

# Inspection of St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Medlar-with-Wesham

Garstang Road North, Medlar-with-Wesham, Wesham, Preston, Lancashire PR4 3HA

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Inspection dates: 27 and 28 February 2024

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

This school was last inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 12 years ago and judged 'Outstanding' under a previous inspection framework. This reflected the school's overall effectiveness under the inspection framework in use at the time.

From then until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between graded inspections under section 5 of the Act. Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last graded inspection.

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

Pupils, and children in the early years, enjoy attending this school. They feel safe and know that they can turn to trusted adults in school who take care of them. They enjoy their lessons and are excited to learn new things.

The school has high expectations for pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Most pupils achieve well.

The school expects pupils to behave well. Pupils move calmly around school. At social times pupils play well together and enjoy choosing from a range of activities. They particularly like 'Wheelie Wednesdays', where they can use their scooters. Pupils listen well in lessons and most pupils try their best. When pupils fall out, adults step in quickly to resolve any problems.

Pupils are proud to represent the school in sporting events. In addition, they are keen to support the community, for example through charity work and carol singing. Older pupils take on responsibilities, such as arranging clubs for other pupils. Members of the eco council take their recycling duties seriously. Pupils love the range of trips that they can go on.

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

The school has been through a turbulent period with significant changes made to staffing. There is a much more settled staffing structure now. The new headteacher has prioritised developments to the curriculum. The new subject curriculums ensure that pupils have access to a broad and balanced programme of lessons which follow a logical order. Teachers have strong subject knowledge. They ensure that lessons are interesting and engage pupils well.

However, in some subjects, the school has not clearly identified the key learning that they want pupils to learn. As a result, staff are not able to identify gaps in pupils' prior learning effectively. The school is developing ways to check how well pupils have remembered previous learning. However, these are at an early stage of development.

The school has implemented an effective reading programme. Well-trained staff deliver lessons with confidence. From the early years, pupils are engaged and keen to demonstrate what they know. They listen intently and focus on what they are learning. Regular checks ensure that teachers pick up any misconceptions quickly. Staff give individual support to help the pupils who need it. Pupils read books that are well matched to the sounds that they know. Most pupils become fluent readers by the time they leave key stage 1.

Pupils enjoy the books which teachers share with them. The school has chosen texts carefully to help pupils gain an understanding of different cultures and ways of life.

This helps pupils to develop empathy and creates interesting topics for debates. Older pupils understand how important it is to learn to read for their future success.

Staff build strong relationships with pupils. From the early years, teachers encourage children to follow the school behaviour policy. Pupils enjoy working towards whole-class rewards. A new approach to managing pupils' behaviour is focused on their understanding the impact of their actions on others. They like the way that they can talk about their feelings with adults who can help them.

The school accurately identifies the additional needs of pupils with SEND. Staff ensure that they make appropriate adaptations so that these pupils can access the same curriculum as their peers. In lessons, teachers check that pupils have understood what they have learned. They use the school's 'learning break' effectively in order to give support to pupils when they need it.

Pupils learn about different faiths and cultures. They know that it is important to remember that people should be treated fairly. They have a well-developed understanding of the inequalities that some people face, both in this country and further afield. Pupils recognise that fundamental British values are important. They understand that people's differences should not affect the way in which they are treated.

The school offers an especially wide range of sporting activities to pupils. There are opportunities for pupils of all ages and abilities to represent the school. Pupils' ideas are listened to and the school has developed new clubs, such as cheerleading, in response. The school uses visits to enhance pupils' learning of the curriculum. Parents and carers particularly appreciate how well the school offers a broad range of experiences which all pupils can access.

Governors provide effective challenge and support to the school. The school works to ensure that necessary changes have a minimal impact on staff workload. Staff value this approach and feel appreciated.

## **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 small number of subjects, the school has not made clear the key knowledge that pupils should learn. As a result, pupils do not deepen their knowledge as well as they could in these subjects. The school should further develop its curriculum design in these subjects so that pupils' learning builds on what they already know.

- In some subjects, the school's assessment strategies do not enable teachers to check consistently well what pupils have learned previously. As a result, on occasion, some teachers are unsure about what pupils already know. The school should ensure that teachers are equipped to use assessment strategies successfully so that they can identify and address gaps in pupils' learning in these subjects.

## 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>	119629
<b>Local authority</b>	Lancashire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10294330
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	97
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Gerard Lawrenson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Louise Freeman
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.st-josephs-kirkham.lancs.sch.uk">www.st-josephs-kirkham.lancs.sch.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	30 and 31 May 2012, under section 5 of the Education Act.

## Information about this school

- A new headteacher has been appointed since the previous inspection.
- The school does not use any alternative provision for pupils.
- This Catholic primary school is part of the Diocese of Lancaster. The last section 48 inspection took place in November 2017. The next section 48 inspection is due to take place in this academic year.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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

- This was the first routine inspection the school had 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.

- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, senior leaders and other members of staff.
- Inspectors met with governors. An inspector held telephone conversations with a representative of the local authority, a representative of the diocese and the school improvement partner.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in the following subjects: early reading, mathematics and art and design. For each deep dive, 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.
- Inspectors also considered the curriculum in other subject areas.
- Inspectors observed pupils read to a trusted adult.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour during playtimes and while in lessons.
- 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.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. They considered the responses to Ofsted's staff and pupil surveys. Inspectors met with parents to gather their views and opinions about the school.

## Inspection team

Sarah Barraclough, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Sarah Gower-Jones	Ofsted Inspector

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