

# Inspection of St John's Catholic Primary School

Innage Gardens, Bridgnorth, Shropshire WV16 4HW

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Inspection dates: 10 and 11 July 2024

## **Overall effectiveness**

## **Requires improvement**

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The quality of education

**Requires improvement**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Good**

Personal development

**Good**

Leadership and management

**Requires improvement**

Early years provision

**Good**

Previous inspection grade

Good

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

There is a strong family ethos at St John's Catholic Primary School. Staff know pupils well and relationships between pupils and staff are warm. This means that pupils enjoy being part of the school community. The school wants all pupils to succeed. However, some of the recent improvements have yet to have the impact the school intends.

The school ensures that pupils benefit from a wide range of activities which develop their interests and build character. Pupils relish the range of roles and responsibilities they take on. For example, pupils benefit from leadership opportunities by taking on positions such as school councillors, faith leaders, house captains and sports leaders. All pupils have the opportunity to represent the school at sporting events.

Pupils are courteous to one another and to adults. They speak with confidence and are eager to share their views. There is a calm, harmonious atmosphere around the school. Pupils know that staff will help them with any worries they might have. Bullying rarely happens and is not tolerated. This means that pupils feel safe in school.

Pupils said that the best thing about school is that 'you will always be treated fairly and with respect'. Parents speak positively about the recent changes.

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

The school has experienced turbulence since the previous inspection, including changes to leadership. The school has subsequently implemented necessary improvements. Some of the recent changes are already proving fruitful.

The school has rightly identified what to focus on in order to improve the quality of education. The key knowledge that pupils need to know and remember in each subject is clearly identified. Learning is ordered logically so that pupils can build on what they already know and can do. Where this is working well, for example in mathematics, pupils are able to draw on their understanding of mathematical concepts. In Year 6, pupils are keen to apply their knowledge of percentages when learning real-life mathematics relating to taxation. Staff know the pupils well and effective support helps all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), to access the same learning. However, where there have been recent changes in subject leadership, there is less security in how well the curriculum is being implemented. This means, in some subjects, the school does not know if the curriculum is being delivered as intended.

There are some small inconsistencies in the teaching of phonics. Some phonics teaching is not always sharply focused on what children need to learn. Pupils falling behind are quickly identified. However, support for these pupils is not always effective in ensuring that they catch up quickly enough. Pupils enjoy learning to

read, but the books they practise with are not always matched well to the sounds they know. As a result, some pupils, including those who find reading more challenging, do not learn to read as effectively as they could.

The early years curriculum builds children's understanding in small steps, preparing them well for key stage 1. The early years environment is vibrant and stimulating. Children engage well in free-flow and structured activities. Children especially like singing along with nursery rhymes and taking part in dancing activities. This supports their physical development and communication and language skills. Children in the early years make good progress from their starting points.

Behaviour in classrooms and across school is calm. Pupils have positive attitudes to their learning. They enjoy sharing their achievements in assemblies. Pupils are encouraged to make positive choices through the school's values and rewards systems. Pupils particularly enjoy outdoor social times. They experience a wide range of exciting activities, such as lunchtime hula hooping and dancing led by staff.

Pupils are taught how to stay safe online and how to keep themselves physically and mentally healthy. They learn about caring for themselves and others and how to build healthy relationships. The school makes sure that all pupils, including pupils with SEND and pupils who are disadvantaged, take part in trips and visits.

At times, the school does not have a clear enough understanding of what is working well and what is less effective. This includes using information about attendance, some minor safeguarding processes and the evaluation of some subjects within the curriculum.

Staff value the recent focus on developing their subject knowledge and the priority being given to their workload. Staff are proud to work at the school.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

While pupils are safe at this school, inspectors identified where some minor improvements in the safeguarding arrangements could be made. Pupils feel safe at school. They can explain how to keep themselves safe online and offline. They know to tell a trusted adult if something concerns them. Staff receive regular training to help them to identify pupils who may be at risk of harm. However, sometimes records or incidents related to safeguarding are not logged as carefully as they could be. A few aspects of the school's safeguarding procedures are not checked thoroughly.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- Some phonics teaching is not focused sharply enough on what children need to

learn. The support for pupils who have fallen behind is not always effective. Some reading books do not always match pupils' phonics knowledge. As a result, some pupils, including those who find reading more challenging, do not learn to read as effectively as they could. The school should ensure that the phonics scheme is implemented consistently, support for pupils falling behind is effective and the books pupils read always match the sounds they are learning.

- The school does not always know what is working well or where improvements need to be made, including in some minor safeguarding processes. As a result, the school does not have a precise enough view of how well some actions are being delivered. The school should ensure that effective evaluation of systems is in place to ensure that the school understands its effectiveness better and continues to drive forward with improvements.
- In some subjects, the school does not check the implementation of the curriculum carefully enough. This means that leaders do not know whether the curriculum is always being implemented as intended. The school should continue to develop subject leadership so that curriculum implementation matches the vision for high-quality education in all subject areas.

## 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>	123551
<b>Local authority</b>	Shropshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10322771
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 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>	Edward Beards
<b>Headteacher</b>	Christina Derwas
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.sjrc.co.uk">www.sjrc.co.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	7 and 8 March 2023, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

## Information about this school

- There has been a change in leadership since the previous inspection. The headteacher, who was previously acting headteacher, has been in the role since July 2024.
- St John's Catholic Primary School is a voluntary-aided school with a Christian ethos.
- The school's last section 48 inspection was in March 2018. Section 48 inspections were suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic. They restarted in September 2021. The next inspection will be within eight years of the last section 48 inspection.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school runs on-site breakfast and after-school clubs.

## 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.

- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- During the inspection, the inspectors carried out deep dives into these subjects: reading, mathematics, history and physical education. For each deep dive, the inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans where they were available, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at a sample of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also considered the curriculum in science, modern foreign languages, art and design and English. Inspectors viewed curriculum plans and a sample of pupils' work in these subjects.
- The lead inspector listened to some pupils read to a familiar adult.
- The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour during lessons, around the school and at lunchtime. The inspector spoke to pupils about pupils' behaviour.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and subject leaders, teachers and support staff. Inspectors met with the leaders with responsibility for pupils with SEND, behaviour, attendance and personal development.
- 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 examined a range of school documentation, including leaders' self-evaluation and the school development plan, as well as documentation relating to disadvantaged pupils, pupils with SEND, behaviour, attendance and governance.
- The lead inspector met with governors, including the chair of the governing body. She also spoke with a representative of the local authority and a representative from the diocese.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and considered the results of the Ofsted staff survey and pupil survey.
- An inspector talked to parents and families at the school gate.

### **Inspection team**

Carli Mccallin, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Susan Hughes

Ofsted Inspector

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