

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

Grosvenor Road, Dalton, Huddersfield, West Yorkshire HD5 9HU

Inspection dates:

15 and 16 October 2024

Outcome

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

The headteacher of this school is David Marshall. This school is part of Blessed Peter Snow Catholic 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), Rob Pritchard, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Antonia Dorsey.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are nurtured and safe at this welcoming school. They enjoy the care and support they receive. The school prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain.

The school has high expectations of all pupils. Raising the aspirations of pupils and helping them to succeed in life is front and centre of the school's work. The curriculum is broad and interesting. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning. They work hard in lessons, showing high levels of engagement. Pupils are enthusiastic about the wider opportunities that they receive. The curriculum is enriched through a range of educational visits, many making the most of the local area. Pupils take part in a wide variety of sporting and musical activities and have many opportunities to compete and perform. The Year 6 pupils are looking forward to their residential visit. They say this will help them to develop independence and resilience.

Pupils are friendly, caring and courteous. They wholeheartedly play their part in helping others in the school and wider community. Pupils are confident that there is no bullying at this school. They trust school staff to help if it were to happen.

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

The school provides a well-designed, ambitious curriculum. The school has identified and sequenced the key knowledge that pupils should learn in each subject. This helps teachers to know what to teach and in what order. Many pupils join part way through school with significant gaps in their knowledge. As a result, the school's published data does not reflect the effectiveness of the curriculum or pupils' commitment to learning. The school wastes no time in setting about filling gaps in learning for pupils new to the school.

Teachers help pupils to recap on their prior learning at the beginning of lessons. They use questioning to assess pupils' understanding and to promote deeper thinking. This is particularly effective in mathematics. In a few subjects, routines to reinforce pupils' previous learning are not as strong. While pupils are clear on their current learning in subjects, such as history and science, their recall over a longer term is less secure.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) achieve well from their starting points. The school identifies pupils' needs quickly. It puts appropriate support in place, seeking help from external specialists when needed.

Children in the early years make a strong start to learning to read. Children in Nursery love singing songs and finding sound patterns in them. This helps them to be ready for learning to match sounds to letters in Reception. Pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 are accurately grouped for phonics. This means that teaching is precisely focused on what pupils need to learn next. Teachers check pupils' knowledge throughout phonics sessions. Pupils who need to catch up in reading receive extra help every day.

The school ensures that pupils learn the basics of reading and mathematics before giving them more complex tasks. This is not the case in writing. The school does not have a clear strategy for teaching handwriting and sentence structure. Some pupils are not ready for the complex writing tasks that they are given because they are not fluent in the basic writing skills.

The school's strong values permeate daily life in school. Pupils learn a range of 'virtues to live by', such as respect and kindness. This helps pupils gain a strong understanding of the fundamental British Values. Pupils say that it is important that we have laws to make the country a good place to live. They compare these to the school rules. Pupils make a positive contribution to the wider community and the environment. For example, by fundraising for the local hospice and litter picking. The school's work to promote good attendance has had a significant impact. The majority of pupils attend well. The school is determined to raise the aspirations of all its pupils. Role models, including past pupils, visit the school to inspire pupils and give them a sense of what is possible.

Trust leaders have managed the changes associated with the school becoming an academy well. New staff receive effective support. The school seeks best practice within and outside of the trust. This helps to ensure that staff receive high-quality training. Staff appreciate this and the time they are given to develop the curriculum. The school has an accurate view of its strengths and what it needs to do next to improve.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school does not have a clear strategy for the teaching of handwriting and sentence structure. This results in some pupils being asked to complete writing tasks that are too difficult. The school should ensure that pupils are fluent in basic writing skills before being asked to complete more complex writing tasks.
- The school does not have a consistent approach to checking what pupils know and remember in wider curriculum subjects. This means that pupils recall of learning in these subjects is not as strong as it is in English and mathematics. The school should ensure that assessment systems are consistent across all subjects.

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 St Joseph's Catholic Primary School to be good for overall effectiveness in June 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	148483
Local authority	Kirklees
Inspection number	10346767
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	318
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Antonia Dorsey
CEO of the trust	Rob Pritchard
Headteacher	David Marshall
Website	www.stjosephscps.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- St Joseph's Catholic Primary Academy is part of Blessed Peter Snow Catholic Academy Trust. There have been several changes in leadership and staffing since the school became an academy in October 2021.
- The headteacher has been in post since September 2024.
- The school is part of the Diocese of Leeds. The last section 48 inspection, for schools of a religious character, took place in May 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 held meetings with the headteacher. In addition, they met with the CEO of the trust, chair of the trust board, a representative of the diocese and members of the local academy council.
- The inspector visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector considered how the school prepares pupils for life in modern Britain.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around school.
- 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 responses to Ofsted's online survey for parents and carers, Parent View, were reviewed. This included any free-text responses. The responses to the staff questionnaires were also considered.

Inspection team

Janet Keefe, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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