

Inspection of St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Vaagen Road, Canvey Island, Essex SS8 9DP

Inspection dates: 27 and 28 February 2024

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Inadequate

The interim headteacher of this school is Phillip Maxfield. This school is part of Assisi Catholic Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief accounting officer, Gemma Ackred, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Frank McEvoy.

What is it like to attend this school?

The pupils at St Joseph's benefit from attending a school where kindness and tolerance are part of daily life. Pupils enjoy mass, go to church and take part in a daily prayer. This helps them to develop their spiritual understanding, and to feel part of the school community.

Pupils receive a high-quality education. They are very positive about the subjects that they study. Pupils are engaged and excited about their lessons. For example, pupils enjoy dancing and discussing different types of music. They value the challenge of the work they are given by their teachers. Pupils also enjoy the opportunities they have to take part in practical lessons.

During lessons, pupils work in a calm and productive atmosphere. They are able to focus well because there is very little disruption. A minority of pupils require extra support to manage their behaviour. Staff are skilled at supporting pupils to return to learning if they have become distracted.

In Reception, children are excited about their learning. They love to sing and play. Children get along very well with each other and with the adults who support and care for them. They enjoy lots of different activities such as painting, writing and playing on outside equipment.

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

Leaders' rapid work on developing an ambitious curriculum has been effective. They have taken appropriate action to address the causes of lower academic outcomes that some pupils achieved in the past. The school makes sure that pupils are taught important skills and knowledge in a logical order. This helps pupils to develop a good level of understanding so that they are well prepared for their next stage of learning.

From Reception, teachers have a good understanding of the curriculum. They are generally skilled at giving pupils work that builds on their previous learning. In most cases, teachers check what pupils already know before presenting new information. The activities that they give to pupils are well matched to their knowledge and understanding. In many subjects, effective systems are in place to check what pupils have learned. Leaders and teachers use this information to give pupils extra support if there are any gaps in their understanding, or to further develop their knowledge and skills. Pupils are proud of what they can do.

In a minority of foundation subjects, teachers are not always confident about what pupils need to know or understand. They do not check carefully if pupils have learned what has been taught. Where this happens, teachers do not take account of pupils' different starting points to adapt their teaching. Therefore, some pupils do not receive the support they need to further deepen their knowledge and understanding.

This is not the case for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The school has ensured that pupils with SEND are prioritised. Pupils who may need extra help are accurately identified. There are clear plans in place with appropriate targets for pupils to achieve, based on their individual needs. The school regularly checks how well these pupils are learning. The high levels of support ensure that pupils with SEND achieve well, relative to their starting points.

Phonics is a strength in the school. Children start learning the skills they need to become confident readers in Reception. Pupils read books which are well matched to their level of understanding. While many pupils are on track to become fluent readers, the school recognises that some pupils need extra help. Where this is the case, they are quickly identified. Adults then provide extra support to help pupils to keep up. This means that pupils progress well and enjoy reading.

The school's culture is respectful. Pupils are orderly. Adults model the expectations that they expect from pupils. From Reception, routines are well established and followed. Pupils have a clear understanding of the behaviour and reward system. The school ensures that pupils enjoy attending school. Consequently, attendance is high.

From Reception, the school provides pupils with opportunities to develop their interests. Some older pupils take on responsibilities such as play leaders. Others are members of the school council. These roles help pupils develop their confidence and compassion towards others. Pupils also enjoy the clubs they take part in. This is particularly the case for clubs that develop their sporting interest, or provide them with opportunities to perform or be creative.

Leaders, including those in the trust, the diocese and within the school, have worked at pace to rectify weaknesses identified in the last inspection report. They have ensured that pupils' education, well-being and safety are prioritised. Staff and parents are positive about the school. They recognise the improvements that have been made and value the impact that the school has on their children's education.

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 has not ensured that the high quality of assessment seen in some subjects is consistent across all foundation subjects. Teachers are not always clear what pupils need to know or be able to do. Therefore, they do not check carefully enough what pupils have learned. This means gaps in pupils' knowledge or understanding are not picked up quickly. The school should ensure that all teachers are clear about what pupils should know and understand in each

subject. They should then ensure any gaps in pupils' learning are quickly identified and addressed so all pupils achieve highly.

- In some lessons, teachers do not adapt their teaching based on pupils' prior knowledge or understanding. This can lead to work being given to pupils that is not as ambitious as it should be. The school should ensure that teachers receive appropriate training so they consistently provide pupils with activities that enable them to achieve as highly as they should.

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	145994
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10314417
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	195
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Frank McEvoy
CEO of the trust	Gemma Ackred (Chief Accounting Officer)
Headteacher	Phillip Maxfield (Interim Headteacher)
Website	www.stjosephscanvey.net
Dates of previous inspection	17 and 18 October 2023, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- An interim headteacher was appointed in March 2023.
- St Joseph's Catholic School is part of Assisi Catholic Trust.
- The school's denominational education and collective worship were inspected under section 48 of the Education Act 2005 in November 2023. The next section 48 inspection will take place within eight years of this date.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We deemed the inspection a graded (section 5) inspection under the same Act.

In accordance with section 13(4) of the Education Act 2005, His Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

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

education provision.

- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, physical education and history. For each deep dive, the inspectors 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, inspectors 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 met with trustees and reviewed documentation relating to governance and school improvement.
- The lead inspector met with trust and diocesan staff and scrutinised documentation relating to school improvement and quality assurance.
- Inspectors reviewed attendance and behaviour records and observed pupils' behaviour around the school site.
- An inspector scrutinised documentation and met with leaders to discuss the school's approach to pupils' personal development.
- Inspectors met with the special educational needs coordinator and reviewed documentation relating to pupils with SEND.
- The lead inspector considered responses to the parent survey, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text comments. She also reviewed responses to Ofsted's staff survey and pupil survey.

Inspection team

Bessie Owen, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Jackie Mullan

Ofsted Inspector

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