

# St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Newtown Road, Malvern, Worcestershire WR14 1PF

## Inspection dates

12–13 February 2019

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Good</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Good</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- St Joseph's is an inclusive, nurturing school with pupils at the heart of all staff do.
- Leaders inspire trust among staff. Through words and actions, they uphold the school's values and communicate a strong ambition for it to improve.
- Governors and senior leaders have an exceptional understanding of their respective roles. They have embedded systems effectively to strengthen teaching, develop the curriculum and improve pupils' progress. Everyone in the school community feels supported in their work and the school is on an upward journey.
- Pupils' attendance is steadily increasing towards the national figure. However, improvement is still too slow for some pupils who continue to be persistently absent from school.
- Attainment in reading, writing and mathematics has improved substantially. Standards continue to improve.
- Pupils' behaviour is good, and they feel safe in school. They work hard in class and are polite and respectful to others. Any rare incidents of conflict or upset are well managed by staff.
- In all year groups, pupils are making swift progress from their starting points.
- The teaching of reading is a strength of the school. When teaching phonics and reading to younger pupils, teachers carefully match the challenge to pupils' abilities. As a result, pupils make swift progress and quickly become confident readers.
- Teachers expect pupils to work hard and, overall, challenge them well through lessons that build on prior learning. At times, pupils' achievement is limited because teachers do not deal swiftly enough with misconceptions or encourage pupils to extend their learning independently.
- The early years provision is well planned. As a result, each child has a personalised curriculum that values their own uniqueness.
- Staff at all levels are now beginning to take on leadership responsibilities. These staff show the potential to make an effective contribution to improvement across the curriculum.

## Full report

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning by making sure that teachers:
  - allow pupils to take risks and extend the challenge of their learning independently across the curriculum
  - routinely ensure that pupils’ misconceptions are dealt with swiftly.
- Continue to improve attendance by:
  - supporting parents whose children are persistently absent to bring them to school more regularly so that their attendance matches or exceeds national figures.
- Further build on the successful work done so far, to strengthen middle leaders’ roles in improving teaching, learning and the wider curriculum.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- The headteacher, ably supported by the deputy headteacher, leads the school in a calm, focused, driven manner, while being kind, challenging and supportive. The senior leaders have embedded a culture of ambition and continual focus on improvement, which ensures that pupils' needs steer the direction of development.
- Leaders and governors have an accurate picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses and know the decisive next steps needed to improve the school further. They use this knowledge to deliver precise, professional development and coaching to strengthen teaching practice. Teachers speak positively about the observation of best practice, both internally and externally, to enhance their teaching practice. Leaders hold teachers to account for the impact of their teaching on pupils' outcomes.
- Leaders are further improving the curriculum to ensure that pupils are taught what they need to know in different subjects. This work is more advanced in some subjects than others. To date, the leadership of English and mathematics has had more impact than the leadership of the wider curriculum. However, teachers who have recently taken on leadership responsibilities are well supported to develop in their roles. Staff morale is good and many staff are involved in driving improvements across the school.
- Leaders' oversight of the academic achievement of all children is effective. Targets set to support individual pupils closely match their needs. As a result, the progress of disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special education needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is substantial and their achievement has significantly improved. Pupils who need to make further improvements are identified, tracked and supported. The work in pupils' books demonstrates evidence of rapid improvements.
- The pupil premium, the physical education (PE) and sport premium and special educational needs funds are spent appropriately. Governors hold leaders to account by keeping an increasingly watchful eye on the difference their decisions and spending make to pupils' achievement and enjoyment at school. Leaders provide worthwhile programmes to reduce barriers to learning and make provision to support pupils' mental and emotional well-being.
- Leaders have ensured that pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain by promoting pupils' understanding of equalities and respect for the beliefs and opinions of others. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well.
- Parents are proud of the school. They appreciate the advice and information provided by staff and say that their children are happy to come to school. Parents express confidence in the school's leadership and believe that the school is heading in the right direction. They describe the school as nurturing and loving. Inspection findings support these views.

