

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

Main Road, Boughton, Newark, Nottinghamshire NG22 9JE

Inspection dates:

12 to 13 September 2023

Outcome

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

The headteacher of this school is Mrs Elspeth Wilkins-Campbell. This school is part of Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Multi-Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, James McGeachie, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Nigel Stevenson.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to school at St Joseph's. They said there is not much that they would change. They feel safe because they know the adults in school will listen to them. From their first day, pupils take pride in wearing their uniform and are eager to learn. By Year 6, pupils are well equipped for positions of responsibility, such as house captain, librarian and prefect. They relish these opportunities.

Pupils understand and display the importance of duty, service and compassion. They show good levels of self-discipline from an early age. Pupils' conduct around school is considerate and thoughtful towards others. They are confident that adults would deal with any problems they might have quickly and effectively.

The school does its best to help and support pupils and their families. The school's religious character is evident through adults' warmth, care and ambition for every pupil. Pupils achieve well regardless of their ability or background.

In the words of one parent, but typical of many, 'Everyone is welcoming and keen to engage in dialogue; a fantastic environment for children to flourish.'

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

Children enter the nursery eager to learn. They enjoy their first introductions to reading, joining in rhymes and traditional songs like 'Old MacDonald's Farm'. From the start, adults teach children to use correct letter sounds. The school's formal phonics programme starts

in Reception Year. Adults teach phonics and reading consistently well throughout the school. Pupils who find reading difficult use what they have learned in phonics to read unfamiliar words and texts. The positive start made by pupils encourages them to be keen and confident readers as they progress through the school.

Teachers plan the mathematics curriculum, so that pupils' knowledge builds over time. Adults give pupils effective support in class and through additional sessions. This helps pupils who need to catch up and keep up. The trust has helped staff develop their expertise in mathematics and other subjects. Staff value this support.

The school is ambitious to give pupils the very best in each subject. Staff review and refine the curriculum regularly. Geography is a good example of this. The curriculum identifies what pupils need to know, and how teachers can check what pupils have learned. Pupils have knowledge organisers to help them remember key information. In some subjects, knowledge organisers do not help pupils link their learning to prior topics. This can slow some pupils' learning of new knowledge. Most pupils can discuss what they have learned and can often link this to other learning. For example, in Year 4 when studying the oceans, a pupil recalled their learning of photosynthesis from Year 3. In Year 6, a pupil did the same in relation to their rainforest topic. Occasionally, teachers do not pay enough attention to what pupils already know. They do not always address gaps in pupils' knowledge.

The school has acted on the recommendations of the last inspection very effectively. The school is ambitious for disadvantaged pupils. The provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is now well planned and communicated. Every pupil with SEND is assigned a 'trusted adult' to act as their advocate. Adults use pupils' views when writing 'pupil passports'. Staff use these effectively to ensure that pupils with SEND make strong progress through the curriculum.

Pupils behave well. Pupils want to do well and want their classmates to do well too. They are tolerant of each other's differences and supportive when they see someone in need. Pupils are punctual and the majority attend well. Those with excellent attendance wear their yellow star badges with pride. Some younger pupils are already planning how many rewards badges they will earn by the time they leave Year 6. Leaders' tenacity in raising attendance also reflects the school's ever-present culture of keeping pupils safe.

Promoting pupils' personal development is a strength. Older pupils talk maturely and knowledgeably about aspects of society. For example, their views are informed by their knowledge of protected characteristics and democracy. Pupils talk excitedly about the residential opportunities they get from Year 2 onwards. Leaders have worked to ensure that there is equality of opportunity and equity of access on these trips for every pupil. Pupils are well equipped for the next stages of their education.

Leaders at all levels are considerate of staff's well-being and workload.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school's curriculum is not yet consistently strong in all subjects. At times, there is not enough consideration given to pupils' prior learning. Knowledge organisers are inconsistent in quality. This can result in gaps in pupils' learning. It makes it harder for them to know more and to do more. Leaders should continue the work to ensure that the curriculum in all subjects is well planned and implemented, so that it meets the learning needs of all pupils.

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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in 9 and 10 May 2018.

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](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the definition of children in need of help and protection; pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's pupil premium

funding (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	142093
Local authority	Nottinghamshire County Council
Inspection number	10298507
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	221
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Nigel Stevenson
Headteacher	Elsbeth Wilkins-Campbell
Website	www.stjosephsschool.net
Dates of previous inspection	9 and 10 May 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Almost immediately following the previous inspection, the school transferred to Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Multi-Academy Trust. The new trust appointed an executive headteacher to lead the school. The current headteacher has been at the school for one and a half years.
- St Joseph's is a Roman Catholic faith school which was last inspected for its religious character under Section 48 Education Act 2005 on 8 and 9 March 2023.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in his evaluation of the school.
- During the inspection, the inspector met with the headteacher and the deputy headteacher, who is also the coordinator for pupils with SEND. The inspector met with

a number of other school leaders as well as representatives of the trust. He spoke with parents at the start of the school day and considered the responses of parents to Ofsted Parent View, including free-text comments.

- The inspector carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, he visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.

Inspection team

Stephen McMullan, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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