

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

Newport Road, Newbury, Berkshire RG14 2AW

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Inspection dates:

17 and 18 October 2023

## Outcome

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

## What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud to be members of this school. They respond positively to the schools' high expectations, which motivate them to try their best. Pupils enthusiastically share their learning with visitors and talk confidently about their work. They show resilience and know that learning takes commitment and effort. For example, it matters that they present their work neatly to meet the schools' high presentation standards.

The school community is friendly and happy, which reflects the school's Catholic values of 'following, recognising and nurturing'. If children join the school mid-year, pupils help them to make friends quickly. Pupils enjoy opportunities to work together. They talk excitedly about residential trips, during which they learn new skills and experience new challenges through teamwork.

Pupils know the school's three 'Diamond Rules' well. These support pupils to behave with respect and consideration for others, with weekly 'Diamond Awards' which recognise positive behaviour. Relationships between staff and pupils are warm. Pupils feel they can share any worries, either with teachers or through classroom 'worry boxes'. Across all years, they are confident that the school will support them to resolve problems, which means they feel safe.

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

The curriculum is broad and ambitious. The important knowledge and vocabulary pupils need to know are carefully planned from Nursery through to Year 6. In core subjects, the curriculum requires pupils to re-visit and re-use knowledge they have learned previously. This means all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), know and remember more over time. In foundation subjects where the curriculum is well developed, pupils learn well. For example, in art, pupils describe the artistic techniques used by artists they have studied. However, in some foundation

subjects, the curriculum is not focused on re-visiting earlier learning. Here, pupils struggle to remember important knowledge and do not develop a secure understanding over time.

Teachers have strong subject knowledge. They teach new knowledge confidently, giving clear explanations which make complicated ideas understandable. Teachers check how well pupils understand new learning and re-explain when pupils struggle. Learning activities are well chosen so that pupils can apply their new learning.

Across the school, assessment is used well. Teachers routinely give pupils feedback while they complete activities. Pupils use this to improve their work straight away. Across subjects, end-of-topic assessments track pupils' progress well. In most subjects, teachers use these to identify knowledge which needs to be re-taught or recapped so pupils develop secure knowledge over time.

The school prioritises the identification of pupils with SEND. There is careful planning to meet the needs of these pupils. This includes working with external agencies to ensure appropriate adaptations are in place, particularly for pupils with more complex needs. This considered approach means all pupils progress well through the planned curriculum.

Reading is prioritised across the school. Children start learning phonics from arrival. Daily phonics support is provided for pupils who struggle with reading. This means they quickly catch up and become fluent readers. Pupils enjoy reading the diverse range of books in the wider reading curriculum. These carefully chosen books promote pupils' curiosity and enjoyment of reading. Pupils regularly choose to read books of their choice and talk enthusiastically about these.

Behaviour across the school is calm and orderly. The school has embedded its behaviour approach, which teachers apply fairly. Pupils receive regular praise for positive conduct. If their behaviour does not meet teachers' high expectations, they are guided to consider what they must do differently. These clear expectations mean pupils are focused well on learning in lessons. At playtime, pupils share and use equipment safely, closely supervised by staff.

The school carefully considers pupils' wider development. Different leadership opportunities give pupils experience of responsibility and representing the views of others. They learn about the different faiths and cultural identities of pupils within the school. They experience music, food and dance, which broadens their perspectives about the different cultures. Pupils explore world issues and then participate in fundraising to support charitable causes linked to these. This means pupils develop empathy and learn how they can contribute to change.

Staff value leaders' mindful approach to workload. They feel leaders are approachable. Governors have strong oversight of the school's work and meet their statutory responsibilities well.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## What does the school need to do to improve?

### (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some foundation subjects, pupils do not recall or securely understand previous learning. This means they struggle to explain important concepts they have already been taught. The school needs to further develop staff knowledge of planning and assessment so that it supports pupils to remember important knowledge over time in all subjects.

## 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 September 2012.

## 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 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	110094
<b>Local authority</b>	West Berkshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10287834
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	229
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Sinead Hall
<b>Headteacher</b>	Kelly Boshier
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.stjosephs.w-berks.sch.uk">www.stjosephs.w-berks.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	20 March 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.
- This is a Roman Catholic school in the Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth. Its last section 48 inspection took place in June 2023.
- The governing body manages before- and after-school childcare provision.

## Information about this inspection

Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

- This is 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 this evaluation of the school.
- The lead inspector met with three governors, including the chair of the governing body. The lead inspector also met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, senior leaders, the local authority school improvement adviser and a representative of the diocese.

- The lead inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and art. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to subject leaders and teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The lead inspector also spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work in geography.
- The lead inspector observed playtime and lunchtime activities.
- 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.
- The lead inspector considered the responses to the staff survey and spoke to a range of staff about their views of the school.
- The lead inspector took account of the responses to Ofsted's Parent View questionnaire and the additional free-text responses. This included speaking to parents at the gate.

### **Inspection team**

Phillip Blagg, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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