

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Green Lane, Rawmarsh, Rotherham, South Yorkshire S62 6JY

Inspection dates

11–12 September 2018

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders have been very effective in making rapid improvements to the school in a short period of time. Improvements to training and systems have led to greatly improved teaching, which has led to much better outcomes for pupils.
- Pupils make good progress from their starting points in reading, writing and mathematics. This is the case for different groups of pupils, including those who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities. It is also true for disadvantaged pupils.
- Due to stronger progress, attainment has improved significantly since the last inspection. Attainment is now in line with or above the national averages in reading, writing and mathematics for different groups of pupils.
- Teaching meets the needs of different groups of pupils well, thanks to accurate and rigorous assessment of pupils and teachers' use of this information to plan lessons.
- Pupils feel safe and well cared for in school. Pupils' conduct is strong and most demonstrate positive attitudes to learning.
- Governors have been committed to supporting improvement and have undertaken a review of their own work to ensure they are effective in their roles. Consequently, they understand the school well and they support and challenge leaders well, contributing to much stronger provision in school.
- The early years is a strength of the school. From lower than typical starting points, children make at least good progress and are well prepared for Year 1, and beyond, because of this.
- Teaching engages pupils well, especially girls. At times, a small minority of boys need a reminder to remain on task and to follow instructions. However, they respond positively to teachers' reminders.
- The curriculum has improved since the last inspection and there is now real depth and breadth to the teaching and learning across different subject areas, including science, history and geography.
- Pupils have a good understanding of British values and demonstrate these throughout their learning and other activities. However, there are missed opportunities for pupils to learn about different faiths in more depth.
- The school has worked effectively to improve attendance, yet it is still lower than average. Persistent absenteeism has also been reduced but remains higher than average.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that teachers engage all boys effectively in learning so that they stay on task and do not need reminders to do so.
- Make sure opportunities for pupils to learn about different faiths are fully embedded into the curriculum so that pupils develop a deeper understanding.
- Improve attendance so that it is at least in line with the national average and ensure that the number of pupils who are regularly absent reduces.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Since the executive headteacher took over the school, there has been a significant improvement in teaching and in pupils' outcomes. Leaders at all levels have a clear understanding of their role and teachers understand leaders' vision for the school.
- New systems for checking the quality of teaching and how well pupils are doing have led to better training for all staff. Teachers have access to resources that help them to plan activities that closely match the needs of pupils.
- The close relationship enjoyed between this school and its partner school has given teachers the opportunity to work with other skilled colleagues and to share good practice in terms of resources and planning. This has contributed to much better teaching and outcomes for pupils, especially in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Staff appraisal ensures that teachers understand their targets clearly and can access training to help them meet their targets. The system ensures that all staff are focused on improving classroom practices and resources to ensure that pupils' needs are met. This helps pupils to make good progress over time.
- Assessment of pupils is regular and is used by leaders and teachers carefully to ensure that pupils' achievement is well understood. This information enables leaders to plan extra support for pupils where achievement is not good enough. The accuracy and rigour of the system have led to better outcomes for pupils.
- Previously, the achievement of disadvantaged pupils lagged behind that of their peers, and gaps between these groups' attainment and progress have been wider than seen nationally. Leaders' efforts to diminish these gaps have been very effective and the progress of these pupils has increased significantly. This means that disadvantaged pupils' attainment has increased. They are now much better prepared for their next stage in learning. Funding received to support disadvantaged pupils is well spent and has a positive effect on pupils' learning and development.
- The leadership of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is a strength of the school. These pupils have a range of needs and some are very complex. Leaders have a very clear understanding of these needs and how to overcome pupils' learning barriers. Leaders communicate very well with all staff so that pupils' needs are met closely in the classroom and therefore make good progress over time.
- The curriculum has improved since the last inspection. Reading, writing and mathematics are now well taught, and this allows pupils to make much better progress. These skills are reinforced well throughout the wider curriculum, which contributes to the better progress and attainment that pupils are achieving. Other subjects such as science, history and geography are also well taught and provide pupils with a wide range of skills, as well as a real enjoyment of learning. Pupils' oral communication skills are central to learning, with a significant focus on pupils using full sentences and correct terminology when speaking.
- The curriculum also enhances pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding effectively. Pupils study different topics which include learning about different countries and cultures around the world. Opportunities to learn about music, art and sport

traditions from around the world, for example, are skilfully woven through the curriculum.

