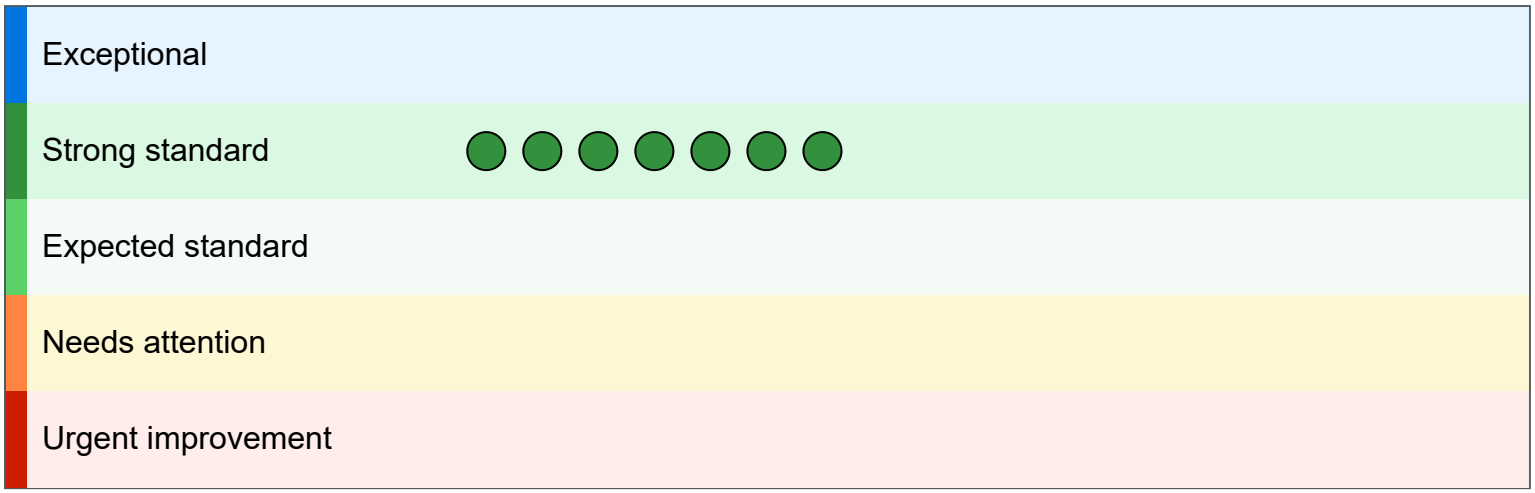
St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Bracknell

Address: Gipsy Lane, Bracknell Forest, Berkshire, RG12 9AP

Unique reference number (URN): 110027

Inspection report: 23 June 2026



Safeguarding standards met

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, pupils are made safer and feel safe.

How we evaluate safeguarding

When we inspect schools for safeguarding, they can have the following outcomes:

- Met: The school has an open and positive culture of safeguarding. All legal requirements are met.
- Not met: The school has not created an open and positive culture of safeguarding. Not all legal requirements are met.

Strong standard

Achievement

Strong standard

Pupils, including those who are disadvantaged or have special educational needs and/or disabilities, achieve very well. They develop foundational skills in reading, writing and mathematics securely. Ongoing assessment is robust. Consequently, pupils with gaps in their knowledge catch up quickly. Pupils with the highest level of need make steady progress from their starting points. Staff provide skilful and responsive support to ensure that they achieve well alongside their peers.

Pupils' communication and language skills are a key strength. Pupils learn to communicate ideas and explain their learning clearly. They use complex vocabulary across a broad range of subjects. Pupils develop secure and detailed knowledge across the wider curriculum. They build connections in their learning. For example, Year 6 pupils explain how their design and technology project requires them to apply sewing skills that they learned in Year 4. Pupils are very well prepared for their next stage of education.

Attendance and behaviour

Strong standard

Pupils attend regularly. Overall pupil attendance is consistently above the national average. Persistent absence is low. Leaders are relentless in their ambition for high levels of attendance. They have created a culture of high expectations where pupils do not want to miss out on exciting opportunities at school. Leaders analyse attendance information in detail. Relationships with pupils and families are prioritised. Support strategies are personalised. Some pupils attend morning club or receive a soft start. As a result, where leaders focus their attention, pupils' attendance improves. For example, the attendance of disadvantaged pupils has improved notably. It is now above the national average.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. The school's values are reflected in pupils' behaviour and attitudes consistently. Pupils are diligent and conscientious learners. Playtimes are harmonious. Pupils self-regulate and manage their emotions effectively. They learn to resolve minor conflict with others successfully. Staff know pupils very well. As a result, staff are proactive in their approach with pupils who may need support to behave well. Consequently, these pupils learn and play alongside their peers successfully. Pupils say that bullying or discrimination do not happen at St Joseph's. However, they can name trusted adults who can help them if they need support.

