



**ISI** Independent  
Schools  
Inspectorate

**Regulatory Compliance Inspection Report**

**St Joseph's School and Nursery**

**February 2023**

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### School's Details

<b>School</b>	St Joseph's School and Nursery			
<b>DfE number</b>	892/6003			
<b>Early Years registration number</b>	EY254641			
<b>Registered charity number</b>	1003916			
<b>Address</b>	St Joseph's School and Nursery 33 Derby Road Nottingham NG1 5AW			
<b>Telephone number</b>	01159 418356			
<b>Email address</b>	office@st-josephs.nottingham.sch.uk			
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Ashley Crawshaw			
<b>Chair of trustees</b>	Mr Austin Kelly			
<b>Proprietor</b>	St Joseph's School			
<b>Age range</b>	1 to 11			
<b>Number of pupils on roll</b>	108			
	<b>Nursery</b>	60	<b>Main school</b>	48
<b>Inspection dates</b>	1 to 2 February 2023			

## 1. Background Information

### About the school

- 1.1 St Joseph's School is an independent co-educational preparatory school. It is situated in the centre of Nottingham. The school was founded by the Sisters of Mercy in 1934. Control passed to a charitable trust run by a board of trustees in 1990, before the school became fully independent in 2003 with a new board of trustees. Whilst having a Catholic heritage, the school is now predominantly mixed-faith. The current headteacher was appointed in 2015. The school has a board of trustees who monitor provision and provide strategic oversight and accountability. The school comprises the nursery for children aged from 1 to 5 and main school for pupils aged 5 to 11.

### What the school seeks to do

- 1.2 The school aims to provide a nurturing and stimulating environment which enables pupils to excel in an ever-changing world; to promote a thirst for learning and to encourage resilience, confidence and understanding. The school seeks for children to develop the skills and attitudes required to become effective lifelong learners. It has a Christian ethos which encourages pupils to love, respect and understand themselves, others and the multi-faith world in which they live. The school values its warm, family atmosphere and traditional values of trust, tolerance, care and hard work are promoted.

### About the pupils

- 1.3 Pupils come from a wide range of social, cultural, and economic backgrounds, with parents working predominantly in business and professional occupations. The school's own assessment indicates that the ability of the pupils is broadly average, although the range of abilities is wide. The school has identified 16 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) which include dyslexia and autism, several of whom receive additional specialist help. No pupil in the school has an education, health and care plan. English is an additional language (EAL) for 3 pupils, whose needs are supported by their classroom teachers. The school has identified 12 pupils as being the most able and the curriculum is modified for them.

## 2. Regulatory Compliance Inspection

### Preface

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is approved by the Secretary of State to inspect schools which are, or whose heads are, in membership of the associations which form the Independent Schools Council (ISC) and report on the extent to which they meet the Independent School Standards ('the standards') in the Schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014. Inspections of schools with early years settings not requiring registration also report whether the school complies with key provisions of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework, and for registered settings the full range of the Early Years Foundation Stage provisions is considered. Additionally, inspections report on the school's accessibility plan under Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996. