

Inspection of St John's Catholic Junior School

Old Chester Road, Bebington, Wirral, Merseyside CH63 7LH

Inspection dates: 4 and 5 October 2023

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Previous inspection grade Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy attending St. John's Catholic Junior School, where everyone is made to feel welcome. They appreciate and benefit from the positive relationships that they have with each other and with staff. Pupils are confident that staff will listen to them and help them with any concerns they may have. This helps pupils to feel safe in school.

The school has high expectations for pupils' achievement, including for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils do their best to live up to these expectations. During lessons, most pupils work hard, and they learn with interest and enthusiasm. Staff encourage pupils to be proud of their successes. Mostly, pupils achieve well.

The school has similarly high expectations for pupils' behaviour. Pupils are eager to follow instructions from staff. They are polite and respectful to each other. This creates an environment in which pupils can learn the curriculum successfully.

Pupils value the range of clubs on offer to them, such as football, dance and the lunchtime 'pop-in' club. They appreciate the opportunity to take on leadership roles. For example, they are keen to act as eco-councillors, 'Mini Vinnies' and members of the sports council. Through such roles, pupils feel that they can contribute positively to their school community and make school a better place to be.

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

The school has designed an ambitious curriculum. The curriculum is broad, balanced and meets the needs of pupils, including those with SEND. The school has carefully considered the most important knowledge that it wants pupils to learn and the order in which this content should be taught. In the main, this helps teachers to design appropriate activities that support pupils to learn the curriculum successfully.

In most subjects, teachers deliver the curriculum well. The school ensures that teachers receive appropriate training. This enables teachers to explain new concepts clearly to pupils. Added to this, teachers are skilled at helping pupils to make links with what they know already. However, from time to time, in a small number of subjects, staff do not select approaches that support some pupils to learn the intended curriculum.

Typically, teachers routinely check that pupils' understanding of earlier content is secure. Where necessary, teachers quickly identify and address any misconceptions that pupils may develop. This supports pupils to build up a rich body of knowledge over time.

The school has prioritised the teaching of reading. Through appropriate training, the school ensures that staff adopt a consistent approach to delivering the phonics programme. This means that those pupils who struggle with reading receive

appropriate support. Staff ensure that the books that pupils read are carefully matched to their reading knowledge. This enables pupils to catch up quickly and become fluent readers.

Older pupils talked enthusiastically about the books that they have recently read. The school ensures that pupils have access to a diverse range of high-quality texts. This supports pupil to further expand their vocabulary and to develop a love of reading.

The school has effective systems in place to ensure that the additional needs of pupils with SEND are identified swiftly and accurately by staff. For the most part, staff skilfully tailor their delivery of the curriculum to meet the needs of these pupils. Nonetheless, on occasion, staff do not make suitable adaptations to how they deliver the curriculum for some pupils with SEND. From time to time, this hinders how well these pupils learn the curriculum.

The school has carefully crafted a suitable programme that supports pupils' wider development well. This is regularly adapted by the school to cater for pupils' individual needs. Pupils learn about different cultures, faiths and types of families that are different to their own. This helps them to respect each other's differences. Pupils know and understand the school's values of kindness and respect. They do their best to demonstrate these values in their actions towards others each day.

The school has established clear routines, which pupils follow. Pupils behave well, and they learn to take responsibility for their own behaviour. The school environment is calm and orderly.

Pupils relish opportunities to welcome guest speakers into school. They enjoy taking part in residential trips and visits to places of interest. Through the curriculum, pupils learn how to stay both physically and mentally healthy. They also learn how to keep themselves safe online and in the wider world. Older pupils told inspectors that they feel well prepared for secondary school.

Governors understand the school's priorities. This ensures that they are well informed about the quality of education that the school provides for pupils. Members of the governing body provide appropriate challenge and support to the school when required.

The school engages with parents and carers and encourages them to be active partners in their child's learning. For example, the school ensures that parents are well informed about what their children will be learning. Many parents hold the school in high regard.

The school considers the workload and well-being of staff in the decisions that it makes about, for example, the curriculum. Staff also appreciate the support that they receive from leaders to carry out their roles effectively. As a result, staff said that they feel valued and that they enjoy working at the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of subjects, staff do not select learning activities that support some pupils to learn the intended curriculum. This hinders some pupils from progressing through the curriculum as well as they should. Leaders should ensure that staff receive appropriate training and support to deliver the curriculum consistently well.
- On occasion, staff do not use the information that they have about the needs of some pupils with SEND to adapt their delivery of the curriculum as effectively as they could. From time to time, this hinders how well some pupils with SEND learn the curriculum. The school should ensure that staff use the information available to them to adapt their pedagogical and activity choices to meet the needs of pupils with SEND.

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

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| Unique reference number | 105080 |
| Local authority | Wirral |
| Inspection number | 10294209 |
| Type of school | Junior |
| School category | Voluntary aided |
| Age range of pupils | 7 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 247 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chairs of governing body | Gillian Dyche Anthony Rutherford |
| Headteacher | Elaine Mullins |
| Website | www.stjohns-junior.wirral.sch.uk |
| Dates of previous inspection | 3 and 4 July 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 |

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Diocese of Shrewsbury. The most recent section 48 inspection of the school's religious character took place in November 2018. The school's next section 48 inspection will take place before 2025.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision for pupils.

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.
- This was the first routine inspection 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.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher and other members of staff. The lead inspector spoke with representatives of the governing body, including one of

the co-chairs of governors. They also spoke with representatives of the local authority and of the diocese.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, including early reading, mathematics and modern foreign languages. For each deep dive, they discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons and spoke to teachers. Inspectors also spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at a sample of pupils' work.
- The lead inspector listened to pupils reading with a familiar adult. Inspectors also discussed the curriculum with leaders in some other subjects.
- 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 observed pupils' behaviour at various times in the school day. This included during lessons and at lunchtime.
- Inspectors considered the views expressed by parents in their responses to Ofsted Parent View. This included the free-text comments. Inspectors spoke with parents as they brought their children to school at the start of the school day.
- Inspectors also took account of the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaires for staff and pupils.

Inspection team

Pat Speed, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Sandra Hamilton

Ofsted Inspector

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