Curriculum and teaching

Strong standard

The curriculum is ambitious, balanced and carefully adapted to pupils' needs. Teaching is robust. Staff model accurately and ask questions intentionally. Ongoing assessment is systematic. This enables staff to adjust the curriculum and teaching to meet pupils' needs precisely.

The foundational skills of reading, writing and mathematics are a priority. Pupils learn to read consistently well. The English curriculum is taught through diverse, high-quality texts. Opportunities for writing are varied and purposeful. Pupils learn how to use accurate

spelling, punctuation and grammar across all subjects. The youngest children develop strong foundations in writing. Staff correct pencil grip, letter formation and seating position intentionally. Pupils learn to be confident mathematicians. They apply their skills across a range of subjects. For example, pupils measure bones and plants in science. Pupils, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, receive skilful adaptations to ensure that they can access the curriculum alongside their peers.

The teaching of communication and language is a strength. Staff model language consistently well. They introduce pupils to complex vocabulary. Strategies such as chat circles give pupils the opportunity to practise and apply their newly acquired skills. Visitors are greeted by pupils who are taught to explain their learning with confidence and accuracy. Consequently, pupils learn to become highly effective communicators.

Early years

Strong standard

Children thrive in the early years. Above-average proportions of children achieve a good level of development. Leaders have a sharp focus on ensuring that the curriculum is highly responsive to children's needs. Teaching is intentional and carefully planned. The foundational skills of reading, writing and mathematics are prioritised. Children learn through high-quality texts. For example, children in nursery develop their fine motor skills by using a pipette to paint the scales of a rainbow fish, having read the book of the same name.

Children learn to read and write well. Phonics is taught expertly. Children apply their learning through games and play. Letter formation and pencil grip are a focus. Staff work one to one with children to develop their writing skills. Mathematics is embedded through learning opportunities in the environment. Children in Reception Year use jugs to measure water, while children in Nursery Year create patterns using natural materials.

Staff maximise their interactions with children. They model language precisely. They use strategies such as chat circles to help children to apply newly acquired skills. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities make steady progress from their starting points. Staff skilfully adapt teaching and interactions to ensure that pupils get what they need to thrive.

Inclusion

Strong standard

Pupils feel that they belong in this highly inclusive school. Leaders have created a culture where every pupil is known, valued and championed. They are unwavering in their commitment to ensuring that all pupils achieve their potential.

Leaders identify pupils' needs swiftly. They get to know pupils quickly and form positive relationships with parents and carers. They use a range of data to inform their thinking. This helps leaders to develop a detailed profile of pupils' barriers to learning.

Leaders implement a wide variety of inclusive strategies, precisely and consistently. Classroom adaptations are prioritised. Leaders ensure that staff are well trained to meet pupils' needs. They are innovative in their approach. For example, specialist seating, standing desks and robotic cameras enable pupils with a range of needs to participate in

learning fully. A carefully planned programme of interventions supplement classroom adaptations. As a result, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities thrive.

Leaders monitor the impact of support in detail. They use this information to inform future adaptations. The pupil premium strategy and associated funding is used highly effectively. Leaders ensure that objectives and actions are closely aligned to pupils' needs. For example, provision for looked-after children is praised by external agencies.

Leadership and governance

Strong standard

Leaders are highly effective. They are relentless in their ambition for what all pupils can achieve. They self-evaluate accurately and identify priorities appropriately. Leaders choose strategies using robust evidence to help inform their decisions. As a result, where leaders focus their attention, there is demonstrable impact. For example, disadvantaged pupils' attendance has improved notably. The teaching of speaking and listening skills is embedded.

Governors are effective. They fulfil their statutory duties appropriately. Governors are continually developing their monitoring procedures in response to the comprehensive information provided by leaders. They provide leaders with support and challenge to ensure that high standards are maintained. Governors have the knowledge and skills to fulfil their duties effectively.

