

# Inspection of a good school: St Joan of Arc RC Primary School

Northolme Road, Highbury Park, London N5 2UX

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Inspection dates:

24 and 25 January 2024

## **Outcome**

St Joan of Arc RC Primary School continues to be a good school.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils feel proud to be a part of this school. The core values of love, service, respect and courage are followed by all and form the basis of the school's high expectations. Pupils here feel safe and cared for, and benefit from the staff's kindness and guidance.

There are strong working relationships between staff and pupils. A culture of being thoughtful and respectful is demonstrated by all members of this school community. Pupils follow the school's clear expectations and show positive behaviours. They are consistently polite and considerate towards each other. The school has systems in place to recognise when pupils demonstrate the school's values and makes sure they are rewarded for doing so.

Leaders want the very best for their pupils. They are ambitious for what they believe pupils can achieve and ensure that teachers can lead learning well. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) also benefit from these ambitions and are carefully provided for.

Parents and carers hold the school in high regard. They are confident that their children are safe and appreciate the personalised care that their children receive. The school runs popular clubs and activities including 'Mini Vinnies', where pupils give up their time in service to others, including raising funds to support local causes.

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

The school is determined that pupils will learn to read fluently and accurately. Staff are well trained. They deliver the phonics programme consistently. Any pupils falling behind are quickly identified and given the help they need to progress rapidly and catch up with their peers. From the early years, children are encouraged to learn sounds that help them become familiar with and interested in reading. Leaders have used research-based approaches to select high-quality texts to build into the school's curriculum. As a result,

pupils gain a passion for reading and enjoy the stories they hear in class. They also develop habits of reading for pleasure, supported by the many books available in school.

Teachers are highly skilled at meeting pupils' needs, including those with SEND. Teaching is adapted to meet pupils' needs and ensure that they can learn the curriculum well. Teachers select appropriate activities and check pupils' understanding so that pupils build on what they have previously learned. The curriculum has clear end points and is organised well. Links have been built between subjects to strengthen pupils' ability to practise their skills in different contexts. This includes activities and trips which enhance pupils' experiences such as the popular 'garden classroom' where pupils extend their understanding of sustainability. Sometimes, however, teaching activities do not closely follow the knowledge set out in the school's agreed curriculum. This can then lead to gaps in pupils' knowledge.

Leaders have worked successfully in partnership with parents to ensure that pupils attend school well. Pupils understand the importance of being on time for school. Parents are invited into school and regularly attend workshops to understand the school's policies and approaches, and to support the school's wider community efforts.

Right from the start in early years, pupils show positive attitudes towards their learning. They take pride in their work and can clearly share their opinions and ideas both orally and in writing. This leads to confidence in demonstrating what they have learned. For example, in mathematics pupils can correctly rearrange number problems and explain their problem-solving in different ways.

The school prioritises the development of pupils' character. Pupils are taught to be mindful of others' beliefs and to treat each other with respect. From the early years, children learn to build friendships and to treat each other fairly. Teachers provide clear messages to promote pupils' understanding of right and wrong. For older pupils, the relationships and health education curriculum introduce concepts at an appropriate age, such as strategies to support online safety.

Teachers are well supported at the school. Leaders are mindful of their workload and ensure that new initiatives are carefully considered. Governors work well with school leaders to set ambitious goals for pupils' achievement. This is realised in the strong results recorded in external assessments. Pupils with SEND are given high priority and leaders have ensured that staff are well trained to meet their individual needs.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- Occasionally, what pupils learn in the classroom does not fully match knowledge set out in the school's curriculum. This sometimes leads to gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding. The school should strengthen its oversight processes to ensure that the curriculum is being delivered as intended.

## 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 July 2014.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	100449
<b>Local authority</b>	Islington
<b>Inspection number</b>	10293202
<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>	424
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Rebecca Eaves
<b>Headteacher</b>	Clare Campbell
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.st-joanofarc.islington.sch.uk">www.st-joanofarc.islington.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	3 July 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- This is a Roman Catholic school. The last section 48 inspection took place in January 2020.
- The school operates a nursery for children from the age of three.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

## 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. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector spoke with the headteacher and members of the senior leadership team.
- The inspector also held meetings with governors.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, geography and mathematics.

- For each deep dive, the inspector held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to 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.
- The inspector met with leaders responsible for supporting pupils with SEND and visited lessons to evaluate the support offered to these pupils.

### **Inspection team**

Karim Ismail, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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