

Inspection of St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Chorley

Cedar Road, Chorley, Lancashire PR6 0JF

Inspection dates: 20 and 21 June 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud to attend this school. They feel well supported and valued in a warm and caring learning community. Pupils enjoy learning and playing together, and everyone is made to feel welcome. Staff and pupils embody the school's values. Pupils' talents are nurtured well.

Leaders have high aspirations and expectations of pupils' behaviour and achievement. Pupils are determined to live up to these expectations. Pupils behave well in lessons and around school. Typically, they learn well.

Pupils know that staff will respond sensitively to any worries or problems that they may have. When bullying does occur, staff act quickly to resolve it. This helps pupils to feel safe and happy.

Leaders provide pupils with an extensive and ambitious enrichment programme to foster their wider interests and talents. For example, pupils talked excitedly about 'building the kingdom' opportunities, which include bushcraft, yoga, climbing and gardening. All pupils engage in a wide range of extra-curricular activities.

Pupils are inspired by a wealth of exciting visits and trips which broaden their horizons. For example, pupils have visited the office of their local member of Parliament. Pupils also appreciate the diverse range of visitors to the school who speak to them about topical issues. All of these exceedingly well-designed activities encourage pupils to have high aspirations for their futures.

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

Leaders have designed an ambitious curriculum from the Reception Year to Year 6. The curriculum is broad and balanced. In the main, it is delivered in a logical order. However, in a small number of subjects, leaders have not fully established the knowledge that pupils must learn and in what order this should be taught. Occasionally, this hinders some pupils from making secure connections between different topics and concepts. Nevertheless, pupils, including children in the early years, achieve well overall.

Teachers across the school and including in the early years have strong subject knowledge. Leaders prioritise staff's training, particularly around the delivery of the curriculum. There is an open culture where staff and leaders support each other successfully to improve the quality of education for pupils.

Leaders' systems to assess pupils' progress through the curriculum are mostly effective. Staff are quick to identify pupils' misconceptions and misunderstandings. They help pupils to catch up quickly if they fall behind the curriculum expectations.

Leaders have effective systems in place to identify the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils with SEND access the same

ambitious curriculum as their peers. Teachers have the same high expectations for pupils with SEND, and for disadvantaged pupils, as they do for all other pupils. Pupils with SEND, and disadvantaged pupils, achieve well.

Leaders have placed a high priority on the teaching of reading. Pupils in key stage 2 have access to a brand-new library, which is helping to engage them in reading for pleasure. Across the school, leaders have made sure that there is a wide selection of books for pupils to read and enjoy. Pupils talked with enthusiasm about the books that they have read, why they chose those books and who their favourite authors are. Most pupils develop a love of reading, and they read widely and often.

At the start of the Reception Year, children begin to learn phonics. All staff who teach phonics have had high-quality training so that they do this consistently well. The books that pupils read match the sounds that they know. Timely support is given to pupils who need to catch up with their reading knowledge. Most pupils become fluent, confident readers by the end of Year 2.

Disruption to learning is rare. In the early years, children learn school routines quickly. They learn to share and take turns. Pupils attend school regularly. Pupils enjoy being rewarded for their efforts.

Leaders have designed an exceptional range of opportunities to promote pupils' personal development. Pupils learn important life skills, such as managing money and taking care of their mental and physical health. Leaders maximise opportunities for pupils to learn about other faiths and cultures.

Across the school, pupils support and respect each other for their differences. Pupils have a very well-developed understanding of how to manage their feelings and deal with any conflict. They are very proud of being presented with an external award for how well they nurture and support people who have experienced trauma in their lives.

Governors know their community and the pupils well. They successfully challenge leaders to ensure that barriers to learning are removed for vulnerable pupils. Governors have skilfully worked with leaders in the development of the school's curriculum. They successfully hold leaders to account for the quality of education that pupils receive.

Staff are appreciative of the way that leaders are mindful of their workload and well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure staff are well trained to identify pupils who may need early help or who may be at risk of harm. Leaders ensure that staff training reflects any potential safeguarding or welfare issues in the local community, for example county lines.

They identify extra training for staff when it is needed such as understanding pupils' mental health.

Where necessary, leaders work with other agencies to secure further support for pupils and their families. Staff are clear on how to report any concerns that they may have.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe and physically and mentally healthy. For example, they learn about how to keep safe when they are working or playing online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, leaders are in the process of refining what pupils must learn. This means that, on occasion, some pupils do not make sure enough connections between different topics and concepts. Leaders should ensure that they finalise their curriculum thinking in these remaining subjects. This is so that pupils develop a deep and rich body of subject knowledge.

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	119671
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10269059
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	210
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Andrew Vose
Headteacher	Annie Douglas
Website	www.stjosephschorley.co.uk/
Date of previous inspection	20 February 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection, a new headteacher has taken up post.
- The governing body is responsible for the breakfast and after-school club.
- The school is part of the Archdiocese of Liverpool. The last section 48 inspection took place in March 2018.
- Leaders do not make use of 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 has 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 conducted deep dives in the following subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, they met with subject leaders and teachers. They also visited lessons, looked at examples of pupils' work and talked

with groups of pupils about their learning. Inspectors also reviewed the curriculum in some other subjects.

- The lead inspector observed pupils from key stage 1 and key stage 2 reading to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors spoke with the headteacher and other school leaders. The lead inspector spoke with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. She spoke with a representative of the local authority and with the school officer. The lead inspector also had a discussion with the school improvement partner from the Archdiocese of Liverpool.
- Inspectors talked with staff about their workload and well-being.
- Inspectors met with the leaders who are responsible for attendance, behaviour, early years, SEND and pupils' personal development.
- Inspectors reviewed leaders' policies and procedures to keep pupils safe. They discussed safeguarding arrangements with leaders and staff. They also checked the single central record and other relevant documentation.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils about safeguarding and their wider experience of school. They looked at a range of policies and documents related to pupils' welfare and education, for example behaviour and attendance records. They observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school.
- Inspectors took account of the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff and pupils.
- Inspectors met with parents at the start of the school day and took account of the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses.

Inspection team

Ruth Moran, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Rebecca Jewitt

His Majesty's Inspector

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