

Inspection of St Joseph's Roman Catholic Primary School, Stacksteads, Bacup

Huttock End Lane, Stacksteads, Bacup, Lancashire OL13 8LD

Inspection dates: 5 and 6 April 2022

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

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are very happy at St Joseph's Catholic Primary School. They are courteous and well-mannered. Pupils explained that sometimes boys and girls fall out and disagree. However, pupils also said that adults deal with any incidents of poor behaviour or bullying swiftly so that they are not repeated.

Relationships between pupils and staff are positive and supportive. Pupils appreciate that they can share their concerns with adults who will listen to them. This helps pupils to feel safe in school. Pupils are very confident that adults treat all pupils fairly.

Pupils understand the school rules. They know how to behave well in school. Children in the early years learn to follow these rules exceptionally well from their earliest days in the Nursery class. This supports their excellent achievement during their time in the early years. Pupils try their best to live up to leaders' high expectations of behaviour. Pupils follow the school mission and strive to be the best versions of themselves that they can be. Pupils gain the knowledge that they need to be successful in the next stage of their education.

Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), enjoy taking part in the different clubs and activities. Many take on a range of additional responsibilities. For example, pupils can become a well-being warrior, a librarian, a mathematics ambassador or a playground pal.

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

Leaders have used the support and challenge provided by governors to ensure that all pupils benefit from an ambitious and interesting curriculum. As a result, pupils achieve well.

Leaders make sure that teachers quickly identify any additional needs, including SEND, that pupils may have. This is apparent in the early years and through the high levels of support given to the many pupils who join the school mid-year across the various age groups. Leaders have effective systems in place to support pupils with SEND. Pupils with SEND access the same curriculum as their classmates and achieve well.

Over time, leaders have carefully developed the curriculums for key stages 1 and 2. They have considered the important knowledge and skills that they want pupils to learn and remember. In most subjects, these curriculums are well established. Teachers use assessment systems well to check that pupils have achieved well. That said, in a small number of subjects, leaders have made recent changes to the curriculums because they recognised that pupils were not achieving as well as they could. Teachers are in the early stages of delivering new subject content. This means that, at times, pupils' knowledge is not as secure as leaders intend.

The curriculum offered at St Joseph's is built firmly on the skills and knowledge that children acquire in the early years. Children in the early years get off to the best possible start. Leaders have carefully considered children's individual starting points. The well-organised curriculum supports children exceptionally well to develop their basic skills in speech, number and social communication. As a result, children leave the early years as curious and independent learners. They are well prepared to take on the challenges of the key stage 1 curriculum.

The promotion of reading is a priority for leaders. All staff are trained to deliver a high-quality early reading and phonics curriculum effectively. Teachers introduce new sounds in a systematic order. This supports children in the early years and pupils in key stage 1 to build on the sounds that they know. Teachers identify pupils who are struggling to keep up with gaining phonics knowledge. Any pupil who falls behind receives timely support to help them to catch up. Leaders make sure that children and pupils take home books that enable them to practise the sounds that they learn in class. This helps pupils to read with accuracy and fluency.

Across the school, pupils show a determined attitude to learn. As a result, most pupils can get on with their learning without becoming distracted or interrupted. All pupils are supportive of one another. For example, in the early years, children help each other. They independently use language such as 'let me show you', without adult support.

Leaders provide many opportunities that promote pupils' personal development. Pupils develop their citizenships skills by collecting items for a local foodbank and raising funds for a local hospice. Pupils learn about other faiths and cultures. They understand the need to respect the views and opinions of others. Pupils have a deep understanding of fundamental British Values. They learn about the benefits of exercise and healthy diets.

Staff are very happy at the school. They appreciate the steps that leaders take to consider their workloads and well-being. Staff benefit from regular training that keeps their skills and knowledge up to date.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff receive regular and appropriate training to help them fulfil their safeguarding duties. Staff know how to record and report safeguarding concerns.

The safeguarding team know the families well. They are proactive in their duties to keep pupils and their families safe. Leaders diligently strive to ensure pupils attend school regularly.

Leaders work hard to engage successfully with several partner agencies. This helps them to put early support in place for vulnerable pupils and their families.

Pupils learn about the dangers associated with the use of social media and online gaming.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have made recent adaptations to the curriculums in a small number of subjects. These new curriculums are in the early stages of implementation. This means that pupils' learning is not as secure as it could be. Leaders should ensure that teachers are familiar with the new curriculum content so that they can support pupils to gain the knowledge that they need to achieve well.

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

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| Unique reference number | 119661 |
| Local authority | Lancashire |
| Inspection number | 10226173 |
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Voluntary aided |
| Age range of pupils | 3 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 124 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair of governing body | Jacqui Potts |
| Headteacher | Lynn Elder |
| Website | www.stjosephsbacup.co.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 19 and 20 June 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 |

Information about this school

- This is a Catholic primary school. The most recent section 48 inspection was in March 2016.
- A new chair of the governing body has been appointed since the previous inspection.
- The school makes use of one alternative provider.

Information about this inspection

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

- This was the first routine inspection that the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken this into account in their evaluation of the school.
- During the inspection, inspectors met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and members of the senior leadership team.
- The lead inspector met with four governors, including the chair of the governing body.

- The lead inspector met with a representative of the local authority, the school improvement partner and a representative of the Diocese of Salford.
- Inspectors spoke with parents and carers to gather their views of the school.
- Inspectors examined a wide range of safeguarding documentation. They spoke with staff to check how well they understood their responsibilities to keep children safe.
- Inspectors spoke with children in the early years and pupils in key stages 1 and 2 about behaviour and safeguarding. Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons, around the school and at play times. Inspectors spoke with staff about their workload and well-being.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, art and design and history. They met with subject leaders, visited lessons and spoke with teachers. Inspectors spoke with pupils about their work. Inspectors also considered other curriculums.
- Inspectors observed children in the early years and pupils in key stages 1 and 2 read to trusted adults.
- Inspectors considered the free-text responses to Ofsted Parent View. Inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted's staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

John Donald, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Cole Andrew

Ofsted Inspector

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