

Inspection of St Joseph's Catholic Academy

Armadale Drive, Leicester, Leicestershire LE5 1HF

Inspection dates: 10 and 11 May 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud of their school. They embrace and follow the school's mission to 'love, learn, respect and forgive'. Leaders and staff have high expectations and are determined that all pupils achieve well. They provide a warm and caring environment where pupils thrive and flourish.

Pupils enjoy coming to school. They play and work together happily and show genuine kindness to others. Classrooms are calm and pupils are keen to learn. They talk enthusiastically about their lessons and take pride in their work.

Pupils know what to do if bullying happens. Staff deal with any issues quickly and fairly. Pupils learn about healthy relationships and how to keep themselves safe. They show respect for each other and their teachers. Pupils say that 'we are all equal here'.

Pupils contribute to improving their community. They raise money for charity. School councillors have worked to change the traffic flow around school. 'Eco warriors' plant the garden and help other pupils to know how to care for the environment.

Parents speak positively about the improvements they see at the school. They make comments such as: 'I cannot be thankful enough for all the extra work and help the teachers have given my child.'

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

Leaders have worked determinedly to improve the school. They have designed an ambitious curriculum which excites and motivates pupils.

Leaders have thought carefully about what pupils will know and learn in each subject. Detailed plans show how the new things pupils learn build on what they already know and can do. Leaders provide teachers with regular training and support so they know what to teach and how. This means that pupils gain the knowledge and skills they need. Some subject leaders have benefited from high-quality training. Not all foundation subject leaders have had the same level of support for their role.

Science, mathematics and design and technology are strengths of the curriculum. Leaders in these subjects have designed activities that regularly revisit and check what pupils remember and understand. This enables teachers to plan the next steps and identify any extra support that pupils may need. However, leaders have not planned this as well in all subjects.

The school fosters a love of reading. Pupils can talk about different authors and books they have read. They say that they love reading. Leaders have prioritised reading from the very start. Teachers use a consistent approach to teach phonics

from the early years. They make sure that pupils who struggle to read get support to help them keep up. The books pupils take home are well matched to the sounds they are learning. This enables them to practise these sounds at home as well as at school.

Mathematics is taught well across the school. Teachers receive training to develop their subject knowledge and learn how to support pupils effectively. Pupils' knowledge and understanding increase steadily over time. Pupils have frequent opportunities to solve problems and explain their reasoning.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported effectively. Well-trained staff adapt plans for these pupils so that they can access an ambitious curriculum. This means they achieve well in a wide range of subjects.

Children get off to a good start in the early years. They settle quickly into school life. The classroom and the outdoor area offer a calm and focused learning environment. Children benefit from a range of well-planned activities. They get lots of opportunities to practise their early mathematical skills and knowledge. Children respond confidently to the many challenges they are offered.

Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They are polite and respectful towards each other and visitors. Pupils readily volunteer for jobs. For example, older pupils accompany the youngest ones to lunch. Leaders ensure that pupils understand fundamental British values and how to be a good citizen. Pupils learn about different beliefs. They can explain their understanding well.

There is a strong, committed staff team. Staff value the opportunities they receive to improve their skills and subject knowledge. Leaders carefully consider the workload and well-being of staff. Staff feel that leaders listen to them.

Governors, school and trust staff work well together to ensure that pupils get the best possible deal. They know the school and the community it serves very well. Governors and trustees provide effective challenge and support to leaders.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding. Staff are well trained and alert to any signs that pupils may be at risk of harm. Leaders act quickly when concerns are reported. They work closely with external agencies to ensure that pupils and their families get the support they need.

Leaders have carefully planned many opportunities for pupils to learn how to keep themselves safe, including when online. Pupils learn how to maintain physical and mental health. They appreciate the help they get with their emotional literacy.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders recognise that planning in some foundation subjects is not as detailed as it is in others. In these subjects, leaders have not thought carefully enough about how to check that pupils have secured their knowledge. This means leaders cannot be sure that pupils know and remember more over time. Leaders should ensure that they implement the plans they have already made to address this.
- The leadership of some foundation subjects is not consistently strong. Some subject leaders do not have sufficient knowledge and skills to carry out their roles as effectively as others. They do not have a detailed understanding of what is working well and what needs to improve in their area of responsibility. Leaders should ensure that all subject leaders have the support they need to be able to carry out their roles effectively.

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.

If you are the school and 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

Unique reference number	138115
Local authority	Leicester
Inspection number	10227384
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	252
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Sarah Noon
Headteacher	Clair Dedman
Website	www.st-josephs.leicester.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	25 and 26 September 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is a Catholic Voluntary Academy. A section 48 inspection of the school's religious character took place on 6 April 2022.
- The headteacher took up post in August 2020.
- The chair of governors took up post in September 2021.

Information about this inspection

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

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, the assistant headteacher, the special educational needs coordinator, curriculum leaders and groups of staff.

- The lead inspector spoke with three members of the local governing body, including the chair, and four representatives of the St Thomas Aquinas Catholic Multi Academy Trust, including the CEO and the chair of the board of trustees.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, science and design technology. For each deep dive, inspectors visited lessons, looked at curriculum planning, reviewed pupils' work and spoke with pupils and teachers about their lessons. The lead inspector also listened to pupils read with a teacher.
- Inspectors also looked at curriculum plans for other subjects.
- A wide range of documents was scrutinised, including those relating to governance, safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors reviewed the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including free text responses. Inspectors also spoke with parents at the start of the school day.

Inspection team

Joanne Sanchez-Thompson, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Gary Fullwood	Ofsted Inspector
Peter Johnston	Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2022