

Inspection of St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Malmesbury

Holloway Hill, Holloway, Malmesbury, Wiltshire SN16 9BB

Inspection dates: 7 and 8 March 2023

Overall effectiveness **Good**

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 enjoy coming to St Joseph's Catholic Primary School. They find lessons interesting. Pupils are eager to talk about their learning. They feel safe to make mistakes and to learn from them. They progress well through the school's curriculum.

Relationships between adults and pupils are warm and nurturing. Pupils appreciate that staff know them well and care about them. Staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school. Pupils strive to meet these. Pupils say that bullying does not happen. They feel that any issues are dealt with quickly. They know how to use the 'worry monsters' to ask for help if they need it.

This is an inclusive school. Pupils learn about religions and understand that people may hold different beliefs. They are accepting of others and celebrate diversity. One pupil said, 'If everyone was the same, it would be the most boring world ever!'

Parents value the wide range of activities that pupils take part in. Year 6 pupils take on leadership roles, such as forest school leaders and house captains. They are proud of their responsibilities and work cooperatively together.

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

There have been some significant changes to the school recently, including a new leadership team. Since the headteacher took up post in 2019, there have been many positive developments. Leaders are ambitious for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They have prioritised improving the quality of education. Leaders have designed a curriculum that meets the needs of all pupils. It identifies what pupils need to know and remember.

Staff say that the leadership team has shared values and a common purpose. They feel well supported and are clear that leaders have helped them to manage their workload. However, there is a small group of parents who have raised concerns about the recent turbulence.

Teachers design learning so that pupils revisit prior knowledge. This helps them to understand and remember subject-specific information. For example, in history, pupils can talk about key events in Malmesbury, such as the mauling of a resident by a travelling circus' tiger in 1703 and lightning striking the Abbey. However, teachers do not always provide pupils with learning that enables them to make links between new and prior knowledge. This means that pupils do not deepen their understanding as fully as they could.

Teachers use assessment well to inform pupils' learning. They are skilled at identifying pupils' misconceptions and provide help to make sure they do not make repeated mistakes.

Leaders prioritise reading. Pupils say that 'reading helps us to know stuff'. They find it 'calming and peaceful'. The new phonics scheme has quickly helped pupils to gain the knowledge they need to be able to read. Books that pupils read help them to practise the sounds they know. As a result, pupils read with increasing accuracy and fluency.

Teachers are knowledgeable about how to support pupils with SEND. They adapt learning so that pupils with SEND can access the full curriculum successfully. Leaders seek expert help and make timely provision for pupils who are waiting for education, health and care (EHC) plans.

Strong relationships between pupils and staff support pupils to manage their behaviour successfully, including those who struggle to manage their feelings. There is no disruption in lessons. Pupils take ownership of their work and persevere, even when they find things difficult.

The school helps pupils to be well prepared for the future. From Reception, children learn how to keep themselves mentally and physically healthy. The curriculum for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong. Worship and opportunities, such as the chaplaincy council, allow pupils to reflect on their faith and spirituality.

Governors meet their statutory duties. However, until recently, they have not discharged their roles as effectively as they could. Governors have not worked strategically enough and have been distracted with issues that do not focus on improving the quality of education for pupils. They have not monitored the curriculum with enough precision. This has limited their understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have developed a culture where pupils feel safe. They ensure that staff are trained to understand what might make pupils vulnerable in school and in the local community. Processes for safer recruitment of staff and managing allegations are effective.

Leaders respond quickly when staff report concerns. They work effectively with external agencies and safeguarding partners to ensure that pupils and families receive the help they need. Leaders keep accurate records and look for patterns that may indicate that a child is at risk of harm.

The curriculum helps pupils to understanding how to keep themselves safe. For example, they know what to do to keep themselves safe online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Until recently, governors have not discharged their roles as effectively as they could. This has limited governors' knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Those responsible for governance need to work collegiately with school leaders to ensure that:
 - they continue to drive the strategic direction of the school
 - they monitor the impact of the school's work in all areas.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to deepen their knowledge and make links between what they know and new learning. As a result, pupils are not as secure in their learning as they could be. Leaders need to continue to develop the curriculum across all subjects so that pupils have opportunities to make links in their learning both within and across subjects.

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	126424
Local authority	Wiltshire
Inspection number	10227990
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary-aided
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	130
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	David Bryson
Headteacher	Susan Woods
Website	www.st-josephs-malmesbury.wilts.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	28 February 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This is a voluntary-aided Catholic primary school. The school had its most recent section 48 inspection under the Education Act 2005 for schools of a religious character in July 2018.
- There have been several changes of staff since the last inspection, including the headteacher and assistant headteacher.
- Leaders do not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We deemed the inspection a graded (section 5) inspection under the same Act.

- 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 met with the headteacher, other key leaders, groups of staff, pupils, a representative from the local authority, a representative from the Diocese of Clifton and members of the governing body, including the chair and vice-chair.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors considered the documentation around safeguarding, including the safeguarding checks made on staff. They talked to governors, staff and pupils about how the school keeps everyone safe.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons, at breaktimes and around the school site.
- Inspectors spoke with a range of staff to see how leaders support their workload and well-being.
- Inspectors considered the 45 responses to the Ofsted online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including 43 free-text responses, and 15 responses to the staff survey.

Inspection team

Steph Matthews, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Nicola Berry

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
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