

Inspection of St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Wetherby

Barleyfields Road, Wetherby, West Yorkshire LS22 6PR

Inspection dates:	18 and 19 March 2025
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Outstanding
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

Until November 2020, the school was exempt from routine inspection because it was judged as outstanding for overall effectiveness at its previous inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The school has not been inspected under section 5 of the Act since October 2013. Since September 2024, schools have not been awarded an overall effectiveness grade.

What is it like to attend this school?

St Joseph's is a friendly and supportive school. Relationships between staff and pupils are warm and respectful. Pupils learn to be resilient and to care for one another. They know they can trust adults to help them with any problems they might have. If any bullying takes place, pupils are confident that adults will deal with it quickly.

The school has high expectations of pupils' behaviour. All pupils know and understand the school 'TRUST' rules. Pupils move around the school calmly and with an awareness of others. From a very young age, they show consideration to adults and to one another. Pupils who struggle to manage their own behaviour are well supported.

Pupils are encouraged and supported to achieve their personal best. Typically, pupils achieve well across the curriculum. The school ensures all pupils have access to a wide and varied range of clubs. As well as sports and music clubs, pupils can enjoy origami, chess, gardening and many other activities. Participation in activities such as school council, 'planet protectors', reading buddies and 'Mini Vinnies' enable pupils to make a positive contribution to the school and wider community.

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

The school curriculum is broad and ambitious. Right from the early years, the school has carefully selected the knowledge and skills that pupils need to learn, and considered ways to help pupils make links in their learning. For example, pupils learn about Yorkshire through units of work in history, geography and art and design. There are clear expectations for what pupils need to learn in each subject as they progress through school. This 'sticky knowledge' forms the basis for teachers' planning. It helps pupils to build their vocabulary and understanding over time.

Children get off to an excellent start from their individual starting points in the early years. Staff maximise opportunities for learning through play. The learning environment enables children to make choices and develop high levels of perseverance and resilience. Children's development in speaking, listening and communication is exceptionally well supported. Staff expertly extend children's thinking and introduce new vocabulary. As a result, children are eager to talk about their learning with adults and with one another. Children with additional needs benefit from early identification and support.

The school is determined to ensure that all pupils learn and achieve well from their individual starting points. The school has systems in place to identify those who might be falling behind and provides additional support in English and mathematics where needed. Staff know their pupils well. They adapt the curriculum delivery to ensure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) can learn well. Staff plan lessons to build knowledge sequentially. They check that pupils can recall previous learning. However, in some subjects, this information is not used well enough to ensure that planned activities reflect pupils' existing knowledge and next steps.

The school prioritises reading. The phonics programme is well established and helps to ensure that most pupils learn to read quickly. Pupils who need more help are well supported. Pupils at the early stages of learning to read develop their confidence by reading books that match their phonics knowledge. As they progress through school, pupils are supported well to read with understanding. The school's wider curriculum offers plentiful opportunities for pupils to read and write to support their learning. However, at times, the planned activities are not well matched to pupils' knowledge or skills in these areas.

The school has an exceptionally well-planned programme of curriculum enrichment. Pupils' knowledge and understanding are developed through visits to places of interest and visitors into school. A very high proportion of pupils access wider opportunities. All pupils have opportunities to represent their school at sporting or musical events. Pupils are confident that staff will support them if they have new ideas for clubs. Pupil-led groups, such as the dyslexia ambassadors, help to raise awareness and offer peer support.

The school's approach to supporting well-being is highly personalised and valued by pupils and their families. Pupils understand that 'we are all the same, but we are all different'. Over time, the personal, social and health education programme, as well as other elements of the curriculum, support pupils to develop a deep understanding of what it means to treat everyone fairly. The school places a high priority on helping pupils to develop resilience. Pupils learn how to support one another in this respect, particularly through approaches such as reading buddies and playmakers, which encourage older pupils to be good role models.

The school has recently been through a period of substantial change in leadership. During this time, leaders, including governors, have maintained a focus on ensuring that school is a safe and positive environment for all pupils. Staff appreciate the way their workload is managed and the support for their well-being. They have been fully involved in developing curriculum plans. Subject leaders are well supported to develop their skills and knowledge through working together and with other schools.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, teachers do not effectively assign tasks to meet the needs of the pupils. As a result, the intended learning is sometimes not realised. The school should ensure that planned activities consistently build on prior learning and take account of gaps in knowledge and/or misconceptions.

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	108020
Local authority	Leeds
Inspection number	10346220
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	234
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Gerard Howard
Headteacher	Karen Williams
Website	www.stjosephswetherby.com
Dates of previous inspection	23 and 24 October 2013, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school appointed a new headteacher in January 2024.
- The leadership of the governing body has changed since the last inspection.
- The school is a Roman Catholic primary school and is part of the Diocese of Leeds. The most recent inspection of the school's religious character took place in November 2018.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth-form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and other leaders from the school.
- Inspectors met with representatives of the governing body, the local authority school adviser and the diocesan adviser.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, art and design and history. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in class, around the school and during social times. They held discussions with leaders about behaviour and attendance.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, 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.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. They also considered staff and pupil responses to surveys.
- Inspectors spoke with groups of staff and pupils to gain their views about the school.

Inspection team

Gill McCleave, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Emma Robertson

Ofsted Inspector

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