

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

Rocky Lane, Nechells, Birmingham, West Midlands B7 5HA

Inspection dates:

30 April and 1 May 2024

Outcome

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

The headteacher of this school is Michelle Ashley. This school is part of St Teresa of Calcutta Multi Academy Company, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Professor Paul Ryan, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Frances McGarry.

What is it like to attend this school?

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School is welcoming and inclusive. Pupils, staff, parents and carers agree that the school is a warm, friendly and caring place to learn. Pupils love coming to school. They excitedly engage with lessons and enrichment activities. The school's focus on pupils' broader personal development prepares them well for their next stages in education and their future lives.

Pupils are challenged to do their very best. Across the school there are high aspirations for all pupils. Pupils live up to these expectations and progress well with their learning in English and mathematics. By the time they leave the school, they achieve well and are well prepared for their next steps.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They conduct themselves very well around the school. They show care and consideration towards each other. As a result, pupils feel happy, safe and valued. They can talk to trusted adults if they have any worries or concerns.

Pupils take pride in the many leadership roles they have, such as being well-being ambassadors or members of the eco committee. Through such experiences, pupils develop a sense of responsibility and compassion.

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

The school has designed a broad and ambitious curriculum. Learning is well sequenced, so pupils build on their knowledge over time. The curriculum is designed to develop pupils' curiosity about the world and their local area.

The teaching of reading has a high profile across the school. As soon as children start in the Reception class, they are immersed in stories and rhymes that help to develop their

language skills. Well-trained staff deliver the phonics programme effectively. Staff use assessments to identify any gaps in pupils' learning. Pupils who fall behind with the phonics programme are given the help and support that they need to learn all that they should.

In core subjects, such as mathematics, teachers ensure that pupils recall and remember what they have learned in the past. They also connect this to new learning. Staff use assessment well to identify any gaps in learning and put in place effective support to swiftly remedy these. Due to this, pupils build their knowledge securely over time and they achieve well.

In some subjects other than English and mathematics, there have been recent changes to the way they are taught to help pupils to know and remember more. The school recognises that for some staff, this new approach needs further embedding. As a result, some pupils do not always gain the depth of understanding they need to make links with previous learning.

The school has developed a nurturing and inclusive environment. In the early years, adults quickly get to know the needs of the children. The school swiftly identifies pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils with SEND are well included in lessons alongside their peers. Many pupils are getting the right help through carefully adapted materials and extra resources. However, some staff do not always ensure that all pupils receive the carefully tailored support they need. As a result, support for some pupils with SEND is less effective.

Pupils are motivated and behave very well in class. This begins as soon as pupils join the school. Pupils' positive attitudes and respect for each other mean that everyone can learn without distraction. The school takes highly effective action to ensure that pupils attend regularly. As a result, attendance is high.

Pupils benefit from many activities beyond the classroom. These opportunities include visitors to the school, trips and a wealth of after-school clubs. Pupils enjoy activities that encourage a healthy lifestyle, such as learning to grow, harvest and cook their own vegetables. Pupils are proud of their school's diversity and keen to learn about the different views of their peers. They are taught about ways to stay safe, including when online. Pastoral support is strong, with tailored support for those requiring it. Pupils have a deep understanding of modern Britain and the need for tolerance and active engagement in their community. They take every opportunity to make a difference in their locality. This includes litter picking in the local park and donating food and handmade cards of good wishes to their local food bank.

Staff appreciate the support that they receive to ensure their workload remains manageable. The school is sensitive to staff's well-being. New initiatives are assessed before they are introduced to ensure that they are not burdensome.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In foundation subjects, there have been recent changes to the way teachers help pupils to remember key knowledge and skills. These changes are not yet fully effective, and some pupils cannot remember their learning over time. The school should provide further support for teachers to embed the new approaches in all classes so that pupils know more and remember more.
- Some teachers do not always adapt their teaching well enough to enable all pupils with SEND to achieve as well as they should. As a result, support for some pupils with SEND is less effective. The school should ensure all teachers adapt their pedagogical approaches so that pupils' needs are met to support them to become independent learners who are well prepared for their next steps.

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 predecessor school, St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, to be good in July 2012.

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	148441
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	10322919
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	192
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Frances McGarry
CEO of the trust	Paul Ryan
Headteacher	Michelle Ashley
Website	www.stjosb7.bham.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school joined the St Teresa Calcutta Multi Academy Company in September 2021.
- The school is within the Archdiocese of Birmingham. Its most recent section 48 inspection under the Education Act for schools of a religious character was carried out in March 2024.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision for pupils.

Information about this inspection

The inspector carried out this ungraded inspection under section 8 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. 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 the headteacher and senior leaders.
- The inspector met with representatives from the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- 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 a sample of pupils' work.
- The inspector listened to pupils read to a familiar adult.
- The inspector considered a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans. Minutes of governing body meetings were also scrutinised.
- The inspector looked at records of pupils' attendance and behaviour. The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around school and talked to them about behaviour, bullying and welfare.
- 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.
- The inspector talked to parents at the start of the school day and considered the Ofsted Parent View survey and free-text comments. The inspector also reviewed the responses to the staff survey and gathered the views of staff and pupils through discussion.

Inspection team

Cathy Young, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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