

# Inspection of St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Dobbin Close, Belmont Circle, Harrow HA3 7LP

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Inspection dates: 12 and 13 March 2024

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Outstanding</b>
Personal development	<b>Outstanding</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The headteacher of this school is Christopher Briggs. This school is part of the Blessed Holy Family Catholic Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Geraldine Higgins. The school is overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Jim Coyle.

Ofsted has not previously inspected St Joseph's Catholic Primary School as an academy under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 as, until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between inspections. 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 of the predecessor school.

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

This is a warm and welcoming school. Pupils come to school enthusiastically and learn well. Parents and carers speak highly of the school and believe it provides a nurturing environment. Pupils are proud of their school community and an ethos of respect and kindness is strongly evident.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary, and they are motivated to learn. The school provides leadership opportunities for pupils, including as members of the school council, chaplain leaders and involvement in charity work. They enjoy school and attend well. Pupils feel safe and are confident that they can talk to staff if they have any concerns.

The school provides an array of enrichment activities and trips so that pupils gain valuable life experiences. Pupils attend a range of clubs including chess, newspaper club, sports clubs and choir. Pupils also take part in singing assemblies, 'poetry slams' and listen to authors and guest speakers.

The school has high expectations for all, including those with special educational needs/and or disabilities (SEND). Pupils study an ambitious and broad curriculum. The school works closely with families to build a strong community from the early years. Leaders ensure parents are well informed and included in their child's learning journey.

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

The curriculum is ambitious and builds pupils' knowledge over time. Leaders have thought carefully about what knowledge needs to be taught, practised and revisited. Teachers ensure that pupils grasp key concepts and ideas well, and make connections between their subjects. Leaders and staff quickly identify pupils with SEND. They make sure that these pupils are supported to learn the curriculum alongside their peers. Teachers have thorough information about pupils' needs and make adaptations effectively so that they progress well.

The school is ambitious for all pupils to read fluently. The phonics programme is set out and sequenced in a logical way to build knowledge gradually and securely. Pupils practise reading often with books that match the sounds taught in class. Staff are skilled in helping pupils to read. Where pupils have gaps in their understanding, effective support is put into place. Leaders are aware of the gap between girls and boys in their reading ability and have strategies in place to reduce this and encourage a love of reading. Teachers familiarise pupils with stories and choose books from a range of genres.

Teachers have strong subject expertise and build a culture of enquiry into their teaching. Teachers have high expectations and often set work that makes pupils think hard. Pupils are supported through guided discussions and are given resources and tools to help them succeed. Occasionally, although they are interesting,

teaching activities are not strongly linked to the key knowledge and skills that leaders intend pupils to learn. The curriculum is stronger from Year 1 onwards. In the early years, the key knowledge and skills that children need for an effective foundation are not as clearly set out or embedded as they are further up the school.

In Nursery and Reception, the curriculum is built around topics and stories. Children are provided with a range of interactive activities to support their fine motor skills and wider learning. However, the early years curriculum is not strongly sequenced in all areas of learning to ensure that children's understanding builds over time.

Children in the early years learn and play with each other cooperatively. They are curious learners and are developing their social and emotional skills. Older pupils demonstrate highly respectful attitudes and are focused on their learning. Pupils are confident and courteous ambassadors of the school. The school works closely with parents to ensure that pupils have high attendance and are nurtured throughout their time at school. Parents are positive about the school and consider it friendly and approachable.

Provision for pupils' personal development is excellent. A wide variety of enrichment activities are available and these effectively build pupils' cultural capital. Well-chosen enrichment opportunities also support learning and make this memorable. For example, in music pupils gain experience of five instruments during their studies, and leaders more widely use author visits and trips to great effect. Outside of the classroom, pupils take an active role in the school community, crocheting blankets for premature babies, raising money for a local hospice, and raising awareness of road safety outside their school. The school provides a comprehensive personal, social and health education curriculum and pupils are taught how to be healthy and safe, including online. They are prepared well for life in modern day Britain and receive talks from those of other faiths, celebrating diversity.

Staff feel valued and are proud to work at the school. They are provided with good quality professional development. Governors regularly visit the school. Leaders seek to involve parents and families wherever they can and have built a strong community. Leaders and governors are dedicated to continual improvement, which drives a culture of ambition.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## **What does the school need to do to improve? (Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- The curriculum in the early years is not as well developed as in the rest of the school. The school has not identified precisely what they want children to learn in each area of learning and how this builds progressively. This means that children

are not as well prepared as they could be for their learning in Year 1 and beyond. The school should ensure that a well-sequenced early years curriculum is set out and implemented well.

## 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>	146246
<b>Local authority</b>	Harrow
<b>Inspection number</b>	10296678
<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>	442
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Jim Coyle
<b>CEO of the trust</b>	Geraldine Higgins
<b>Headteacher</b>	Christopher Briggs
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.stjosephs.harrow.sch.uk/">www.stjosephs.harrow.sch.uk/</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- St Joseph's Catholic Primary School converted to become an academy in May 2019. When its predecessor school, also St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted it was judged to be outstanding overall.
- Inspectors found the age range of the school to be 3 to 11, rather than 4 to 11 as shown on the Department for Education (DfE) website, 'Get Information About Schools' (GIAS). Inspectors notified the DfE of this as the appropriate authority for information on GIAS.
- This is a Roman Catholic school within the Diocese of Westminster.
- The school is part of the Blessed Holy Family Catholic Academy Trust.
- The most recent section 48 inspection took place in 2018.
- The school runs its own breakfast club and after school club.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

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

- 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 has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- The inspectors met with senior leaders, some teaching and support staff, governors, the CEO of the trust and a representative from the diocese.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, physical education and geography. 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. Other subjects were also considered as part of this inspection.
- The inspectors scrutinised a range of documents, including leaders' evaluation of the school and priorities for school improvement.
- 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.
- The inspectors took account of the views of pupils, parents, and staff as gathered through discussions and Ofsted's surveys.
- Inspectors checked the school's policies and records, including those related to behaviour and pupils' wider development.
- Inspectors held meetings with staff and spoke with pupils during social times. They observed pupils' behaviour across the school, including as they arrived and left school.

## Inspection team

Sarah Saunders, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Helen Lockey

Ofsted Inspector

Karen Wyatt

Ofsted Inspector

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