils do not remember some of the previous curriculum, particularly in history and geography. Pupils have gaps and misconceptions. Leaders should ensure that these gaps in knowledge are identified and addressed.
- Subject leaders are highly knowledgeable but do not have sufficient opportunities to train and support other staff. Teachers' curriculum knowledge is generally strong but is weaker in a small number of subjects. Leaders should ensure that subject leaders have sufficient time to train and support staff so that all subjects are consistently well implemented.

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 an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the third ungraded inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Holy Family and St Michael's Catholic Primary School, to be good in May 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.

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	141594
Local authority	Wakefield
Inspection number	10240780
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	200
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Charles Gillott
Headteacher	Claire Cade
Website	www.hfsm.bkcat.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	12 September 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The number of pupils with SEND is above average.
- The number of pupils who speak English as an additional language is also above average.
- The school does not make use of alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- 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 has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- No trustees were available to meet with the inspector during the inspection to discuss their accountability for the school's performance.
- The inspector held several meetings with the headteacher during the inspection.
- A meeting was held with two members of the governing body. The inspector also met with the chief executive officer.

- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and, where appropriate, looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector observed pupils reading to a familiar adult.
- Pupils talked to the inspector, formally and informally, about their learning and experiences at school.
- Safeguarding documentation and records for behaviour and attendance were considered.
- The inspector reviewed the responses received through Ofsted's survey, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text responses. The inspector considered the responses received through Ofsted's staff survey and responses to the pupil survey.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour throughout the school day, including during lesson visits and at breaktimes and lunchtimes. The inspector spoke to groups of pupils about their views on behaviour and the wider experiences they receive at school.

Inspection team

Zoe Helman, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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