

Inspection of St Joseph's Catholic Voluntary Academy

Chesterfield Road, Matlock, Derbyshire DE4 3FT

Inspection dates: 17–18 September 2019

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

What is it like to attend this school?

There is a warm, welcoming and caring atmosphere throughout this school. The staff encourage all pupils to aim high and do their best, both in lessons and in their personal development. Pupils do well in English and mathematics and support is readily available to those who need it. Classrooms are bright and well organised, and the outdoor spaces are exceptionally attractive. Pupils told us that they enjoy school. They said that 'Our teachers help us, and they are kind.' Pupils describe behaviour at this school as good, with hardly any bullying, and we agree. Teachers are quick to sort out any poor behaviour, both in lessons and during playtimes. We found that pupils are enthusiastic about learning new things because the lessons are interesting and easy to understand. Staff, parents and carers believe that the school has changed 'dramatically' since the last inspection. A typical comment from a parent summed up the positive changes that have taken place: 'My child is happy, safe and doing extremely well in all subjects.'

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

Leaders and staff are providing a good quality of education for pupils. Over the past year, there has been a strong focus on English and mathematics. This has led to rapid improvements in both subjects.

Teachers in all year groups make reading a high priority for pupils. In the younger classes, pupils begin taking part in well-organised, daily phonics sessions as soon as they start school. Staff are confident in teaching early reading because they have been well trained to do so. Most pupils quickly learn to become confident readers. Staff step in to provide extra support for pupils who need it so that they catch up as soon as possible. In the older classes, teachers encourage pupils to develop a love of reading, providing a plentiful supply of well-chosen books for pupils to enjoy.

The teaching of mathematics is a strength of the school. The subject leader has a clear overview of what should be taught and when. Teachers follow well-structured plans that help pupils to gain secure knowledge and skills in mathematics. Teachers carefully assess what pupils know at the beginning and end of each unit of work. This means that teachers pick up on any misunderstandings quickly.

A range of whole-school topics has been launched this year, in which the learning is planned so that pupils build a better, richer store of knowledge as they progress through the school. Physical education (PE), history and science are all subjects that are taught well. It is clear from the actions that leaders have already taken that they are making similar improvements across all other subjects.

Leaders and staff have high expectations for pupils' behaviour. There is a calm, well-ordered atmosphere throughout the school, both in lessons and at breaktimes. Pupils cooperate well in lessons, showing interest and enjoyment in their learning.

All staff take a keen interest in supporting pupils' personal development and their physical and mental health. For example, the 'sunshine group' nurture provision is available for pupils with particular needs. Leaders and staff prepare pupils thoughtfully for life in modern Britain through their school values. These are embodied in the six 'Golden Skills' that are well known to all. Pupils were keen to explain how this helps them to understand and appreciate respect and tolerance. They say, 'It's OK to be different here.'

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive good support which is well matched to their needs. Parents told us that they are very happy with the support and teaching that their children with SEND receive.

The multi-academy trust, and governors, provide effective leadership of the school. They fulfil their statutory obligations well and consider parent views and staff workload.

The experienced early years leader gives expert guidance to staff about how to plan activities that will meet the needs of all children. There is a clear focus on reading, phonics and mathematics so that children get off to a strong start in these important subjects. Children in the early years are safe and well cared for. During our lesson visits, we found that children did not always respond to instructions from new members of staff. This was because clear expectations and routines had not been set. At times, this hindered their ability to make best use of the good-quality activities on offer.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Recruitment procedures meet statutory requirements. There is a strong culture of safeguarding at the school, which is echoed in the positive views of pupils and parents. Concerns, however minor, are never ignored. All staff follow thorough guidance for recording and following up any concerns that may arise. Leaders work professionally with other agencies to ensure that support is in place for pupils and families when it is needed. Pupils receive regular teaching about how to keep themselves safe, including when online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders' work to ensure that the curriculum is coherently planned and sequenced is not fully established for all foundation subjects. Plans for English, mathematics, PE, history and science are complete. However, other subjects are yet to be revised. A timetable is in place for this to be achieved by the end of this academic year. There is good capacity, judging by the impact of the actions already taken by leaders and the multi-academy trust, for this work to be brought to a

successful conclusion. For that reason, the transitional arrangements for curriculum intent have been applied in this case.

- Staff who are new to the early years foundation stage require further support from leaders to become fully effective in their role. This is to ensure that routines for children are established quickly and the carefully planned curriculum and purposeful activities are used as they are intended, to support children's learning and development.

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 Ofsted Parent View information 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 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	142827
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	10110030
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	112
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Jacqueline Rodden
Headteacher	Katherine Chadbourne
Executive headteacher	Tracey Churchill
Website	www.saintjosephsschool-matlock.co.uk/
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- St Joseph's Catholic Voluntary Academy is a Roman Catholic primary school.
- The school has been part of the St Ralph Sherwin Catholic Multi-academy Trust since 1 September 2018.
- The acting executive headteacher has been in post from February 2019. The acting head of school was appointed to her position in September 2019. She was previously assistant headteacher at the school.
- The school provides before- and after-school care managed by leaders of the school, under the responsibility of the multi-academy trust.

Information about this inspection

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

- Inspectors met with the executive headteacher, the acting head of school, the assistant headteacher and a range of curriculum leaders.

- The lead inspector met with the chair of the multi-academy trust and the chief executive officer. The lead inspector met with other representatives of the trust and held a telephone conversation with a member of the local governing body.
- The following subjects were evaluated in depth: reading, mathematics, PE and history. This involved speaking with curriculum leaders, teachers and pupils, examining planning documents and pupils' books, and carrying out lesson visits.
- We inspected safeguarding by speaking with leaders, staff and pupils, and reviewing documents, policies and the school's systems for recording concerns. We reviewed the school's system for carrying out checks on the suitability of staff to work with children.
- We evaluated a wide range of subjects and visited lessons across the school, including in the early years foundation stage.
- We inspected pupils' behaviour and attitudes by speaking with staff and pupils and observing pupils' behaviour in lessons and around school. We met with leaders to discuss bullying, attendance and exclusions.
- We inspected the school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare. We evaluated how well pupils are prepared for life in modern Britain.
- We inspected the quality of leadership and management by meeting with leaders and those responsible for governance, paying regard to views expressed in Ofsted's online surveys.
- We inspected the quality of education provided for children in the early years foundation stage.

Inspection team

Christine Watkins, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Sarah Fielding

Ofsted Inspector

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