

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

Leavale Road, Norton, Stourbridge, West Midlands DY8 2DT

Inspection dates:

14 and 15 February 2023

Outcome

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

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy attending St Joseph's RC Primary School. They are friendly and welcoming to all. This is a school where there is plenty on offer and everyone is included.

Pupils know that there is always someone to talk to if they have a worry. From school councillors to members of staff, pupils know that they can seek support if they need it. This helps them to feel safe in school. Adults act quickly to address any bullying. Pupils understand what bullying is. They know that if it were to happen, they would tell an adult and it would be stopped.

Pupils are taught through the curriculum how to keep themselves safe and healthy. They are also taught that we are all different. They know that some families might be different to their own. They are respectful of this.

Leaders want the very best for all pupils in school. Pupils live up to this. They appreciate the pupil leadership opportunities, such as 'rainbow warriors' and 'liturgy leaders'. These roles help them to prepare for life in modern Britain.

Parents appreciate all that the school does. One parent, voicing the views of many, said, 'The school is a happy, nurturing and friendly place.'

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

Leaders are developing an ambitious curriculum, so that all pupils can succeed. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), learn the full breadth of curriculum subjects. Pupils understand the value of learning and are ambitious for their futures.

In most subjects, for example mathematics, leaders have carefully sequenced learning into small steps. These steps help pupils to build on what they already know and prepare them for what they will learn next. The sequencing also helps teachers to deliver the

curriculum well. In these subjects, teachers give pupils the right activities at the right time to practise and apply new skills in different ways. In these subjects, leaders ensure that teachers regularly check pupils' understanding. This helps teachers to adapt subsequent learning or provide extra support where needed. But, in a few subjects where the curriculum is less well developed, leaders have not identified some of the small, precise steps for pupils to practise so that they can learn more over time.

Leaders have prioritised the teaching of reading. In the early years, children start learning to read as soon as they join Reception. Leaders have recently invested in new books. This means that pupils practise reading using books where the words are matched to the sounds they are learning. Teachers regularly check pupils' reading. They put in place extra help for those who are falling behind. Leaders also ensure that pupils develop a love of reading. For example, pupils have enjoyed recent author and illustrator visits. Pupil 'reading ambassadors' are keen to continue developing their role in school.

Leaders ensure that there are effective systems in place for identifying pupils with SEND. They make sure that pupils with SEND are well supported so that they can access the same learning as their classmates. Leaders seek out advice from external professionals and make sure that all staff are trained to provide the best support for pupils. As a result, pupils with SEND enjoy attending school and achieve well.

Pupils behave well. As a result, learning is not disrupted. Older pupils talk about the school rules of 'Safe, Ready, Respect'. From Reception, children quickly learn the routines and listen carefully to their teachers. For example, on a signal from their teacher, children are quick to stop and listen after excitedly talking to their partners about being number detectives and identifying which number Basil the puppet has hidden. This sensible behaviour continues at breaktime and lunchtime. Year 6 'buddies' on the playground support younger children and act as good role models.

Leaders ensure that pupils benefit from a wide range of opportunities to develop their character and resilience. For example, some pupils train to be Junior Police Community Support Officers. Others enjoy meeting the local community at 'senior lunches' in the parish centre. Pupils are given the opportunity to sing at Birmingham Symphony Hall. They take part in residential trips which they describe as 'helping with their spiritual journey'. Leaders are careful to ensure that these opportunities are available to all pupils. This means that pupils are very well prepared for their next steps in education.

Staff are proud to work at the school. They appreciate that leaders and governors take into account and support their well-being. Governors and the Emmaus Catholic Multi-Academy Company have accurate views of the school's strengths and areas for development.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have established a strong culture of safeguarding in school. They provide regular training to ensure that all staff are alert to any signs that pupils might be at risk. Staff

report concerns promptly, and leaders respond diligently.

Leaders keep detailed records of concerns. They work with external agencies to support pupils and their families. They are not afraid to challenge decisions to keep pupils safe from harm.

Leaders also ensure that pupils are taught about how to keep themselves safe and healthy.

Leaders make sure that all adults who come into contact with pupils are suitable to do so.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In subjects where the curriculum is less well developed, the knowledge and skills that pupils need to learn are not always identified precisely. Teachers sometimes do not choose activities or resources which support pupils to learn well. As a result, pupils cannot always build on their learning over time. Leaders should ensure that all curriculum subjects clearly show the precise knowledge and skills that pupils must secure in order that teachers can select the best activities and resources for pupils to practise new learning and know more and remember more over time.

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 RC Primary School, to be good in November 2013.

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](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	141477
Local authority	Dudley
Inspection number	10240930
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	207
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Joanna Griffin
Principal	Anthony Wilkes
Website	st-jo-st.sch.life/
Date of previous inspection	26 September 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not make use of alternative provision.
- St Joseph's RC Primary School is part of the Catholic Archdiocese of Birmingham. A section 48 inspection was carried out by the archdiocese on 3 and 4 December 2018.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- During the inspection, the inspector carried out deep dives into these subjects: reading, mathematics and art. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspector also listened to pupils read to a familiar adult.
- The inspector held meetings with the principal and vice-principal, curriculum leaders, and the special educational needs coordinator.
- The inspector held meetings with the chair of the local governing body and spoke to

representatives from the diocese and multi-academy company.

- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour during lessons, around the school and at lunchtime. The inspector spoke to pupils about behaviour.
- To evaluate safeguarding, the inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead, looked at the single central record of recruitment checks, looked at safeguarding records and talked to pupils and staff.
- The inspector considered responses to Ofsted Parent View, including parent free-text responses. The inspector also took account of responses to Ofsted's staff survey. There were no responses to the pupil survey.
- The inspector talked to parents at the school gate.

Inspection team

Rachel Henrick, lead inspector

His Majesty's 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 children looked after, 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 2023