

# Inspection of a good school: St Joseph's Catholic Voluntary Academy

Coventry Road, Market Harborough, Leicestershire LE16 9BZ

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Inspection dates:

4–5 December 2019

## **Outcome**

St Joseph's Catholic Voluntary Academy continues to be a good school.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

St Joseph's is a friendly and successful school. One parent described it as 'a warm and welcoming school, with staff who are enthusiastic, loving and fun'. Pupils enjoy school and are proud of their achievements.

The school's mission statement is 'Believe, Achieve, Succeed'. This reflects the importance of the Catholic faith in the day-to-day life of the school. It also shows the high expectations leaders have for every pupil.

Pupils behave well. They are kind and friendly to one another. There are very few bullying incidents. If bullying does occur, pupils say that staff act quickly to ensure that it stops. Pupils know that there are caring adults they can turn to if they have any worries.

Keeping pupils safe is the highest priority. Parents and carers who shared their views all agreed that their children feel safe at school.

Staff are always looking for ways to broaden pupils' horizons. Pupils join lots of different clubs and many play musical instruments. Pupils enjoy exciting visits and taking part in national events and competitions.

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

Leaders and staff are determined that pupils will do well. They have put in place ambitious curriculum plans. These set out what they want pupils to learn. The plans identify the order in which different parts of the curriculum must be taught. Almost all pupils achieve well. They do particularly well in reading, writing, mathematics and science. By the end of Year 6, pupils are ready for their secondary schools.

As soon as they begin school, a top priority is to get children to become fluent and confident readers. Staff teach phonics well. They give extra support to any children who are at risk of falling behind. Staff explain to parents how they teach reading. This enables

parents to help their children too. As pupils move through the school, their enjoyment of reading grows. The staff's own love of books is infectious. Pupils enjoy talking about their favourite authors. Many of them join the school book clubs.

Curriculum plans in mathematics and science are detailed. Teachers follow them consistently. In these subjects, teachers revisit the key knowledge and vocabulary they want pupils to retain. As a result, pupils remember what they have learned recently and in the past. This planned revisiting of learning is not so evident in geography. In this subject, pupils struggle to recall earlier learning.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive strong support. Teachers adapt their lessons so that the curriculum is accessible yet challenging. This helps pupils with SEND to improve their reading, spelling and mathematics. Their progress in writing is more limited.

Leaders ensure that pupils learn about British values, such as democracy and respect. In lessons and assemblies, pupils learn how their actions and decisions can help or hurt others. Leaders also want pupils to understand other people's faiths and customs. Representatives of different faiths speak to pupils about their beliefs.

Pupils are keen learners. They try hard in lessons. This means that learning is rarely disrupted by silly behaviour.

Children play and learn happily together in the early years. They follow class routines well. They listen to adults and respond quickly to instructions. Adults make learning fun. The children loved making and signing their birthday cards for baby Jesus. Adults keep a close eye on how well children are learning. When necessary, they adapt teaching to help anyone at risk of falling behind. Children are well prepared for Year 1.

Staff are proud to be part of the school community. They have a high regard for leaders. They say that leaders are considerate of their well-being. Leaders always act in the best interests of pupils.

The school is a member of the St Thomas Aquinas Catholic Multi-Academy Trust. The trust supports leaders to build on the school's strengths. Leaders of the trust and members of the governing body have a strong ambition that the quality of education will get even better.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders make sure that there are clear arrangements for keeping pupils safe. Safeguarding leaders and all staff have received up-to-date safeguarding training. Pupils have a good understanding of the potential dangers they face when online. Leaders arrange for visitors from organisations such as Google, the fire service and the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) to talk to pupils. This help pupils learn how to stay safe.

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

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

- In geography, the curriculum is not planned to ensure that pupils revisit previous learning frequently enough. Some pupils are unable to recall what they have learned in the subject. Leaders should make sure that teachers revisit and assess pupils' knowledge and understanding in geography so that they do not forget it.
- Pupils with SEND make strong progress in reading, spelling and mathematics. Leaders should ensure that pupils with SEND who have targets linked to writing, particularly writing in sentences, make just as strong progress.

## 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 predecessor school, St Joseph's Catholic Voluntary Academy, to be good on 21 March 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>	138080
<b>Local authority</b>	Leicestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10110146
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	207
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Sarah Noon
<b>Headteacher</b>	Karen McVea
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.stjosephs.leics.sch.uk">www.stjosephs.leics.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- The school is a member of the St Thomas Aquinas Catholic Multi-Academy Trust.

## Information about this inspection

- I met with senior leaders, subject leaders and four governors. I spoke with a representative from the local authority.
- I did deep dives in reading, mathematics and science. I conducted interviews with staff and pupils, visited lessons, spoke with leaders and looked at pupils' work.
- I reviewed the arrangements for safeguarding by scrutinising safeguarding records, questioning staff and through discussions with pupils.
- I took into account the views of the school shared by parents, staff and pupils.

## Inspection team

Anthony O'Malley, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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