

Inspection of a good school: St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Christchurch

Dorset Road, Somerford, Christchurch, Dorset BH23 3DA

Inspection dates:

19 and 20 June 2024

Outcome

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Christchurch continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Community is at the heart of this nurturing and caring school. Pupils live out the school's vision to 'let your light shine' through their day-to-day interactions with one another and with adults. Pupils are polite, kind and caring. They have impeccable manners and treat adults with the utmost respect. Relationships between adults and pupils are positive. Pupils feel happy, safe and valued.

The school has high expectations and aspirations for all pupils. Pupils meet these expectations well. There is a purposeful and calm learning atmosphere, which begins in Reception Year. Children understand and consistently follow the routines that are in place. Older pupils model these well. They demonstrate 'fantastic walking' as they move around the school. During playtimes and lunchtimes, pupils of all ages play together harmoniously. This makes it an enjoyable experience for all.

The school provides a broad range of opportunities for pupils' wider development. Pupils enjoy representing the school in many local competitions, including tag rugby, handball and golf. They talk enthusiastically about the 'phizzlab' that science ambassadors organise as well as the recent residential trips for Years 5 and 6. All of this helps to build pupils' character and confidence.

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

The school has designed a broad and ambitious curriculum. Opportunities to enrich pupils' learning are carefully considered. The school has identified the important knowledge that pupils need to learn in most curriculum subjects. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are at the forefront of the curriculum design. Teachers adapt learning effectively for these pupils. Additional 'scaffolds' and adults' swift intervention help all pupils to progress well through the intended curriculum.

Reading is at the front and centre of the curriculum. The school has purposefully created a reading spine that opens pupils' minds to the wider world. Older pupils enjoy reading

and know that it is an important life skill. They strive to achieve the bronze, silver and gold reading badges, which motivates them to read on a regular basis at home. The importance of books and reading is interwoven throughout the school. The newly refurbished library, as well as interesting book corners in classrooms, keeps the reading profile high. Pupils in the early stages of reading learn phonics from the moment they start school. Skilled adults deliver effective phonics lessons. The school quickly identifies pupils who are at risk of falling behind. It ensures that these pupils receive the additional support they need to catch up. Pupils read books that match the sounds they know. All of this helps pupils to develop as confident and fluent readers.

Assessment in reading and mathematics is well established and effective. The school uses 'in the moment' feedback to address misconceptions and it analyses and identifies strengths and gaps in pupils' knowledge. However, assessment in the wider curriculum is less well developed. The school does not have an accurate understanding of the gaps pupils have in their knowledge. As a result, some pupils find it difficult to recall previous learning. In art and design, for example, older pupils struggle to recall primary and secondary colours or explain how to create tone and mood.

Pupils are enthusiastic about their learning. This begins in Reception Year, where children are curious and inquisitive. Pupils are keen to share their ideas, and listen respectfully to one another. This means that pupils can learn without disruption. There is a strong work ethic in each classroom.

The school's values underpin pupils' wider development. Pupils work with the local community and other professional bodies to instil a safe and happy community. Pupils understand the importance of tolerance and difference. They talk about fundamental British values with confidence. They can explain the consequences when the 'rule of law' gets broken. Pupils have a mature understanding about healthy relationships and the attributes needed to be a good friend. They learn about personal space and the importance of permission. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe in the locality as well as when online.

Pupils have many opportunities to develop their leadership skills. House captains, library keepers and sports leaders are passionate about the roles and responsibilities they hold. This helps pupils to develop a sense of self-belief and ambition.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Assessment in some wider curriculum subjects is not precise enough to check that pupils have remembered the knowledge they have been taught. As a result, some pupils have gaps in their learning and do not build their knowledge well over time. The school needs to ensure that assessment is used to check on pupils' understanding effectively and use this information to inform future learning.

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 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 would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which 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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in February 2015.

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	113848
Local authority	Bournemouth, Christchurch & Poole
Inspection number	10322214
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	215
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Brigid Hincks
Headteacher	Elizabeth Rippon
Website	www.stjosephs.dorset.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	12 September 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school uses one unregistered alternative provider.
- St Joseph's is a Roman Catholic school within the Diocese of Portsmouth. At the most recent section 48 inspection of the school, carried out in June 2022, the school was judged to be good.
- The school has a breakfast club for pupils who attend this school.

Information about this inspection

- 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. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and art and design. For each deep dive, the inspector 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.

- The inspector also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects, including design and technology and science.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: 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 inspector listened to pupils from Years 1, 2 and 3 read to a familiar adult.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, subject leaders and representatives from the board of governors.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site. In addition, she met with pupils informally and formally to hear their views.
- The inspector considered responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text responses. The inspector also took into consideration responses to the staff survey.

Inspection team

Wendy D'Arcy, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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