

Inspection of St Joseph's Primary School

St Joseph's Road, Handsworth, Sheffield, South Yorkshire S13 9AT

Inspection dates: 6 and 7 March 2024

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

The headteacher of this school is Debra McFarlane. The school is a single academy trust, St Joseph's Primary School, a Catholic Voluntary Academy. The trust is run and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Rev Simon Hegarty.

Ofsted has not previously inspected St Joseph's 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. However, the academy received an ungraded inspection under section 8 of the Act on 19 September 2018. 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?

St Joseph's Primary School is a warm and welcoming school. Pupils are polite and courteous. They speak to adults with maturity and curiosity. The class learning ambassadors introduce themselves to visitors when they enter the classroom and explain the topic that they are learning about. The Catholic ethos is evident throughout the school.

Leaders have high expectations for how pupils will behave and learn. Most of the time, pupils meet these expectations. Pupils display respect and tolerance towards each other. They approach their learning with enthusiasm and interest.

Pupils are happy and feel safe at school. They have trusted adults to speak to if needed. Parents value the support that staff provide to the pupils at St Joseph's. Pupils interact positively with each other, including at breakfast club and at playtimes.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe online and in the community. They can talk about healthy relationships in an age-appropriate way. The school provides a range of meaningful leadership opportunities for pupils. For example, house captains plan and lead an assembly each week. Reading prefects look after the library and read to younger children.

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

Leaders have developed an ambitious curriculum that meets the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders want pupils to develop positive character traits and skills that will prepare them for future learning and a changing world. To achieve this, the school is working with a local university to develop these skills through the 'maker spirit'. Activities have been woven into the curriculum to develop independence, critical thinking and debate. Within these activities, pupils use resources such as virtual reality and 3D printing to give real purpose to their learning.

Leaders have recently reviewed and improved some areas of the curriculum. In most curriculum areas, subject leaders have carefully identified the knowledge and skills that pupils will acquire. They have designed the curriculum to build knowledge logically from reception through to Year 6. In a small number of subjects, the curriculum is not as developed as others. Where this is the case, there are clear plans in place to complete this work.

The curriculum for children in early years is equally ambitious. Areas of provision support and promote children's use of language. Children develop positive learning behaviours, for example by asking each other questions, making suggestions and completing tasks. Pupils are well prepared for Year 1.

Reading is a priority at St Joseph's. Last year's Year 1 phonics published outcomes were not as high as in previous years. In response, leaders have made some improvements to the early reading curriculum. Leaders are closely monitoring the delivery of phonics and offering coaching and drop-in sessions for staff where needed. As a result of this, staff subject knowledge has improved and the curriculum is taught well. Leaders identify pupils who are not keeping up with the phonics programme. Adults support these pupils to catch up quickly.

Provision for pupils with SEND is a strength of the school. Leaders work closely with parents to put thorough plans in place for these pupils. Teachers make effective adaptations to their lessons so that pupils with SEND can access the curriculum. A small number of pupils access an adapted curriculum. This curriculum meets the needs of these pupils well.

Most pupils behave well at St Joseph's. However, there is occasionally low-level disruption in lessons. The behaviour policy is not always applied as consistently as it could be across the school. At times, this has a negative impact on pupils' learning. Leaders have worked hard to keep attendance levels high. They identify any pupils falling below expected levels of attendance and put additional support in place to help these pupils. As a result of this, the number of pupils attending school who are persistently absent has significantly reduced this year.

Pupils develop a good understanding of fundamental British values. They learn about different faiths and beliefs. Leaders have worked hard to raise pupils' aspirations. Previous pupils visit the school to talk about their experiences at university and work. Pupils from a secondary school in the city visit school to share their experiences of future study and careers.

Those responsible for governance have a strong oversight of the school. They have made recent strategic decisions to strengthen school leadership. The diocese has a close relationship with the school and helps it to work in partnership with other local schools. Leaders are very considerate of staff well-being and encourage random acts of kindness between staff. Staff are happy and proud to work at St Joseph's.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have not fully developed the curriculum in a small number of subjects. The curriculum in these subjects is not as effective as it is in other areas of the curriculum. Leaders should continue with their plans to improve the curriculum in these subjects so that pupils' learning is consistently strong across all areas of the curriculum.

- A small number of pupils do not display consistently positive behaviours during lessons. This results in occasional disruption to learning in some year groups. The school should ensure that the behaviour policy is consistently well embedded across school.

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 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	139346
Local authority	Sheffield
Inspection number	10297383
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	207
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Rev Simon Hegarty
Headteacher	Debra McFarlane
Website	www.st-josephs.sheffield.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	19 September 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is a single academy trust, St Joseph's Primary School, a Catholic Voluntary Academy.
- The school is part of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Hallam.
- The school received a section 48 Diocesan Inspection Report in June 2018. The next report is due in the 2024/2025 academic year.
- The school has a breakfast club.
- The school uses one unregistered alternative provision.
- The school no longer provides nursery provision.

Information about this inspection

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

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of the school's education provision.

- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and other senior leaders. The lead inspector also spoke with the chair and vice-chair of the trust.
- The lead inspector met with a representative of the diocese.
- The lead inspector met with school improvement partners from the local authority.
- The inspection team carried out deep dives in the following subjects: reading, mathematics and history. 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.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in a range of situations, including in corridors, at breaktimes, at lunchtimes and in lessons. They also spoke to pupils about behaviour and bullying. Inspectors spoke with leaders, teachers and pupils about the school's programme of personal development.
- 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.
- Inspectors considered the views of pupils, parents and staff through discussions and looking at information collected from Ofsted's online surveys.

Inspection team

Chris Sergeant, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Lindsay Lomas

Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2024