

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

Headley Way, Headington, Oxford, Oxfordshire OX3 7SX

Inspection dates:

25 and 26 February 2025

Outcome

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

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils flourish in this ambitious and caring school where everyone is valued and included. The school places equal emphasis on promoting academic excellence alongside pupils' social and cultural development. The school ensures that every child is able to participate fully, in both the academic curriculum and a wealth of enrichment activities. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those who speak English as an additional language thrive. This is because the school structures key experiences carefully to build each pupil's confidence and resilience.

Pupils are happy at school. The school's care and attention make pupils feel safe. Pupils behave well. When new pupils join the school, the school gives them guidance about how to treat each other, as well as on their learning. The school's strong values, such as gratitude, are embedded throughout the school. Pupils appreciate how the values help them to make good choices for their lives.

Pupils are proud of their work. Their books demonstrate the depth and breadth of their learning. Pupils from a variety of different starting points achieve well. Pupils from Reception onwards are eager to learn and quickly develop the language skills to express themselves clearly. They are well prepared for the next stages of their education.

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

The school has high expectations for all pupils. Everyone is passionate about ensuring the best for all, including pupils with SEND, those who speak English as an additional language and those who are disadvantaged. Staff are expert at identifying and supporting

pupils with SEND. These pupils flourish in the school's approach to learning. The school has a number of pupils who join the school throughout the year. The school ensures that they are supported to catch up quickly with their peers if they arrive with gaps in their knowledge. As a result, these pupils achieve well.

Pupils learn very well in the effective and well-delivered curriculum in reading, writing and mathematics. From Reception onwards, children benefit from approaches that prioritise communication and language. Across all the wider curriculum subjects, pupils build their learning through intentionally chosen activities and experiences. The school provides high-quality training for staff. They have strong subject knowledge. Staff routinely check what pupils know. However, on a few occasions, staff do not give pupils the feedback they need to improve their work. Where this is the case, a few pupils do not achieve as well as they could.

Reading is at the heart of the school's curriculum. As soon as children start in the Reception Year, they begin to learn letters and the sounds they make. Pupils read books that match the sounds that they learn. Effective support is provided for pupils who fall behind with their reading so that they become confident and fluent readers. In key stage 2, regular reading lessons help pupils to read with confidence and expression. Pupils read widely, and they relish opportunities to discuss their preferences. They appreciate the well-stocked library because when they discover a great book, it enables them to read more books by the same author.

Pupils' behaviour is positive. This begins in the early years, where children are motivated and engaged in all areas of learning. Teachers set consistent routines from day one. These become habitual, and children show impressive independence. Skilled staff support pupils who need help to keep their focus. This helps them to thrive. The school shows tenacity and dedication to help families overcome barriers to attending school successfully. As a result, overall absence is low.

The school has embedded an impressive programme to develop pupils' characters. Pupils learn to make a tangible difference to the school through a range of leadership roles. These responsibilities help pupils to become active citizens who promote equality. Pupils have opportunities to develop their interests and talents. These include chess, gardening and a range of sports. The school's choir performs with confidence and great enjoyment. Pupils talk confidently about democracy and law and why these are important. They understand that they can make a difference in the world; they enjoy doing so. Alongside a strong desire to help others, pupils know how to look after themselves. They have an excellent knowledge of how to keep physically and mentally healthy.

The governing body is well informed about the school. It understands and carries out its responsibilities effectively. Leaders, including governors, share a desire to continually improve the experiences of pupils and staff at the school. They balance this ambition with support for all staff and thorough consideration for their workload and well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Sometimes, the feedback given to pupils does not precisely address how they can improve their work. As a result, some pupils do not achieve as highly as they could across the whole curriculum. The school should ensure pupils receive feedback that helps them to make improvements to their work and achieve highly across every subject.

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 to be 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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good for overall effectiveness in July 2019.

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	123216
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	10341556
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	394
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Canon Mervyn Tower
Headteacher	Jessica Tweedie
Website	www.st-josephs-pri.oxon.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	10 and 11 July 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is a larger than average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is above the national average and so is the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- The school is a voluntary aided Catholic primary school within the Diocese of Birmingham. The most recent section 48 inspection took place in June 2019. The next section 48 inspection is due in 2025.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation 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 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 met with school leaders and with representatives from the governing body, diocese and the local authority.
- The inspector evaluated responses to Ofsted's pupil survey and spoke to pupils to gather their views.
- The inspector analysed responses to the staff survey and spoke to staff about their views of the school.
- The inspector took account of the responses to the Ofsted Parent View questionnaire and the additional free-text responses. They also spoke with parents at the start of the second day of the inspection.

Inspection team

Clare Morgan, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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