Leaders prioritise professional learning. They have transformed the school's offer to ensure that it is structured, responsive and underpinned by high-quality research. All staff are included. Leaders ensure that learning is embedded before moving on. As a result, training and initiatives are impactful for pupils. Collaboration is encouraged. Leaders care about their staff. They take practical steps to ensure that workload and wellbeing are thoughtfully supported. As a result, staff are proud to work together as a team in the best interests of pupils.

Leaders' interactions with parents are underpinned by a commitment to care for pupils and their families. Consequently, pupils and their families feel they belong there. Parents say that staff go above and beyond for their children. Leaders build effective partnerships in the wider community. For example, they work closely with the food bank and local care home in acts of service.

Personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard

Pupils thrive at St Joseph's. They are very well prepared for life beyond school. The personal development and wellbeing programme is comprehensive. Leaders have prioritised ensuring that staff are well equipped to make immediate adjustment to the programme. This ensures that teaching is carefully aligned to pupils' needs.

Pupils develop a detailed knowledge of topics within the personal development programme. For example, pupils explain how to respond to cyberbullying. They understand how to keep safe. Younger children know how to keep healthy and protect themselves in the sun. Pupils learn to resolve minor conflicts. However, they can identify avenues of support if they need it. As a result, pupils become knowledgeable, independent young citizens.

Pupils' character development is a notable strength. They have a secure understanding of British values. They explain concepts such as mutual respect and the rule of law using examples from their own experiences. Pupils are equitable and inclusive. They benefit from annual culture days and learning about different faiths. They live out their Christian values in daily interactions.

The wider offer is extensive. Pupils benefit from a range of extra-curricular activities, trips and visitors. The enrichment charter ensures that all pupils have a range of life experiences before they leave primary school. Consequently, pupils develop talents and interests. They are ambitious. For example, Year 6 pupils confidently describe future careers in medicine, animal photography and law. Leaders are innovative to ensure that all pupils can benefit from the wider offer. For example, a swimming pool is delivered to the school, biannually, so that all pupils learn to swim and keep safe in the water.

Wellbeing is prioritised. Leaders provide a comprehensive pastoral offer. They ensure that pupils who need additional support are identified quickly. Many pupils benefit from emotional literacy interventions, play therapy and chaplaincy activities. As a result, pupils feel safe, valued and listened to.

What it's like to be a pupil at this school

Pupils are proud to be learners at St Joseph's. They are greeted every day by staff who care about them and their families deeply. There is a strong sense of community that is underpinned by the school's core principles. Consequently, pupils feel they belong. They attend regularly. Few pupils are persistently absent. Pupils are excited for what the day holds when they arrive at school.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. High expectations are embedded. Older pupils are role models to younger children. The school's buddy system helps to ensure that children in Reception Year get to know the school and expectations quickly. Behaviour during social times is harmonious. Pupils rarely need adult support to play well. Pupils say that bullying does not happen there. They learn to resolve minor disagreements independently. However, they are reassured that adults will help them if there is a problem. The youngest children name their trusted adults on one hand confidently. As a result, pupils feel safe.

Pupils, including those who are disadvantaged or have special educational needs and/or disabilities, achieve well. They develop foundational skills in reading, writing and mathematics securely. They learn to apply these skills across a broad curriculum offer. Teaching is of a high quality. Pupils learn to communicate particularly well. Staff model language and vocabulary accurately. Opportunities for practice are embedded across the curriculum. Consequently, pupils are confident young communicators.

The youngest children thrive in the early years. Learning is sharply aligned to children's needs and underpinned by key texts. Children use pipettes to carefully paint the scales of rainbow fish and mould dough to make sea creatures. They dance their 'under the sea dance' with joy.

Pupils are very well prepared for their next steps. A robust personal development programme complements the high-quality academic curriculum. Pupils' learning is enriched by leadership opportunities, extra-curricular activities, trips and visitors. As a result, pupils thrive there.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that they continue to respond robustly to the changing needs of pupils and the school community so that high standards are maintained across all areas of the school's work.
- Governors should continue to develop their monitoring procedures so that they maintain a detailed oversight of leaders' work and provide robust support and challenge.

About this inspection

The chair of the board of governors in this school is Christine Lynch.

