

Inspection of a good school: St Joseph's Catholic Academy, Goldenhill

Mobberley Road, Goldenhill, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire ST6 5RN

Inspection dates:

16–17 October 2019

Outcome

St Joseph's Catholic Academy, Goldenhill continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

The Catholic values of the school underpin learning and school life. Equal opportunities, fairness and respect filter through all aspects of the curriculum. The school meets individual pupils' needs well, including those with social, emotional and mental health needs.

Leaders have high expectations for pupils in all aspects of their work and life. Pupils take part in a wide range of activities that extend their learning. Pupils have an 'Activity Passport' where they tick off challenges and experiences they have completed. For example, Year 2 pupils visit Trentham Gardens to undertake a barefoot nature walk. Pupils also take part in a wide range of clubs and extra-curricular activities that include tag rugby, street dance and choir.

Pupils say they feel safe and know how to keep themselves safe, especially when using the internet. Relationships between adults and pupils are positive.

Pupils are keen and attentive in lessons. They work hard. At times a small number of pupils do not behave in the way the school expects. However, the school deals with any poor behaviour quickly and pupils know the consequences. They say if bullying occurs a teacher sorts it out.

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

School leaders, governors and staff want to provide the best education for pupils. Teachers plan learning activities that are interesting. These build on pupils' previous learning within each subject.

Children in the pre-school, Nursery and Reception make a good start. This is because the early years is well led. Learning environments both inside and outside of the classroom are well organised. Clear policies and procedures that are easy to understand keep children safe.

The teaching of reading begins with simple songs and rhymes in the early years. Well-trained staff teach phonics daily. The books which pupils take home match the phonic sounds they know. Pupils have well-focused support to keep up and catch up so they can read these books. Most pupils read well by the end of Year 1.

The school's library is a rich source of high-quality books that pupils can take home and read for pleasure. Parents come into school to visit the library van with their child. They also take part in reading workshops and 'breakfast with books'. These activities help pupils to develop a love of reading. Reading diaries show reading is carefully monitored.

When pupils write, sometimes they make errors in the way they form and write the letter shapes. They also misspell simple words. This is not picked up quickly enough within lessons by teachers.

Teachers use their knowledge and enthusiasm to plan and deliver lessons well in a range of subjects. Subject leaders make sure learning is practical and relates to everyday experiences. A range of resources help pupils understand key ideas and learning. This is particularly the case in physical education (PE).

Problem solving is a key feature of many lessons. 'Can you remember still?' challenges pupils to revisit their learning and checks what pupils know and remember. In some mathematics lessons pupils did not form their numbers in the right way or set their work out in the correct columns. This was not picked up quickly enough by teachers. This hindered pupils' progress as they could not read their own work and made mistakes as a result.

Pupils understand the importance of staying fit and healthy and know why they need to warm up before physical activities. They cooperate well with one another and enjoy their PE lessons.

The school has put in place a range of support for pupils who need extra help. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils receive support in class and also out of class one to one and in small groups. The school has plans to check how this support is working.

The SEND coordinator (SENCo) is new to post and receives support from the principal until she has completed her national SENCo training. Individual plans for pupils with SEND ensure that pupils' needs are identified and that they receive the care and attention they need.

Teachers say that they are supported by leaders and their workload is taken into account. There is a culture of staff helping and supporting each other across the school.

The school is well led and managed. The principal provides strong direction. Most parents speak positively about the school. Governors and trustees understand their responsibilities and check the work of the school well. When pupils leave the school mid-year it is for valid reasons.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders train staff so they know what to do if they have concerns about pupils' well-being or safety. Staff and leaders act quickly when they have concerns. The school works well with other organisations to support pupils, and their families, to get the help they need.

Leaders and governors check that staff are suitable before they begin work at the school.

Pupils take part in Safe and Sound activities. These include a workshop on gang and knife culture that helps pupils to make sensible choices.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In mathematics pupils do not always present their work as well as they should. This results in them making mistakes. Teachers should ensure that pupils form their numbers the right way and set out their work in a way that helps them to make better progress with their calculations.
- In phonics sessions in key stage 1 some pupils make errors in forming and writing letters and words. Sometimes this is not picked up quickly enough by teachers. Teachers should ensure that pupils write their letters and words accurately.
- The effectiveness of interventions that take place, both within the classroom and as one to one and small groups outside of the classroom, have not been fully monitored. Leaders should evaluate the impact of the extra support they are providing for pupils to ensure that they are supporting pupils to make better progress.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged St Joseph's Catholic Academy, Goldenhill to be good on 22–23 April 2015.

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	140148
Local authority	Stoke-on-Trent
Inspection number	10088428
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	240
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Senior Executive Leader	Ian Beardsmore
Principal	Laura Hamilton
Website	www.stjosephscatholicacademy.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	22–23 April 2015

Information about this school

- The academy is a member of The Newman Catholic Collegiate, a multi-academy company and trust. Local decision making is delegated to the local academy committee of governors.
- About one fifth of pupils are from Gypsy, Romany and Traveller families.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector met with a range of staff as part of the inspection. The inspector spoke with the principal, vice-principal, the SENCo, the academy officer, subject leaders and teachers. The inspector also spoke to governors and trustees.
- The inspection focused deeply on reading, mathematics and PE. All other subjects were considered as part of the inspection. Evidence was collected through meeting with subject leaders, meeting with teachers, scrutiny of curriculum planning, visits to lessons, talking with pupils and examining their work.
- The inspector considered 14 recent responses to Parent View and spoke to parents during the inspection. The inspector also looked at 23 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for staff.

- The inspector examined school documents, including policies and records relating to behaviour, bullying, safeguarding and the curriculum. The school's website was also checked.

Inspection team

Heather Phillips, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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