

# Inspection of St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Edenfield Crescent, Huyton, Liverpool, Merseyside L36 6DS

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Inspection dates: 18 and 19 October 2023

## **Overall effectiveness**

## **Outstanding**

The quality of education

**Outstanding**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Outstanding**

Personal development

**Outstanding**

Leadership and management

**Outstanding**

Early years provision

**Outstanding**

Previous inspection grade

Outstanding

This school was last inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 10 years ago and judged 'Outstanding' under a previous inspection framework. This reflected the school's overall effectiveness under the inspection framework in use at the time.

From then until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between graded inspections under section 5 of the Act. Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last graded inspection.

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

Pupils flourish at this school. They feel valued for who they are. Caring staff build strong, positive and supportive relationships with pupils, including children in the early years. This helps pupils to feel safe and secure in school.

All pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), achieve exceptionally well. Pupils are eager to learn. They make the most of the rich learning opportunities that the school provides for them. They listen well in class and strive to be 'the best that they can be'. Consequently, pupils achieve highly across a wide range of subjects.

Pupils' behaviour in class and around the school is exemplary. Learning time is rarely disrupted. This leads to a calm and mutually respectful atmosphere that makes St Joseph's a happy place to be.

Pupils engage fully in the wide range of leadership opportunities that are made available to them. For example, pupils on the school council and those involved in fundraising support both local and international charities. These opportunities build pupils' understanding of how they can make a difference to the lives of others. Pupils relish taking on extra responsibilities. They understand that it is important to fulfil these roles diligently as they know that this will prepare them for life. Library prefects take their responsibilities seriously, ensuring that an ordered and inviting space is available for pupils to visit.

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

The school has designed a highly ambitious curriculum that enables all pupils to be successful. From the moment that children join the school in the Reception class, they benefit from a carefully designed and well-ordered curriculum. Staff are expertly trained so that they have absolute clarity about the knowledge that pupils should learn at each stage of the school year and in each year group. Teachers routinely ensure that pupils build on what they have learned previously. They carefully check that pupils' understanding is secure before moving on to new learning. The expert support that pupils receive enables them to build up a valuable and rich body of subject knowledge over time.

The school sets high expectations of behaviour from Reception through to Year 6. The clearly established rules and routines are known to all. Children and pupils follow them at all times. They are highly respectful of staff, visitors and each other. This ensures a purposeful atmosphere in which everyone can learn.

The school has ensured that reading sits at the heart of the curriculum. Children in the Reception class and pupils across the rest of the school regularly experience the delight that comes from listening to a book being read to them. Highly trained staff deliver the phonics programme skilfully. Children in the Reception Year quickly learn the sounds that letters represent. Additional support is promptly put in place for any

children who need it. This helps them to catch up quickly. The books that they read closely match the sounds that they have learned. Pupils in key stage 1 build on this excellent start so that they become fluent and accurate readers. They are very well prepared for the curriculum in key stage 2.

Pupils right across school love to read. They have access to a rich range of books from different cultures and by different authors. Pupils learn to appreciate different types of books, including poetry, playscripts and non-fiction. Many pupils spoke to inspectors about the importance of reading regularly in order to become more knowledgeable. They told inspectors that reading supports their writing as they can use the vocabulary that they have learned to make their written work interesting.

The school has highly effective systems in place to identify the additional needs of pupils with SEND. Teachers benefit from the high-quality support and training that the school provides in order to meet the needs of all pupils. Teachers are highly skilled in how they adapt the delivery of the curriculum to ensure that pupils with SEND can learn alongside their peers. Pupils with SEND achieve highly.

The school has an extremely well-thought-through programme to support pupils' personal development. The wide range of clubs on offer, such as football, judo and the Shakespeare club, reflect the interests and talents of pupils. The school responds to pupils' personal requests wherever possible to ensure that everyone can be involved in these enrichment activities.

Pupils learn about different faiths and cultures. Older pupils have an extremely mature understanding of why it is important to be tolerant and respectful. Pupils are very accepting of difference. Pupils enjoy a rich variety of trips. These include visits to different places of worship, museums, galleries and places of geographical significance. The range of experiences that the school provides prepares pupils exceptionally well for life in modern Britain.

Governors have a comprehensive understanding of the school and the community that it serves. They work closely with the school to make sure that all pupils receive the highest quality of education possible. They are well informed about how pupils are achieving throughout school. There is no complacency. Governors support and challenge leaders in a measured and considered way.

The school supports parents and carers to become active partners in their children's education. For example, it provides a range of workshops on the teaching of phonics so that parents know how to support reading at home. The vast majority of parents who shared their views hold the school in high regard.

The school considers the workload and well-being of staff in the decisions that it makes, for example about the curriculum. Staff appreciate the support that they receive from leaders to carry out their roles effectively. As a result, staff said that they feel valued and enjoy working as part of the school community.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	104472
<b>Local authority</b>	Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council
<b>Inspection number</b>	10203355
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	206
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Marion Hughes
<b>Headteacher</b>	Pauline McIlroy
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.stjosephshuyton.co.uk">www.stjosephshuyton.co.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	19 and 20 March 2013, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

## Information about this school

- A new headteacher has been appointed since the last inspection.
- The school is part of the Archdiocese of Liverpool. It was last inspected under section 48 of the Education Act 2005 in May 2018. The school's next section 48 inspection will take place before 2025.
- The school does not make use of alternative provision for pupils.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement 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 the school and have taken this into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher and other members of staff. The lead inspector spoke with representatives of the governing body, including the chair of governors. She also spoke with representatives of the local authority and of the archdiocese.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, and spoke to teachers and with some pupils about their learning. Inspectors also looked at samples of pupils' work. The lead inspector listened to pupils reading with a familiar adult. Inspectors also discussed the curriculum with leaders in some other subjects.
- 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.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at various times in the school day. This included during lessons as well as at lunchtime.
- Inspectors considered the views expressed by parents in their responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. Inspectors spoke with parents as they brought their children to school at the start of the school day.
- Inspectors also took account of the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaires for staff and pupils.

### **Inspection team**

Pat Speed, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Vicky Briggs

Ofsted Inspector

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