

Inspection of St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Hazelgrove Road, Haywards Heath, West Sussex RH16 3PQ

Inspection dates: 16 and 17 May 2023

Overall effectiveness

Good

The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Good

Early years provision

Outstanding

Previous inspection grade

Not previously inspected under section 5
of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Adults care for pupils and know them well at this nurturing, inclusive school. Pupils benefit from very positive relationships with each other and with the committed staff team. Pupils make an exceptional start in Reception. Pupils develop confidence and understanding of the school's pledge for all pupils to be 'respectful, ready and safe'. Pupils feel safe and are happy at school. Bullying or unkind behaviour is rare but taken seriously. If any incidents occur, they lead to thoughtful and determined actions from school leaders. Pupils understand how to raise concerns with trusted adults if they have any worries.

Pupils are proud to make a positive difference to their school community. Older pupils care for the younger ones and help them by mentoring, leading play and acting as positive role models throughout many aspects of school life. Through the school's 'pupil passports', they experience a deliberate, structured programme of rich cultural experiences, such as auditioning for school plays or taking part in a 'Titanic fair'. Behaviour is exemplary throughout the school and the school day, with pupils engaging in a wide range of activities, where they show highly positive approaches to their learning. One pupil summed this up, saying, 'At our school, we welcome everyone. There are opportunities for all.'

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

Leaders have rightly prioritised phonics and early reading at the school. There is a systematic approach, which is taught consistently well. Pupils read regularly and develop a love of books from the start of Reception. Pupils appreciate the school library and are enthused by the creative ways staff try to engage them, such as using a book vending machine, which links to the school's praise and rewards system. Books that help pupils to learn to read are matched closely to the sounds they know. All pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), learn to read well and catch up if they fall behind because of effective tuition and extra support.

Leaders are highly ambitious for every pupil. In core subjects, such as mathematics, they have implemented a curriculum that equips pupils with the essential knowledge and skills they need to be prepared for their next stage of education. Teachers design lessons thoughtfully. They demonstrate and continue to develop secure subject knowledge. Teachers check how well pupils have learned and then adapt future lessons to ensure that pupils succeed. In a small number of subjects across the wider curriculum, however, leaders continue to work to identify the precise knowledge that pupils need to learn.

Leaders provide high-quality training for staff. There is a range of opportunities to help staff develop their skills, including successful programmes to help staff move into leadership roles. Through these, staff support each other and other schools

across the trust. Leaders are committed to excellence across all subjects and are clear about the strengths and areas to develop further.

Confident pupils discuss their ideas in mature and skilful ways. For example, the school council hosted a 'Question Time' event, where they debated topical issues with a local member of parliament. The comprehensive personal, social and health education programme helps pupils to explore keeping mentally and physically healthy, online safety and a range of experiences to help develop pupils' resilience and wider understanding. Pupils with SEND and pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds consistently benefit from a variety of opportunities, including learning musical instruments and developing artistic knowledge and skills through clubs such as lunchtime drama club. Pupils enjoy a wide range of other activities, such as choir, dodgeball, Spanish dancing and tennis. Leaders ensure that British values, like understanding democracy, link closely to the school's broader values. For example, in the early years, children vote for the book that is to be read at the end of the day, and key stage 2 pupils debate controversial topics. Pupils develop a strong awareness of diversity in modern Britain. They understand the importance of tolerance and acceptance. One leader stated, 'Our values are lived, breathed and understood here.'

Trust leaders and governors share an ambitious vision for the school. They work closely with staff, offering high-quality challenge and support, which is both appreciated and welcomed. Under the guidance of the headteacher, leaders engage with staff well to support them with issues such as workload and well-being. Staff and parents are highly supportive of school leaders.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Governors take account of all their statutory duties in relation to safeguarding, including 'Prevent' duty. There are robust systems in place to support the strong culture of safeguarding that exists at the school, including safe recruitment of appropriate staff and volunteers. Leaders know families well and make sure that pupils get help if they need it. Leaders ensure that all staff receive appropriate training and are aware of the signs of potential harm. Leaders review case studies and scenarios to keep staff's knowledge up to date. Pupils have a clear understanding of e-safety and the potential dangers of technology use and social media.

What does the school need to do to improve? (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of foundation subjects, leaders have not identified the precise knowledge that pupils need to learn consistently and clearly. As a result, pupils do not learn as well as they could in these subjects. Leaders should ensure that the

curriculum for all subjects builds cumulative knowledge and vocabulary to support all pupils in knowing and remembering more.

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	147937
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	10268756
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	419
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Dominic Dow
Headteacher	Catherine Walker
Website	http://www.stjosephshh.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- St Joseph's Catholic Primary School is designated as having a Roman Catholic religious character. It is part of the Diocese of Arundel and Brighton.
- The predecessor school was last inspected by Ofsted in January 2018, when its overall effectiveness was judged to be good. A section 48 denominational inspection was carried out in July 2019. This is an inspection of the school's religious character.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is close to the national average, and the proportion with a statement of special educational needs and an education, health and care plan is below the national average, but increasing. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional government funding) is well below the national average.
- The school currently uses one alternative provider, Sense Learning and Grass Roots Equine Therapy.

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 school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- During this inspection, inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, history, computing and physical education. This involved meeting with leaders of those subjects, visiting lessons, looking at pupils' work and talking to pupils and staff about learning in these subjects.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and other staff. They reviewed documentation and actions taken to safeguard pupils and promote their welfare, health and safety.
- The lead inspector met the chair of the trust, members of the governing board and a representative from the diocese.
- Inspectors looked at curriculum documents, school policies, safeguarding documents and employment checks, including the single central record.
- Inspectors considered responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View. Inspectors also considered the survey responses from 101 staff and pupils.

Inspection team

Carl McCarthy, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Kate Magliocco	Ofsted Inspector
Adnan Ahmet	Ofsted Inspector

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