Inspectors carried out this full inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Following our renewed inspection framework, all inspections are now led by His Majesty's Inspectors (HMIs) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

This school is registered as having a Roman Catholic religious character. Its last section 48 inspection was in October 2024.

The school currently uses no alternative provision.

The school has undergone a significant change since the last inspection. An acting headteacher was appointed in the autumn term of 2025. This position was made permanent on 1 June 2026. There is a temporary leadership structure in place, with 2 assistant headteachers in post. This structure is due to be reviewed in the next academic year.

At the time of the inspection, there were 212 pupils on roll.

Headteacher: Nicola Philpott

Lead inspector:
Anneka Fisher, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:
Sahreen Siddiqui, Ofsted Inspector
Nic Browne, Ofsted Inspector

Facts and figures used on inspection

This was the data available at the time of the full inspection, taken from different sources. More recent data may have been published since the full inspection took place.

The inspector(s) used this data during the full inspection on 23 June 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

208
Close to average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils currently at this school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 272

School capacity

210
Below average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils who can attend the school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 300

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

4.33%
Well below average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals at any point in the last 6 years.

National average: 26.3%

Pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan

2.40%
Close to average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan. This covers pupils with more support than is available through special educational needs support.

National average: 3.5%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

12.02%
Close to average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with reported special educational needs support at the school.

National average: 15%

Location deprivation

Close to average

What does this mean?

Based on the English indices of deprivation (2019) and the school's location, we have calculated whether the school is located in a more or less deprived area.

Resourced provision or SEND Unit (if applicable)

No resourced provision

What does this mean?

Whether school has Resourced provision or SEND unit (if applicable).

All pupils' performance

Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standards in a combined reading, writing and mathematics measure.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	87%	61%	Above
2024/25 (final)	90%	62%	Above
2023/24 (final)	81%	61%	Above
2022/23 (final)	89%	60%	Above

Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	97%	74%	Above
2024/25 (final)	100%	75%	Above
2023/24 (final)	97%	74%	Above
2022/23 (final)	93%	73%	Above

Pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	89%	72%	Above
2024/25 (final)	90%	72%	Above
2023/24 (final)	87%	72%	Above
2022/23 (final)	89%	71%	Above

Pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	96%	73%	Above
2024/25 (final)	100%	74%	Above
2023/24 (final)	90%	73%	Above
2022/23 (final)	96%	73%	Above

Disadvantaged pupils' performance

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after.

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average		46%	
2024/25		47%	
2023/24 (final)	S	46%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	44%	S

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average		62%	
2024/25		63%	
2023/24 (final)	S	62%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	60%	S

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average		59%	
2024/25		59%	
2023/24 (final)	S	58%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	58%	S

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average		60%	
2024/25		61%	
2023/24 (final)	S	59%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	59%	S

‘S’ in the table above indicates the data has been suppressed, which is usually due to small cohorts. The suppression rules applied by the DfE when publishing the data have been mirrored and applied in the report card.

Disadvantaged pupils' performance gap

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after. The school disadvantage gap is the difference between the performance of the school's disadvantaged pupils compared to the performance of all non-disadvantaged pupils nationally.

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics, including the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average		68%	
2024/25		69%	
2023/24 (final)	S	67%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	66%	S

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average		80%	
2024/25		81%	
2023/24 (final)	S	80%	S

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2022/23 (final)	S	78%	S

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average		78%	
2024/25		78%	
2023/24 (final)	S	78%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	77%	S

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average		80%	
2024/25		81%	
2023/24 (final)	S	79%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	79%	S

‘S’ in the table above indicates the data has been suppressed, which is usually due to small cohorts. The suppression rules applied by the DfE when publishing the data have been

mirrored and applied in the report card.

Absence

Overall absence

The percentage of all possible mornings and afternoons missed due to absence from school (for whatever reason, whether authorised or unauthorised) across all pupils.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (3 term)	3.8%	5.2%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	3.9%	5.5%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	4.6%	5.9%	Below

Persistent absence

The percentage of pupils missing 10% or more of their possible mornings and afternoons.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (3 term)	4.9%	13.0%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	6.0%	14.6%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	7.6%	16.2%	Below

Our grades explained

Exceptional

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other schools can learn from it.

Strong standard

The school reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

Expected standard

The school is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

Needs attention

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

Urgent improvement

The school needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) inspects services providing education and skills for children and learners of all ages, and inspects and regulates services that care for children and young people.

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