

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

Chedworth Drive, Warndon, Worcester, Worcestershire WR4 9PG

Inspection dates:

7 and 8 December 2022

Outcome

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

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a school that feels like a family. Pupils enjoy attending and being with their friends. They feel safe because the staff help them and look after them. A pupil commented, 'I enjoy being with my friends and the teachers always help us to do our best work.' There is a strong sense of pastoral care across the school, which dovetails with the school's ethos.

Leaders, governors and staff want the best for all pupils. This has led to many improvements in the quality of education and other aspects of school life. However, leaders are not complacent. They are aware that the school can improve even further and are determined to pursue improvements for the benefit of all pupils.

There is a calm atmosphere around the school. Leaders have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. In lessons, pupils listen well and focus on their work. At breaktimes, they play games cooperatively and enjoy chatting with their friends. Staff take bullying seriously and deal with any issues quickly.

Most parents speak positively about the school. They appreciate the level of care given to their children and the fact that teachers are willing to go above and beyond.

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

In a wide range of subjects, leaders have carefully considered the order of learning in the curriculum. They have mapped out the knowledge and skills that pupils need to learn from early years through to Year 6. As a result, teachers know what pupils have learned in the past, what they need to learn currently and what they need to learn in the future. Pupils achieve well in these subjects. In a small number of subjects, such as art and design, leaders are currently redesigning the curriculum. In these subjects, the order of learning is not as clear. Consequently, teachers are less sure about what they need to teach.

Teachers have secure subject knowledge in a range of curriculum areas. As a result, they explain concepts in a clear, step-by-step manner. Teachers weave subject-specific vocabulary into their teaching effectively. Pupils are starting to use similar vocabulary when answering questions or explaining their understanding. Teachers and teaching assistants use questioning well to check pupils' understanding. If required, staff adapt their teaching to address any areas of confusion or misunderstanding.

Leaders have put systems into place to identify the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) accurately. Pupils with SEND are fully included in lessons and all aspects of school life. Teachers consider the needs of pupils with SEND when they plan learning activities. Staff are always at hand to step in if a pupil needs help. However, staff know that they are there to support pupils with their learning, not to do the work for them.

Reading is a whole-school priority. Pupils enjoy reading and talked about the books their teachers read to them. The phonics curriculum is clearly mapped out across the early years, key stage 1 and beyond if required. However, there is some variability in relation to how the phonics programme is taught across the different groups. That said, systems are in place to provide extra help for any pupils who are falling behind with their reading.

The Nursery, referred to as the pre-school, helps children to prepare for the Reception classes and beyond. There is a focus on developing children's language skills and learning in a range of areas. Staff support children to listen well, develop their self-help skills and play alongside their peers.

Pupils speak confidently about the school's mission statement 'Following Jesus in all we do'. They say this reminds them to be kind to others. Pupils appreciate the range of trips that enrich the curriculum. They talk excitedly about the time when they had a sleepover at a tourist attraction in Birmingham. Pupils enjoy attending the range of after-school clubs, including choir, board games and girls' football. Pupils know that a balanced diet and regular exercise are important to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

Leaders know the school well. Supported by governors and staff, they continually look for ways to improve the school even further. For example, they are currently implementing a whole-school approach that supports pupils who struggle to manage their own behaviour.

Staff enjoy working in the school and are proud to be part of St Joseph's. Leaders are considerate of teachers' workload and well-being. Staff feel that leaders really care for them. They gave lots of examples of how leaders demonstrate this such as well-being Wednesday as well as tailored support for individual members of staff.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have made sure that safeguarding is everyone's top priority. The safeguarding team are knowledgeable and carry out their roles efficiently. All staff attend suitable training and receive regular updates. This includes safeguarding updates, as well as a

focus on specific issues such as child-on-child abuse. Consequently, staff know what to do if they have a concern about a pupil's welfare and act accordingly.

Pupils trust the staff to look after them. They say they would speak to members of staff if they were worried about something. Pupils have an age-appropriate understanding of how to stay safe when working online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have not prioritised the development of all staff linked to the delivery of the phonics curriculum. As a result, there is some variability in relation to how staff teach phonics. Leaders should provide all staff with relevant support so they can deliver the phonics programme effectively.
- In a small number of subjects, the curriculum is not well sequenced. As a result, teachers are not clear about the best order of teaching. In these subjects, leaders should map out the knowledge and skills that pupils will learn across the school to improve the quality of children's learning.

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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in January 2013.

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	116925
Local authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	10227031
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	353
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Vincent Brennan
Headteacher	Louise Bury
Website	www.stjosephsworcester.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	30 March 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school has a Nursery, known to parents as the pre-school, which admits two-year-olds.
- This is a Catholic primary school, which is part of the Archdiocese of Birmingham. The latest section 48 inspection took place on 14 and 15 June 2016.
- The school has a breakfast club on the site. This provision is managed by the school.
- The school does not use any 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 this into account in his evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and the assistant headteacher. He met with governors, including the chair of the governing body. The inspector held a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority. Also, he held a telephone conversation with a representative of the Archdiocese.

- The inspector held meetings with a range of leaders to discuss safeguarding, provision for pupils with SEND and pupils' behaviour.
- As part of the inspection, the inspector carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and art and design. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector observed pupils reading to a familiar adult.
- The inspector spoke to groups of pupils formally and informally about their learning and experiences at school.
- Safeguarding documents were checked, including the checks that leaders make on staff's suitability to work with children. The inspector checked that staff implement safeguarding policies and procedures effectively across the school.
- The inspector considered responses to Ofsted Parent View and the free-text responses received during the inspection.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted's staff survey.
- The inspector looked at a range of documentation provided by the school. This included the school's self-evaluation, school development plan, school policies, curriculum documents, SEND records and minutes of meetings held by the governing body.

Inspection team

Wayne Simner, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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