

# Inspection of a good school: St Joseph's Catholic Infant School

Hazell Avenue, Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire HP21 7JF

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Inspection dates:

5–6 November 2019

## Outcome

St Joseph's Catholic Infant School continues to be a good school.

## What is it like to attend this school?

This is a happy school. The headteacher emphasises the importance of positivity and praise. This runs like a connecting thread through the school. Pupils respond well to this ethos. They thrive and grow in confidence.

Pupils experience a smooth start to their educational journey because of the strong links between St Joseph's and the nearby pre-school and juniors. For example, pupils from the junior school help out at lunchtimes. Pupils like school. They enjoy their learning, particularly subjects such as geography because it develops their interest in the wider world. They value the wide range of languages spoken within the school community.

Teachers have high expectations of pupils. Pupils respond well to these. They work carefully and industriously. They listen to their teachers and are keen to do well. Pupils make good progress so that, by the end of Year 2, they are well prepared for their next schools. Around the school, pupils behave well. They are kind to each other and encourage each other. Pupils are not concerned about bullying. They are confident that adults would help them if they had worries, although they told me that they did not have any.

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

Leaders have thought carefully about what pupils learn in a wide range of subjects. They have developed detailed sequences that help pupils to build on their knowledge and skills well.

Teachers use these plans successfully to help pupils to learn more and remember more. In art, for example, pupils learn about mixing basic colours in the Reception Year. This helps as they mix shades of colour in Year 1. This knowledge is then combined with a study of texture as pupils look at dinosaur skin. Pupils then bring the skills together to produce colourful and textured fireworks pictures. Teachers' high expectations of

behaviour support learning well so that pupils learn useful routines, for example when colour mixing.

Leaders ensure that teachers have a good knowledge of the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Teachers consider these needs carefully when they plan their lessons. They make sure that pupils who may need learning broken down into smaller steps, or need extra support, have what they need to experience success.

Leaders have ensured that plans provide pupils with plenty of opportunities to develop a good understanding of important concepts, such as number and pattern in mathematics. Right from Reception Year, pupils' mathematical understanding is supported well, for example by regular talk and exploration. For instance, pupils learning about shape were exploring shapes in the sand and through making pictures. This helps to ensure that all pupils, including pupils who speak English as an additional language, develop a good base on which to build their knowledge as they move through the school.

Pupils develop their mathematical skills in line with the expectations of the national curriculum. However, teaching does not necessarily develop what pupils already know and can do. When this is the case, learning does not build or challenge pupils enough to extend their thinking, particularly for the most able pupils.

Leaders place emphasis on developing pupils' love of books and reading. Right from the start in the Reception Year, children develop a joy in books. They demonstrate a high degree of respect for these resources. Pupils carefully turn the pages together and take time to enjoy the interactive aspects of the books they explore. As pupils move into Year 1, they relish opportunities to share texts about their learning themes and to discuss the thoughts and feelings of the characters. By Year 2, many pupils have well-developed skills which they apply confidently to help them to read and enjoy a wide range of books. Pupils who struggle are promptly identified and given the support they need to catch up quickly.

Children learn phonics right from the start in the Reception Year. However, sometimes, the teaching of phonics in the Reception Year is not closely matched to pupils' needs and does not always help them to apply or extend their learning. Teachers have wisely shown parents and carers how they can support their children in learning to read. However, children do not always take home books which will help them to practise their skills and experience success.

Leaders have ensured that pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is developed well. Within subjects such as art, pupils study a range of artists and create their own art gallery to share with parents. Pupils enjoy regular singing, reflection and celebration. They value highly the rewards they are given for working hard or demonstrating the school's values in their behaviour.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Everyone involved in the school is aware of the central importance of keeping pupils safe. Staff are well trained and know what to do if they have concerns. Reporting systems have been reviewed to ensure that they help leaders in their regular monitoring. Leaders are tenacious in making sure that any referrals to other agencies are followed through.

Parents and staff are confident that pupils are safe at school. Staff know pupils well and are quick to spot if all is not as it should be. They ensure that pupils learn how to keep themselves safe, including e-safety.

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

### (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders need to ensure that the teaching of phonics in the early years is closely matched to children's needs and that the books children take home to practise their skills are carefully matched to the phonics they know.
- Leaders need to ensure that teachers always plan mathematics learning that considers what pupils already know and can do so that suitable sequences of learning help pupils to systematically build and extend their knowledge.

## 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 a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good on 4–5 May 2016.

## 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 Ofsted Parent View information 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.

If you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

## **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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	110478
<b>Local authority</b>	Buckinghamshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10111374
<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	178
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Sonia Adamo-Ibbotson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ann Taylor
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.stjosephsrcinfant.bucks.sch.uk">www.stjosephsrcinfant.bucks.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	4–5 May 2016

## Information about this school

- St Joseph's is an average-sized infant school. Children join the Reception classes full-time in the September of the school year they turn five.
- The pre-school that shares the school site is run by the governing body but was not inspected as part of this inspection.
- Two-thirds of pupils are from a background other than White British. Over half speak English as an additional language.
- The deputy headteacher left the school at the end of the last academic year for promotion. There is currently an acting deputy headteacher who has been seconded to the school. Recruitment for a permanent deputy headteacher is under way.

## Information about this inspection

- I met with the headteacher, leaders, staff and representatives from the governing body. I spoke to a representative from the local authority on the telephone. I spoke to parents at the school gate and considered their responses to Parent View, including free-text responses. I also considered the school's own survey information.

- I did deep dives in the following subjects: reading, mathematics and art. I visited a range of lessons and looked at learning plans. I spoke to pupils and staff about pupils' learning, and looked at pupils' work.
- I spoke to pupils, parents and staff about the school's work to keep pupils safe. A range of safeguarding documentation was considered.

### **Inspection team**

Deborah Gordon, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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