### Governance of the school

- Governance is extremely effective. The leadership provided by the governing body inspires leaders to be their best. Governors have specific roles and responsibilities with clear precision and they are adhered to without fail. Governors receive all the

information they need at the right time and in the right way for them to hold leaders to account. They use a range of information, including visits to the school, to see the results of the actions that leaders have taken. They are ambitious for the school to be the best it can and to make a difference to the life-chances of its pupils. To this end, governors provide a finely tuned balance of encouragement and challenge to the school's leadership.

- Governors have ensured that the funding for disadvantaged pupils has been used well, for instance to develop effective support for pupils' well-being. They are proud of the kind and supportive ethos that the headteacher has maintained at the school.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders have ensured that all safeguarding processes and procedures are fit for purpose. For example, all the required pre-employment checks on employees are carried out and recorded correctly to meet statutory requirements. The nominated governor for safeguarding has received training in safer recruitment better to inform her role. Senior leaders and governors have established a strong safeguarding culture within the school.
- Staff receive regular training, which ensures that they are alert to signs of abuse or neglect, as part of their induction, followed up by regular updates for all staff. As a result, staff are vigilant. Pupils, too, know what to do if they have a problem or worry. Staff administering medication are appropriately trained. Medicines are accessible and stored safely.
- Inspection findings show that leaders maintain effective record-keeping, so that they can keep track and improve the support that they give to families. Staff report and record any concerns about pupils' welfare. When necessary, leaders are quick to act, and information is passed to the right people in a timely manner. Leaders shared some effective examples of supportive partnership work with parents to improve outcomes for families.

## **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

**Good**

- In the past, the quality of teaching has been inconsistent. However, the quality of teaching, learning and assessment has significantly improved and is now consistently strong. Teachers are motivated to improve their practice and they appreciate the opportunities they have had to develop their teaching skills. As a result, improved teaching has contributed to the standards rising throughout the school.
- Teachers use assessment information well to shape their teaching, so that they meet the needs of different groups of pupils. They follow the school's systematic teaching approaches and support the implementation of the wider curriculum wholeheartedly. Pupils can build on their prior learning effectively, as a starting point to new learning. However, on occasion, teachers underestimate pupils' capabilities. Consequently, there are times when teachers are not allowing children to take risks and independently move their learning on to reach their potential across the curriculum.

- Some staff make good use of questioning to probe and deepen pupils' learning. This was exemplified by questioning used well, to enable pupils to evaluate the use of appropriate vocabulary and explain their reasoning, to draw out their ideas.
- Pupils are keen writers. Work in books shows that they write for a variety of purposes, such as poetry, diaries, playscripts and recounts within English and across the curriculum. Pupils' writing is often inspired by high-quality texts, which stimulate them to write imaginatively. However, at times, the use of worksheets with response boxes prevents them writing at length or in greater depth, particularly those who are most-able. Pupils' grammatical misconceptions are always corrected.
- In mathematics, the work in pupils' books reflects the professional development teachers have received on sequencing and broadening the curriculum. Pupils use the calculation skills they have previously learned to solve increasingly complex mathematical problems and reasoning questions. At times, misconceptions are not swiftly dealt with. This allows errors to continue and can slow pupils' learning. Some teachers set tasks that do not allow pupils to move on independently as soon as they are ready.
- Pupils with SEND are supported effectively by teaching assistants. Assessment is used well to plan work to ensure that all pupils with SEND make the necessary steps to the successful achievement of their personal targets.
- When teaching phonics and reading to younger pupils, teachers carefully match the challenge to pupils' abilities. As a result, pupils make swift progress and quickly become confident, early readers. Each day, pupils learn a little more and the older pupils are mostly fluent readers. However, some pupils would benefit from more challenging texts.
- In other subjects, teaching holds pupils' interest and keeps them busy. This was particularly the case in PE. In addition, pupils' work in science, history and religious education show that they are required to think deeply, when considering scientific evidence, recalling historical facts and when reflecting on matters of faith.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils work successfully with one another and on their own. They have an informed understanding of what it means to be a successful learner. Pupils take pride in their learning. This is reflected in the neat and tidy work in their books. They engage well in a wide range of activities at school. Pupils develop confidence in their own abilities to learn and to succeed.
- Pupils have a clear awareness of how to keep themselves safe from bullying. Although it is rare, they understand that this does happen in school and they know who to talk to if they have any concerns.
- Leaders' commitment to supporting pupils' personal development ensures that pupils receive individual support to cope with difficult situations. Pupils who spoke to inspectors were keen to share their views about the positive impact the school's

nurture provision has had on their well-being. For example, pupils say this support has helped them to keep calm, rather than react negatively to difficult situations.