- Leaders have invested the primary school sports and physical education (PE) funding in buying more equipment for pupils to use in PE lessons, during playtime and in after-school clubs. They have also employed a specialist sports coach to run extra-curricular sport and to support teachers in their teaching of PE.
- Parents have a positive view of the school. They report that their children are safe and happy in the school, and that staff are approachable and care about their children. They believe that behaviour is a strength of the school. In addition, they state that when their children need extra help or care the pastoral support offered is excellent and often involves the whole family, where necessary.
- The local authority has worked with the school, as well as the diocese, to ensure the school is well led and managed. All parties have worked together to bring about much stronger leadership which, in turn, has led to much improved teaching and outcomes.
- Pupils have a deep understanding of their own faith. They are also regularly taught about other faiths. However, pupils do not demonstrate a deep enough understanding of other faiths. Nevertheless, pupils do have a clear understanding of British values and show this in all they do, from their respectful treatment of each other to their keen interest in learning about the world around them.

Governance of the school

- Governance has improved since the last inspection. Within the past year, governors have undertaken a review of their work. Following this, governors have responded effectively to the recommendations of the review and are now much clearer on their role and how to support and challenge leaders appropriately.
- Governors understand how the funding for disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities is spent. They challenge leaders to ensure that spending has a positive impact on these pupils and this helps leaders to develop their work. Such funding is spent well.
- Governors ensure that staff, as well as governors, are trained in key areas so that pupils are safe and safeguarded in school. They understand their responsibilities in this area and adhere to statutory requirements.
- Governors work with leaders to ensure there is a rigorous and fair appraisal system in place for staff. This includes ensuring that staff receive appropriate training and are held to account for the progress of pupils.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Checks are made on all staff and governors, as well as visitors to the school. The checks include staff's suitability to work with children, and their qualifications.
- Leaders ensure all staff are regularly trained so that they understand their responsibilities in keeping children safe. This means that staff can identify the signs when a child is at risk and know what to do if a child discloses a concern. There are

also very highly trained safeguarding officers in school who take a lead when risks are identified.

- The school liaises positively with a range of external agencies so it can seek the best advice when a concern is raised.
- Parents and pupils understand what to do if they are worried about a pupil's safety. There is a wealth of information for parents, staff and pupils around the school and on the website to help them if they have a concern.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching is now good, and this represents a significant improvement since the last inspection. New systems for monitoring teaching have led to a better understanding of how teaching can be improved. This means training is now more pertinent to staff. In turn, classroom practices have been strengthened and now meet pupils' needs well, supporting better outcomes. This is the case for different groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils.
- Teaching of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is strong. These pupils' needs are well communicated between leaders, teachers and teaching assistants. This ensures that activities are well planned and means these pupils can access the learning and are well challenged, so that they make good progress from their starting points.
- Teachers use assessment information well, and can identify where pupils need extra support and where they are ready to move on more quickly. They plan activities which are engaging and which support different groups of pupils' needs well. At times, a small proportion of boys take longer to start tasks than girls. This can be because they do not always listen to instructions the first time. This can also lead to some overly boisterous behaviour by a small proportion of boys when they leave the classroom and are on the playground. However, when reminded of the expectations both inside and outside the classroom, these pupils respond positively.
- Mathematics is well taught. A new approach to teaching mathematics was implemented 12 months ago, which allows pupils to practise, regularly, their key skills and apply them in a range of ways. This allows pupils to deepen their understanding of mathematics and to use their skills in a range of situations. Pupils' progress has improved and is now good.
- Phonics is taught well. This has led to pupils learning their letters and sounds very quickly, which supports their general reading skills. This helps pupils to develop an enjoyment and passion for reading from an early age, as well as providing the opportunity to read a range of authors and genres. Consequently, pupils develop both a strong understanding of different themes and a wide-ranging vocabulary. Reading outcomes have improved as a result.
- Pupils have regular opportunities to write at length in a range of styles. Writing is brought into the wider curriculum on a regular basis, allowing pupils to practise their skills. Teachers also give pupils advice on their writing. For example, they suggest ways in which pupils could develop their sentence structure or use language that is more sophisticated. Over time, this leads to pupils improving their writing and making good progress.

