

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

Fitzwilliam Street, Wath-upon-Dearne, Rotherham, South Yorkshire S63 7HG

Inspection dates:

21 and 22 February 2024

Outcome

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

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy in this welcoming and caring school. The whole school community knows the school's seven gospel values. These values set the standard for high expectations in pupils' behaviour and success in their learning. Pupils can explain how these values influence their actions.

The school wants every pupil to do as well as they can. They make sure that almost every child is reading at the expected standard by the time they start Year 3. They also provide opportunities for pupils to develop confidence and resilience.

Pupils behave well throughout school. They participate fully in lessons and enjoy learning new knowledge. Relationships between staff and pupils are positive. Pupils can talk about a trusted adult who they could turn to if they were worried. Across Year 6, all pupils are allocated an adult who acts as their mentor.

The school prepares pupils to be responsible, respectful and active citizens. Each class has a local, national or global cause that they learn about and try to support. For example, Year 2 pupils learn about recycling and looking after the local environment. Pupils are able to develop character and leadership by having roles of responsibility in school, such as running the library or being mentors for younger children. Year 5 pupils also support local charities and organise regular donations to a local food bank.

Staff know each pupil well. As a result, most pupils find school a positive and rewarding experience.

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

In many subjects, including mathematics, pupils benefit from the work that the school has done to strengthen the curriculum. Where there has been careful consideration of the knowledge that the school wants pupils to know and remember, teachers clearly highlight this knowledge and pupils have the opportunity to return to it over time. In these

subjects, pupils can remember what they have been taught before and can apply this knowledge to new learning. However, in a few subjects, the knowledge is not as clearly defined. Teachers have less clarity about what to teach and how to teach it. As a result, some pupils have gaps in their knowledge and struggle to make sense of new content. This includes gaps in knowledge about different faiths and cultures and from the wider personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum.

Teachers have strong subject knowledge and clearly explain new information to pupils. Staff ask questions that challenge pupils' thinking while enabling them to check how well pupils understand what is being taught. This supports teachers to help those pupils who need further explanation. However, teachers do not always do the right checks to identify what pupils know or use their knowledge of what pupils need to ensure that planned tasks are appropriate. As a result, some tasks and activities can be too hard or easy. They also, sometimes, do not match the ambition of the curriculum.

The school prioritises early reading and children get off to a rapid start in Reception. By the end of Year 2, almost all pupils have achieved the expected standard in the phonics assessment. Staff who deliver phonics are well trained and receive regular support and coaching. Effective support enables pupils who find reading difficult, or who have fallen behind, to catch up quickly. Reading books are well matched to pupils' phonics knowledge.

There are some pupils who need extra support, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The school continues to develop the effective use of assessment for these pupils so that support plans are accurately based on what these pupils need. Within the curriculum, careful adaptations are made so that pupils with SEND are able to succeed alongside their peers. The school also works with outside agencies to strengthen the provision offered.

The school monitors absence closely. It knows its families well and has worked hard with them to support, as well as challenge, those who face difficulties getting their children into school regularly. As a result, attendance has improved.

Staff know that leaders have their best interests at heart. Despite recent changes to leadership, there are secure professional relationships and a positive culture across the majority of staff. Leaders and governors invest in staff's professional development and give staff time to work on aspects of school development. Staff appreciate how the school is mindful of their workload.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few subjects, including PSHE, the school has not ensured that teachers are clear about the important knowledge that pupils should know and remember. As a result, some pupils have gaps in their knowledge. The school should ensure that the planned curriculum developments enable pupils to learn well in all subjects.
- The school's approach to assessment is inconsistent. Sometimes, pupils experience work that is too hard or too easy. This limits the ambition of the curriculum and the amount of progress that some pupils make. The school must provide support for teachers to ensure that the use of assessment is consistent in all subjects so that the taught curriculum is carefully matched to pupils' needs.

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 December 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

Unique reference number	106942
Local authority	Rotherham
Inspection number	10315536
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	236
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Rebecca Swann
Headteacher	Louise Illien
Website	www.ourlady-stjosephs.rotherham.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	29 January 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not make use of alternative provision.
- There has been a new headteacher in post since the last inspection.
- The school is a voluntary aided school with a religious character. The previous inspection of denominational education given to pupils and the content of the school's collective worship, under section 48 of the Education Act 2005, was carried out in June 2022. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, section 48 inspections were suspended and the inspection window was extended by up to eight years. Therefore, the next section 48 inspection is due between June and December 2030. It is part of the Diocese of Hallam.

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 representatives from the governing body and diocese.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher and other leaders and staff.
- The inspector took account of responses to the Ofsted Parent View free-text service, the online questionnaire and the staff survey. The inspector considered the views of pupils through both formal and informal discussions.
- The inspector considered information about pupils' behaviour, attendance and personal development.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: 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 also listened to some pupils read and discussed the curriculum in some other subjects.
- 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

Becky Austwick, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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