

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

Finkil Street, Hove Edge, Brighouse, West Yorkshire HD6 2NT

Inspection dates:

20 and 21 February 2024

## Outcome

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

The executive headteacher of this school is Mary Hodges. This school is part of the Blessed Peter Snow Catholic Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the interim chief executive officer (CEO), Rachel McEvoy, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Antonia Dorsey. There is also an acting head of school, Claire Bonner, who is responsible for this school.

## What is it like to attend this school?

St Joseph's Catholic Primary Academy is a warm and welcoming school. The school motto 'Love, learn and live in Christ!' is central to the life of the school. Pupils are polite and respectful. They respond well to adults. Caring staff provide the high-quality pastoral support that pupils need to thrive.

Pupils behave sensibly in lessons and when moving around school. The school's mission statement impacts positively on behaviour. It helps pupils to 'be the best versions of themselves'. Pupils and staff understand this mission statement well. Pupils are confident to speak to adults if they are worried. They feel safe in school.

All pupils, right from Nursery, are proud of their leadership responsibilities in class. These are varied. The level of responsibility increases as pupils move through school. Pupils are proud to make a difference to the local parish through the Junior Parish Mission Committee. Pupils raise money for charity through individual class activities such as non-uniform days and pyjama days.

Most parents and carers are positive about the school and value the education and support their children receive. One parent said, 'Our children are in the best school with the best care with the best people.'

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

The broad and ambitious curriculum starts in the early years. Leaders have carefully considered the key knowledge and vocabulary that pupils will learn. Leaders have prioritised curriculum development. An effective cycle of curriculum reviews has refined the sequencing of the curriculum. This gives teachers time to teach new knowledge, ensuring that they meet the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Teachers' subject knowledge is strong. Adults in lessons explain and model new knowledge across subjects well. Displays in classrooms support current learning. Adults regularly check how pupils are learning the intended curriculum over time. Pupils recall key knowledge from their current learning and from learning in previous years. They present their work in different ways. Pupils' written work shows a thorough understanding of the knowledge they are learning. However, some pupils do not always present their work well.

The introduction of the phonics programme has ensured that phonics is taught consistently well. Highly trained staff implement the programme effectively. Children get off to a strong start with phonics in the early years. They read accurately and with increasing confidence and fluency as they move through the school. Pupils who are falling behind with reading are given the support that they need to catch up. However, for these pupils, the support that they receive for writing does not match the support that they receive for reading.

The early years curriculum lays strong foundations for Year 1 and beyond. There is a clear focus on language and vocabulary. The early years team has worked closely with subject leaders to ensure that children's knowledge of different subjects is developed from their starting points in Nursery. The early years environment is vibrant. Children participate in a wide range of exceptionally well-planned activities both inside and outside.

The school identifies the needs of pupils with SEND quickly and puts the right support in place. Individual support plans are detailed. They identify appropriate targets that are specific to pupils' needs. Adults in lessons provide effective support through carefully considered adaptations that help pupils with SEND learn alongside their peers.

The school has high expectations for behaviour that begin in the early years. In most lessons, staff establish strong routines. Pupils talk positively about the rewards on offer, including 'star of the week' and the 'student's student award'. Pupils enjoy the range of equipment available at playtime and lunchtime. There are individual plans in place for pupils who need support with their behaviour. Staff are supported by leaders to manage behaviour incidents well. However, these strategies are not included in enough detail in the current behaviour policies. A minority of parents do not feel well informed about how the school deals with behaviour issues, including bullying.

Pupils value the opportunities they have for wider development in school, including leadership roles and extra-curricular clubs. Educational visits and enrichment activities, including history workshops, make the curriculum meaningful. Pupils understand equality

and learn about different faiths and cultures. They know how to keep themselves safe online.

Academy councillors and trustees know the school well. They are committed to supporting staff's workload and well-being and provide regular opportunities for staff to share their views. Staff feel valued in school. They speak positively about the training and development that they receive. They appreciate the well-being support on offer, including the staff welcome service at the beginning of the year.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- A small number of pupils do not gain the basic skills for writing, including spelling, grammar and punctuation, to help them write confidently and fluently. The school should ensure that the curriculum for writing gives sufficient attention to building pupils' fluency in the basic skills so that they are able to write independently.
- The school does not have consistently high expectations of pupils' letter formation and presentation. This means that some pupils do not take sufficient care when presenting their learning. This makes their work difficult to read. The school should ensure that the routines for writing across the curriculum are clearly established so that pupils present their work consistently, accurately and with pride.

## **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 predecessor school, St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, to be good in February 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 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>	148480
<b>Local authority</b>	Calderdale
<b>Inspection number</b>	10323130
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	230
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Antonia Dorsey
<b>CEO of the trust</b>	Rachel McEvoy (Interim CEO)
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mary Hodges (Executive Headteacher)
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.stjosephsbrighouse.org.uk">www.stjosephsbrighouse.org.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- The school is part of the Blessed Peter Snow Catholic Academy Trust.
- The school is a Roman Catholic primary school in the Diocese of Leeds. The most recent section 48 inspection of the school's religious character took place in March 2017.
- The executive headteacher and acting head of school have been in post since January 2023.
- The school does not use alternative provision.
- There is a breakfast club and after-school club run by the school on site.
- The school has a Nursery for three- and four-year-old children.

## 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 their evaluation of the school.

- The inspector met with the executive headteacher, the acting head of school, the interim CEO and the special educational needs coordinator.
- The inspector met with the chair of the board of trustees, representatives from the local governing body and a representative from the diocese
- The inspector carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and history. 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. The inspector heard pupils read to a familiar adult.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in lessons, around the school, at playtime and at lunchtime. The inspector spoke with pupils about their views of the school and their learning, behaviour and safety.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector reviewed the single central record of recruitment checks; met with the designated safeguarding leads; 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 considered responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff and pupils. They also took into account the views of parents and carers using Ofsted's online survey for parents and carers, Ofsted Parent View, including comments received via the free-text facility. The inspector also talked to parents in the school playground.

## **Inspection team**

Nicola Beaumont, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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