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

Lidgett Lane, Dinnington, Sheffield, South Yorkshire S25 2QD

Inspection date: 17 December 2024

Outcome

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

The headteacher of this school is Laura Atkinson. This school is part of St Francis Catholic Multi 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), Siobhan Kent, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Martin McDonagh.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy attending school. Alongside staff, they create a friendly and welcoming environment. The school has recently reviewed its behaviour policy to clarify expectations of pupils' behaviour. Pupils understand and respond well to these. They know that staff will help them if they struggle to meet the school's expectations. The school does this effectively. Pupils understand the importance of respecting one another. This is reflected in their interactions.

The school provides pupils with a range of opportunities to enhance their personal development. Some pupils hold positions of responsibility, such as play leaders, in the school. They enjoy the opportunity that this gives them to contribute to the wider school community. The school also works to broaden pupils' horizons. This includes exposing pupils to experiences that they may not otherwise have. One recent example of this included pupils watching a performance from a travelling theatre company.

The school is aspirational for pupils. The majority of pupils achieve well. This is reflected in the outcomes that they achieve in national assessments. During a period of instability, some improvements have taken longer than intended to be fully realised. The trust has supported the school effectively to minimise any disruption to pupils' education during this time.

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

The school's curriculum outlines the knowledge and skills that pupils should learn. It sets these out in a logical order so that pupils are prepared for what they learn next. Staff value the clarity that this provides them and how this helps to reduce their workload. They have received training in how to teach many of the subject curriculums effectively. This helps them to teach the curriculum confidently.

Teachers explain new content clearly. They have secure knowledge of the subjects that they are teaching. They use this to ask questions that check on, or extend, pupils' understanding. Teachers provide pupils with opportunities to discuss their learning with their peers. Pupils express themselves and their ideas with confidence and clarity. Sometimes, teachers do not use lesson activities as well as they could to reinforce the most important knowledge.

Staff have received training in how to teach the school's phonics scheme. They teach this with consistency. Pupils learn to read with confidence. Pupils who need extra help receive effective support. Reading and opportunities to develop pupils' vocabulary are a high priority in the school. This helps pupils with their learning across subjects.

The school identifies pupils with additional needs, including special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), quickly. They work alongside external agencies to provide the support that these pupils need. The school rightly recognises that there is further work required to help some pupils, particularly some pupils with SEND, develop their handwriting and apply their knowledge of grammar and punctuation. Pupils with SEND are fully included in the life of the school.

Children in the early years settle into school quickly. Staff teach children the routines that they need to prepare them for future learning. Adults help children to develop their understanding across topics. For example, adults teach children to use mathematical language accurately. They reinforce this effectively when children use measuring equipment or when discussing shapes in the outdoor environment.

Most pupils behave well. They understand the rules of the school and respond well to the expectations of adults. Teachers address incidents of poor behaviour effectively. This helps pupils to feel safe.

The proportion of pupils who are absent from school is reducing. The school works well with families and other professionals to support pupils to improve their attendance. The impact of this work is evident, for example, in pupils' improved punctuality. Disadvantaged pupils attend more regularly than their peers.

Pupils have a secure understanding of the school's personal, social and health education curriculum. They speak confidently about topics such as how to keep safe online. Pupils have a strong sense of fairness and understand the importance of equality. The school supports this by exposing them to texts that explore diversity and other important themes.

Staff value the support of the trust, including the opportunities that they get to collaborate with others in similar roles. They speak positively about the support of leaders and colleagues. The additional support that the trust has provided to the school in recent months has provided greater consistency for pupils. Some school systems, such as those for identifying patterns and trends in absence and behaviour data, have not supported leaders consistently well. This limits how effectively leaders, including those with responsibility for governance, have been able to evaluate the impact of their work. While steps are being taken to improve this, these are early and are in the process of becoming established.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some pupils require additional support to become fluent in writing transcription skills. These pupils are less able to express their views and ideas in the written form. The school should ensure that pupils who need it receive effective support to improve their transcription so that they are better prepared for future learning.
- Sometimes, the activities that teachers ask pupils to complete do not support pupils to learn important knowledge as well as they could. When this happens, pupils' learning of this most important content slows. The school should ensure that teachers select and use activities to strengthen pupils' understanding of the intended curriculum consistently well.
- Some of the school's systems have not supported leaders, including governors and trustees, to scrutinise the impact of its actions consistently well. This limits the school's ability to make informed decisions about further improvements to pupils' education. The school should embed recent changes to improve the ability of leaders at all levels to evaluate the effectiveness of the school's actions.

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 the school to be good for overall effectiveness in May 2021.

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	140590
Local authority	Rotherham
Inspection number	10346534
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	127
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Martin McDonagh
CEO of the trust	Siobhan Kent
Headteacher	Laura Atkinson
Website	www.stjosephs-dinnington.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	26 and 27 May 2021, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection, the school has joined St Francis Catholic Multi Academy Trust. The school joined the trust in August 2021.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school has a Roman Catholic religious character. It is part of the Diocese of Hallam. The most recent section 48 inspection, for schools of a religious character, took place in February 2024. The next is due within 5 years of this date.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a 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.

- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: 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 lead inspector met with members of the trust board and the trust's CEO.
- An inspector spoke with a representative of the Diocese of Hallam.
- During the inspection, inspectors met with the headteacher and other leaders. This included discussions with those responsible for safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation regarding the support pupils with SEND receive. They looked at the quality of the provision for pupils with SEND in lessons.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation, including minutes from governing board meetings as well as the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans.
- Inspectors looked at a range of information regarding behaviour. They observed the behaviour of pupils in classrooms and at social times.
- The views of pupils and staff who responded to Ofsted's surveys were considered.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents through the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents, Ofsted Parent View.

Inspection team

Thomas Wraith, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Jo Bentley	Ofsted Inspector

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