- The school provides well for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through its interesting curriculum, extra-curricular experiences and assemblies. Leaders ensure that pupils have opportunities to learn about other faiths, while valuing the catholic ethos of the school. Pupils speak with enthusiasm about trips, especially the most recent trip to a mosque. This is evidence of leaders' ambitious vision for promoting equality, developing pupils' understanding of the needs of others and tolerance.
- Pupils are aware of how to keep themselves safe, including when online. They understand the need to keep personal information safe and they are aware of the dangers that strangers can pose.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils' conduct in and around the school is good. At playtimes, older pupils act as excellent role models for younger children by leading activities. Pupils are polite and well mannered. They routinely step aside to let others through doorways and offer courteous and cheery greetings to visitors. The parents who responded to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, had no concerns about the behaviour of pupils.
- Most of the time, pupils listen when adults are speaking in class. On occasions, and more noticeably when some children have finished tasks, some pupils get a bit restless and fidgety and teachers did remind them to pay attention. However, where teachers allow pupils to independently move their learning on, this is not the case.
- Pupils know that bullying of any sort will not be tolerated. They say that good behaviour is noticed and rewarded and that the school's rules are fair. Exclusion from school is rare but it has been used appropriately when necessary.
- Since the last inspection, leaders have made concerted efforts to improve pupils' attendance at school. Overall, attendance is improving. It is currently higher than it was at the same point last year. This is the result of the rigorous system leaders used to record the attendance of different groups of pupils. Some pupils' attendance is not improving quickly enough. Although fewer pupils are now persistently absent, the number is still too high. The school has not tackled the high rates of absence for a small number of pupils robustly enough.

## Outcomes for pupils

**Good**

- Over the last three years, there has been a dramatic increase in the proportion of pupils who achieve the specified levels of attainment compared to national levels in reading, writing and mathematics. Over three times the number of pupils achieved this standard in 2018 compared to 2016. Pupils are now making strong progress. In reading and mathematics, progress presents a slightly stronger picture than in writing.
- Across the school, pupils are making consistently strong progress from their starting points in reading, writing and mathematics. This has led to higher standards of

attainment. There are two main reasons for this. Firstly, rigorous systems for checking the performance of pupils are now embedded. Leaders ensure that there is 'nowhere to hide' for pupils and that timely interventions are sharp and focused. Secondly, curriculum planning and pupils' books show that new learning builds firmly on earlier learning.

- External moderation is a central part of the school's work. Teachers check the accuracy of their assessments with each other, and with other schools in the locality. Such effective practice ensures that teachers have an accurate picture of the progress that differing groups of pupils are making in each year group.
- Pupils have responded very well to a recent whole-school focus on improving the quality of their writing across the curriculum. For older children, the standard of written work shows that pupils are well prepared for learning at secondary school.
- The good teaching of phonics in key stage 1 ensures that most pupils reach the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check. Pupils quickly develop secure early reading skills, so they can decode unfamiliar words and apply these skills to their writing. Pupils clearly enjoy reading. Inspection findings show that the youngest pupils tackle words using their phonics skills, anticipate what is coming next in a story and become fluent early readers. Older pupils read confidently, sharing their opinion about their choice of book and expressing preferences for authors or genres. These pupils could be further challenged by teachers allowing them to read more challenging texts.
- Disadvantaged pupils benefit from additional teaching groups, to address any gaps in learning. As a result, rates of progress of disadvantaged pupils are increasing and attainment gaps are closing compared to pupils nationally.
- The achievement of pupils with SEND is good because teachers and other staff check their progress regularly and carefully match work to their abilities. Pupils are well supported by teaching assistants in class or group work.
- Most parents agree that their children make good progress while at St Joseph's School. This view is endorsed by the local authority and the Diocese of Birmingham. Pupils leave the school as well-rounded youngsters who are well prepared for the next stage in their education.

