

# Inspection of St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

115 St Mary's Lane, Upminster, Essex RM14 2QB

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Inspection dates: 1 and 2 November 2022

**Overall effectiveness** **Good**

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The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Good

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

Pupils described their experiences at this school as 'joyful'. Their behaviour and attitudes towards learning are positive. Pupils work and play well together. Adults deal with any rare incidents of bullying swiftly. This helps to ensure that pupils feel safe and are kept safe.

Pupils value their warm working relationships with staff. They also appreciate the many extra-curricular events on offer, including those in the wider community. They are encouraged to be reflective about their experiences and those of others.

Leaders are ambitious for pupils' learning. These ambitions are typically realised. Staff know pupils well and ensure that they get the support that they need to achieve successfully. Parents and carers value being part of this school community.

Pupils are proud of the opportunities they are given to contribute to school life. For example, in the early years, children vote on the books that they want to read. Similarly, older pupils readily take on the role of reading ambassadors or house captains. Pupils who are 'eco-warriors' promote the importance of sustainability. For example, they encourage everyone to ensure that the lights are turned off around the school when they are not needed.

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

The curriculum is broad and balanced and matches the scope and ambition of what is expected nationally. In many subjects, leaders have identified what pupils need to learn and remember. This has been logically organised so that this important knowledge is secured over time. For example, in the early years, children develop a clear understanding of number. They become familiar with how numbers work, for example, through regular practice of counting. This helps children to be ready to learn about multiplication, factors and fractions later on. Similarly, in physical education, pupils build on their knowledge year on year. For example, pupils recall how to hold a hockey stick correctly. They use what they know confidently, for example when stopping and passing the hockey ball.

In the early years, the curriculum has been designed to support children to build the knowledge and skills that they need when they move into Year 1. For example, children learn to name different parts of plants and identify what plants need to grow. This supports their understanding in science. However, a small number of subjects are less well designed. In these areas, knowledge does not build as cumulatively from the early years up. As a result, pupils' understanding in these subjects is not as fully developed.

A clear, well-structured programme is in place to ensure that pupils learn to read effectively. This starts from Reception. Pupils read books that are well matched to the sounds that they have learned. Appropriate extra help is in place for pupils who

struggle to read confidently. This means that pupils learn to read with increasing fluency and precision over time.

Although teachers typically check pupils' understanding, sometimes errors and misconceptions are missed. In these instances, this reduces how successfully pupils know and secure their knowledge in the long term.

Leaders provide appropriate training to staff about the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). A range of additional support is provided, and this ensures that these pupils fully access the planned curriculum.

Pupils are well motivated to learn. Behaviour in the school is calm and orderly. Pupils are respectful and kind to each other. The curriculum for personal, social and health education (PSHE) is well designed so that themes are revisited over time. Pupils are encouraged to develop a detailed understanding of important issues such as staying safe when online. Leaders provide opportunities for pupils to be active citizens. For example, each one of the four school houses does fundraising for a charity of their choice.

Staff feel valued by leaders. Their well-being is carefully considered. For example, subject leaders are provided with the time they need to manage their responsibilities.

The governing body has a clear understanding of its role. It fulfils its statutory effectively. Currently, governors are working closely with the new headteacher to evaluate the strengths of the school and to identify key priorities moving forward.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that staff have appropriate safeguarding training. This ensures that procedures for identifying and reporting concerns are clear. Those responsible for governance ensure that appropriate pre-employment checks are carried out.

Leaders use external agencies to ensure that pupils and their families receive the support that they need, such as counselling. Pupils are taught to keep themselves safe through the PSHE curriculum, including when online. They appreciate the consideration given to their mental health by staff. For example, they like being able to share concerns via the 'feelings box' in their classes.

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

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

- In most subjects, leaders have identified the knowledge that pupils need to learn. However, there are some subjects where this is not as clear. In these areas, pupils do not develop their understanding as thoroughly. Leaders must ensure that the

important ideas pupils need to learn are identified in all subjects so that pupils develop their understanding across the curriculum.

- Most teachers check pupils' understanding of what they have learned. However, there are times when errors and misconceptions are missed. In these instances, pupils are less well prepared to tackle more challenging ideas because they have not secured the prior knowledge that they require. Leaders must ensure that teachers routinely check what pupils have learned and remembered so that pupils are well prepared to learn what comes next.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	102334
<b>Local authority</b>	Havering
<b>Inspection number</b>	10240872
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	416
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Angela Podmore
<b>Headteacher</b>	Michael Ross
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.st-josephs-upminster.net">www.st-josephs-upminster.net</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	5 February 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The current headteacher took up his post in September 2022.
- The school has a Roman Catholic character. Its last section 48 inspection took place in March 2022.
- The school does not make any use of any alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded 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 leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors spoke with the headteacher and assistant headteachers. They also spoke with a representative from the local authority and the school's educational welfare officer.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: design and technology, early reading, physical education, mathematics and science. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with pupils about their learning and looked at samples of their work.
- Inspectors reviewed documentation and spoke with pupils about their learning in other curriculum subjects including history, geography, art and music.
- Inspectors reviewed relevant safeguarding documentation and records, including the single central record of pre-employment checks.
- Inspectors also spoke with members of the governing body, including the chair. They also spoke with a representative from the Diocese of Brentwood.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour around the school, including at play time.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff, pupils and parents.

### **Inspection team**

Sophie Healey-Welch, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Karen Jaeggi	Ofsted Inspector
Teresa Neary	Ofsted Inspector

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