Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: St Joseph's School, a Catholic Voluntary Academy

Bevan Avenue, Rossington, Doncaster, South Yorkshire DN11 0NB

Inspection dates: 25 and 26 February 2025

Outcome

St Joseph's School, a Catholic Voluntary Academy has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

The headteacher of this school is Marianne Courtney. This school is part of St Francis Catholic Multi 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 (CEO), Siobhan Kent, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Martin McDonagh.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils say that at St Joseph's 'everyone cares about and values each other'. This statement is true. It is a warm and friendly school where pupils feel safe and are happy. The school is a harmonious place to learn. Pupils get on well together. They look after each other and behave well. Pupils enjoy coming to school and are excited about their learning. The school is ambitious and sets high expectations. All pupils are well supported to achieve these. As a result, they do well.

Reported bullying is rare. Pupils are confident that if bullying did happen, staff would deal with it immediately. Pupils know that adults will listen to any concerns that they have and will help them in any way that they can. Pupils value this support.

Throughout all aspects of school life, the school promotes 'RESPECT'. Pupils know that this stands for: resilience, excellence, self-awareness, passion, empathy, communication and teamwork. Pupils, parents and staff all share a strong sense of community. They value what the school stands for.

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

The curriculums for English and mathematics are both well developed and well sequenced. The key knowledge that pupils are to learn is clearly mapped out. This helps pupils to achieve outcomes at the end of Year 6 that are above national average.

The school prioritises the teaching of basic literacy and numeracy skills well. Reading is a key focus. Staff are well trained to deliver the school's phonics programme. The school carefully checks the sounds that pupils know. This ensures that additional targeted interventions support those who may need extra help. This extra tuition enables them to quickly gain the knowledge and skills they need to become fluent, confident readers.

Across all subjects, pupils are encouraged to explore and use the new words that they are taught. In the early years, children develop their knowledge through practical activities both indoors and outdoors. For example, children enjoy discovering key number facts through building with different-sized bricks. They count the number of 'dots' as they build, and as a result, they relate this to new learning in mathematics.

The school's wider curriculum is vibrant, rich and engaging. Pupils speak confidently and knowledgably about the things that they have learned, such as the life stories of inspirational people. Pupils in key stage 1 were able to recount the diaries of Samuel Pepys, talk about the Great Fire of London and describe how this had changed the future of town planning. Older pupils talked about their knowledge of the world. They did this by recounting the adventures of figures such as Amelia Earhart and Ranulph Fiennes.

Some of the school's curriculums are more considered than others. In some cases, these are not precise enough about the important facts that pupils are expected to learn. Class teachers have instead defined what they want pupils to know. This occasionally leads to gaps or repetition in learning. Because of this, there are instances where pupils do not learn as well as they could.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well supported. These pupils study the same topics as their peers. The school knows the needs of these pupils well and ensures that teachers meet these individual needs. Adaptations may include working with an extra adult or having learning broken down into smaller steps. The school reviews and celebrates every success. Parents recognise and value the support that their children receive.

The school is passionate about pupils' personal and character development. Pupils have opportunities that develop them spiritually, morally, socially and culturally. This includes a range of visits and visitors that enrich learning. Pupils also take part in large events such as the school's reading festival. The curriculum for personal, social and health education gives pupils an age-appropriate understanding of a range of important topics such as online safety. Pupils know how to stay physically and mentally healthy. Many pupils have leadership roles that they are proud to undertake. Some organise and manage playground games; others have run charity campaigns and competitions.

Leaders drive continuous improvement across the school. 'No child left behind' is the statement that they keep at the forefront of their minds as they make decisions. Leaders take the impact of workload on staff seriously. Staff say that they feel valued and motivated. Governors and trustees support and check the impact of the school's work. They provide a strong network of support for the recently appointed headteacher and leadership team.

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 subjects, the curriculums do not detail precisely the key knowledge that the school wants pupils to learn and remember. This means that pupils do not build their knowledge consistently over time. As such, opportunities for pupils to make connections with prior learning are not as strong as they might be. The school needs to ensure that teachers have a clear understanding of the key knowledge that they need to teach at each stage of pupils' learning.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024, graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. 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's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection 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 school to be good for overall effectiveness in June 2015.

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	140340
Local authority	Doncaster
Inspection number	10346526
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	243
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Martin McDonagh
CEO of the trust	Siobhan Kent
Headteacher	Marianne Courtney
Website	www.st-josephs.doncaster.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	12 July 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the St Francis Catholic Multi Academy Trust.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school runs its own before- and after-school club.
- As the school is designated as Roman Catholic, it is also inspected under section 48 of the Education Act 2005. The school's last section 48 inspection was in March 2023.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- The inspector discussed any continued 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 other leaders in the school.

- The inspector also met with representatives of the academy council, the CEO of the trust and a representative of the Diocese of Hallam.
- The inspector visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- 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 considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. They also considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff. Inspectors spoke with groups of staff and pupils to gain their views about the school.

Inspection team

Lee Wilson, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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