- Teaching assistants work well with pupils. They support pupils of all abilities and, like teachers, understand the needs of different groups of pupils well. As such, they support pupils to access their learning and to work increasingly independently.
- All adults model good English to pupils. All adults see their role as one of supporting pupils to develop their oral communication skills. As such, they are insistent that pupils speak in full sentences, use correct English and use specialist terminology wherever possible. They often push pupils to articulate reasons and evidence for their answer.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe in various situations, including when using their bike or playing in the local community. They also know how to keep themselves safe and what to do if they are worried about anything when using the internet.
- Pupils and parents report that bullying is rare. School records support this view. Pupils state that when bullying does occur they know to report it to an adult and that staff always take the matter seriously. This means that issues do not persist.
- Pupils have access to a strong PE curriculum, as well as a variety of extra-curricular sporting activities. This helps them to stay active and understand the importance of keeping fit and healthy. Pupils also learn about the importance of eating a healthy and balanced diet. School dinners are tasty and healthy, according to pupils. The large majority of pupils choose to have a school dinner.
- Pupils are safe and feel safe. They can say why this is. A few pupils reported that occasionally, when behaviour is too boisterous in the playground, they feel less safe. However, they are confident that they know to tell an adult, who deals with any issues immediately and effectively. Parents agree that their children are happy and safe at school.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Since the previous inspection, pupils' attitudes to learning in class have improved. Pupils now conduct themselves well. They consistently respond well to teachers' advice about how to improve their work. This shows that they want to do their best and have good attitudes to learning.
- Learning is largely engaging. At times, however, a small minority of boys need reminders to remain on task and to follow instructions. For a few, this can also sometimes impact on their conduct when they are in the playground. At times, a small number of boys are overly boisterous and need reminders to behave calmly. They respond well to these reminders.
- Attendance is now improving. Leaders have engaged with parents who find it difficult to get their children to school on time and on a regular basis. This work has been

effective in improving attendance overall and in reducing the number of pupils who are persistently absent. However, attendance remains lower than average and too many pupils are still regularly absent.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Since the previous inspection, outcomes have improved considerably. Pupils now make good progress from their starting points. All groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, boys and girls, and those who have SEN and/or disabilities, achieve well across all key stages.
- Historical, published information indicates that by the end of key stage 2 pupils made too little progress from their starting points in reading, writing and mathematics. Standards of attainment by the end of Year 6 in 2017 were below average. However, provisional results from national tests and assessments of Year 6 pupils in 2018 indicate that standards have risen considerably and are similar to, or above, the 2018 provisional national average. This represents good progress. Furthermore, school assessment information and inspection evidence, such as work seen in pupils' books, demonstrate that, across the year groups currently in key stage 2, pupils are making good progress. Standards of attainment are now rising quickly.
- The progress of disadvantaged pupils has significantly improved since the previous inspection. They have gained ground across all areas of the curriculum, leading to much better attainment in reading, writing and mathematics. This means that previous gaps between these pupils' progress and attainment and that of others have diminished greatly. They are now much better prepared for their next stage of learning.
- Most-able pupils make good progress. Since the last inspection, there has been a focused effort to ensure these pupils are well challenged. They are given the chance to access more-complex activities to allow them to reach higher standards in reading, writing and mathematics. At key stage 2, these pupils have achieved well. Furthermore, in key stage 1, provisional school outcomes indicate that the proportion of pupils reaching greater depth in 2018 has risen considerably and is higher than the proportion that did so nationally in 2017.
- Outcomes in mathematics are strong and have improved well since the last inspection. Pupils practise speed in using number, which helps them when they tackle problem-solving activities. They also reinforce their mathematical skills in subjects such as science and geography, which contributes to the good progress they make.
- Outcomes in phonics are good. Pupils secure their knowledge of letters and sounds quickly and a high proportion pass the phonics screening check at the end of Year 1 and Year 2. This means they are well prepared to develop more-complex reading skills from an early age. This has led to improved outcomes in reading at both key stages 1 and 2.
- Writing outcomes have improved and are now good. Pupils regularly practise their skills in different areas of the curriculum. Pupils often focus their efforts on improving their writing, using better vocabulary and restructuring their sentences to make them clearer. Such work has led to rapid progress in writing. School assessment information

and inspection evidence indicate that current levels of attainment in key stages 1 and 2 are high.