## Early years provision

**Good**

- The leadership of early years is strong and effective. The inspection found that clear-sighted leadership and mostly effective teaching mean that children are happy and safe at school. They make good progress in all areas of learning. Teaching builds on children's own interests and fascinations. Staff steer children's learning effectively by asking thought-provoking questions. Leaders ensure that the curriculum is personalised to each individual child, valuing their uniqueness.
- Most children start school with skills and knowledge that are slightly below those typical for their age. Children who join the school with limited spoken English receive prompt, additional support in school to help them keep up. This works well and, by the end of the Reception Year, the proportion of children who achieve a good level of development is usually just above national figures, especially in their personal development and communication skills.

- Adults assess children regularly. Assessments are managed well by staff so that they do not take time away from them working with children. Children's learning journals are unique. Staff capture children's 'magic moments' well and share them with parents so that parents can carry on children's learning at home. While teachers generally use their assessment information well, the most able children are sometimes not challenged as well as others.
- Staff have excellent relationships with children. They promote children's independence well. Children are confident to explore the many, well-planned opportunities on offer. Staff have created a nurturing, secure, learning environment. Children behave well, for example, when sharing toys. They say 'please' and 'thank you' to adults and each other. Children's behaviour shows that they feel safe to explore the classrooms and outdoor areas. They concentrate for sustained periods of times on well-planned, imaginative activities, which build imagination, questioning, curiosity and independence. At times, teachers do not allow children in their immediate play to extend their ideas, which limits opportunities to develop independence.
- Staff maintain good communication with parents. There are many opportunities for parents to come into school to talk with staff and find out how their children are getting on. These positive relationships and the flow of information between home and school help parents to support their children's learning at home.
- Adults work well together to ensure that systematic approaches across Reception and Year 1 provide a smooth transition between the classes. As a result, children settle extremely well as soon as they move from the Reception to Year 1.

## School details

Unique reference number	116901
Local authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	10053032

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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	131
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Chris Park, Maggie Griffiths
Headteacher	Mrs Therese Langford
Telephone number	01684 573 016
Website	<a href="http://www.stjoesmalvern.co.uk">www.stjoesmalvern.co.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:office@stjoesmalvern.worcs.sch.uk">office@stjoesmalvern.worcs.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	6-7 July 2016

## Information about this school

- St Joseph's is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The school's most recent section 48 inspection for schools with a religious character took place in November 2016.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is just above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is above the national average.
- The school's breakfast club is run on behalf of the governing body on the school site from 7.45am.
- The school's after-school club is run on behalf of the governing body on the school site from 3.20pm to 5.00pm.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors visited numerous lessons in all classrooms, some together with the senior leaders. In addition, inspectors observed small groups of pupils being taught.
- Inspectors also scrutinised pupils' work in books and on display. Inspectors listened to pupils read. The inspectors also considered current assessment information.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils about their enjoyment of school and their opinions of behaviour and safety. Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at lunch and breaktimes, and when pupils were moving about the school site. Inspectors considered the 31 responses to the pupil survey.
- By the end of the inspection, there were 23 recent responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and 15 free-text responses. The inspection team considered these, spoke with parents at the beginning of the school day and met with a parent.
- Meetings were held with governors, senior leaders, middle leaders and teaching staff.
- Formal discussions took place with representatives of the local authority and a representative of the archdiocese.
- Inspectors examined school documents, including: information about pupils' progress and attainment, evaluations of the school's performance and several policy statements. Records relating to leadership, governance, staff training, SEND, early years, behaviour, attendance, punctuality, exclusions, safety, safeguarding and the quality of teaching were also scrutinised. The school's website was also checked.
- Inspectors reviewed safeguarding documentation, considered how this relates to daily practice and spoke with staff and pupils.

## Inspection team

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Ofsted Inspector

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Ofsted Inspector

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