

Inspection of St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Green Lane, Rawmarsh, Rotherham, South Yorkshire S62 6JY

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 Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils love attending St Joseph's Primary School. They are happy and proud to belong to this nurturing and friendly school community. Adults encourage pupils to have ambition. Pupils learn about different careers and the opportunities available to them. They enjoy a wide range of extra-curricular opportunities. The school ensures that pupils can access places and events that they would not otherwise see. For example, pupils enjoy theatre visits and trips to the zoo. The school is proud of the pastoral support it offers not just to pupils, but their whole family.

Pupils behave well in school. They are respectful and polite. They listen to each other well. Pupils learn new skills through playing with adults in the playground. They speak confidently about respect, difference and acceptance. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. The school is highly inclusive and strives for all pupils to achieve well. By the time they leave for secondary school, pupils are ready for the next stage in their education.

Pupils are enthusiastic about the leadership roles that they hold in school. They talk passionately about being reading ambassadors. They can apply to be school councillors, Mini Vinnies and play leaders. These opportunities provide pupils with leadership skills for the future.

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

The school has an ambitious curriculum. In the core subjects, such as English and mathematics, leaders have identified precise curriculum content. Teachers know exactly what pupils should learn and when. Teachers use subject-specific language that develops pupils' vocabulary and builds their understanding. They check pupils' understanding regularly. Staff identify and address gaps in learning quickly. As a result, pupils achieve well in these subjects. This is reflected in the results they achieve.

In the wider curriculum, subject leaders have identified how pupils' knowledge should build over time. However, the learning tasks that teachers choose do not help pupils to learn the most important subject knowledge. The school has identified this and has begun to take steps to address it. However, pupils do not develop the depth of understanding they need for future learning.

Children in Reception get off to a flying start. The school has recently strengthened the curriculum in the early years. Teachers implement this new curriculum well. Staff in the early years prioritise the development of new vocabulary. They model this well. They make sure that children learn and can use new words linked to the curriculum. Staff ensure that there are strong routines in place. Expectations are high. As a result, children develop independence quickly.

Support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is a strength of the school. The school has a robust system in place to identify and meet

pupils' individual needs. Staff in classrooms know the next steps that individual pupils are working on. Teachers make adaptations in lessons and provide pupils with bespoke support. This helps pupils with SEND to achieve well.

The school prioritises reading. The teaching of phonics starts in the first week of Reception. The well-structured approach helps pupils to learn to read quickly. Effective support ensures that pupils who need extra help catch up quickly. Pupils enjoy reading. They delight in talking about their favourite books and authors.

Pupils develop positive attitudes to learning. Staff have high expectations. Pupils enjoy meeting these. They want to do well and please adults. The school works hard to encourage high attendance. When pupils' attendance is low, the school takes specific action to improve this. The school works with individual families to remove any barriers to pupils attending school. This is having a positive impact on pupils' attendance.

There is a shared ambition across the school for all pupils to experience a high-quality education. There has been some turbulence in staffing over the last two years. Leaders are working to stabilise this. There are systems in place for leaders to check the quality of provision. However, in some areas, these systems are underdeveloped. The school has developed close links with a multi-academy trust, the local authority and many outside agencies. They do this to help staff, pupils and their families. This support is strengthening experiences for pupils.

The governors are proactive and well informed. Their work provides the school with valuable support. Staff enjoy working at the school. They feel valued and respected. Leaders provide appropriate support to teachers in the early stages of their career. Staff at all levels have a determination to continue making key improvements to the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some lessons, adults do not choose activities that link closely to the curriculum aims. This means that pupils do not learn the intended curriculum content as well as they might. The school should ensure that staff have the training and support they need to select teaching activities that meet the curriculum aims.
- The school's work to monitor the implementation and impact of the new areas of the curriculum is not fully developed. This limits leaders in their ability to develop the curriculum further. The school should ensure that there are robust systems in place to help them evaluate how well the curriculum is being implemented across the school.

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

Unique reference number	106944
Local authority	Rotherham
Inspection number	10297194
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	194
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Catherine Ratcliffe
Headteacher	Karen Dobson (executive headteacher) Christie Williams (headteacher)
Website	www.rsjp.org.uk
Dates of previous inspection	11 and 12 September 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is a Catholic school and is part of the Diocese of Hallam.
- The last section 48 inspection of the school's religious character took place in December 2018.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.
- The school runs a breakfast club on the school site.

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 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.

- Inspectors met with the executive headteacher, head of school and other school leaders. They also met with governors, the acting director of schools for the diocese and the local authority representative.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the 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 carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, art and science. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of their work.
- Inspectors also considered the curriculum by looking at work samples in other subjects, including mathematics.
- The inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's online survey for parents, including the free-text responses. Inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted's surveys for staff and for pupils.

Inspection team

Helen Haunch, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Sinead Fox

Ofsted Inspector

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