Early years provision

Good

- In general, children enter the Reception class with levels of development which are typically lower than what is expected for their age. For some, their speaking and listening skills are particularly low. From these starting points, an average proportion of children achieve a good level of development. A higher than average proportion exceed this level. This represents good and, for some, rapid progress.
- The proportion of children reaching a good level of development by the end of Reception has increased consistently each year since the last inspection, meaning that children are increasingly well prepared for learning in Year 1. This is the case across all learning areas, including reading, writing and mathematics. It is also the case for different groups of children, including disadvantaged children and those who have SEN and/or disabilities.
- As in the rest of the school, adults in the early years are skilled in developing children's confidence and accuracy in communicating orally. This supports the children's rapid development in phonics, which, in turn, helps their reading and writing development.
- The leadership of the early years is strong. This is seen in various areas, including the work adults do to ensure there is a smooth transition from the children's pre-school. Children quickly develop positive and trusting relationships when they arrive at school. This helps them to access learning.
- Children quickly understand and follow the established routines because they are well reinforced. This means they move between activities calmly and learning time is not wasted. As a result, children conduct themselves very well and quickly demonstrate positive attitudes to learning.
- Adults generally work well with the children because assessment is regular and rigorous and gives adults a clear understanding of children's needs. At times, some adults do not take the initiative to support children as skilfully as others, and this can mean learning time is lost and opportunities to challenge the children are missed.
- Parents are very positive about the provision and report that their children settle quickly and enjoy school. They state that adults are very caring and always take the time to speak to them about their child's day. Parents feel that adults are approachable and always keen to know what the children like to do at home, so they can engage children in the classroom. Parents receive a lot of information about how their children are doing at school.
- The learning environment is vibrant and well planned, with lots of opportunities for children to develop across all learning areas. Activities are situated inside and outside so that children have a choice about how and where to learn.
- Transition into Year 1 is largely strong. Children are well prepared, thanks to the good progress they make in Reception. However, some of the Year 1 routines and expectations are not well known to the children when they move into Year 1, which can initially slow their progress at the start of the year.

- Safeguarding is effective, and the statutory welfare requirements are in place and met properly.

School details

Unique reference number	106944
Local authority	Rotherham
Inspection number	10052878

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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	189
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Catherine Ratcliffe
Headteacher	Helen McLaughlin (executive headteacher)
Telephone number	01709 710270
Website	www.rawmarshstjosephs.co.uk/
Email address	school@rawmarshstjosephs.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	6–7 July 2016

Information about this school

- This is a smaller than average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below average.
- A much higher than average proportion of pupils are disadvantaged.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is well above average. The proportion of pupils who have an education, health and care plan is average.
- Children start school in the Reception class on a full-time basis.
- The executive headteacher took up her post in September 2017.
- The school works in partnership with Our Lady's and St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Wath, which is also led by the executive headteacher.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in a range of lessons and scrutinised work in pupils' books.
- Inspectors observed and spoke with pupils during lessons and at break time. They also met formally with two groups of pupils.
- Inspectors heard pupils read from Year 2 and Year 6.
- Inspectors observed pupils during assembly.
- Meetings were held with senior and middle leaders. Meetings also took place with members of the governing body, a representative from the local authority and a representative from the diocese.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documents, including the school's arrangements for safeguarding, performance management procedures, leaders' monitoring documentation, leaders' reports to governors and pupils' attendance and behaviour information. They also looked at the school's assessment information showing pupils' attainment and progress over time.
- The inspectors considered the views of parents through the 50 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. They also spoke to a range of parents as they brought their children to school. They took into account the 29 parent responses to the online questionnaire.

Inspection team

Fiona McNally, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Natasha Greenough

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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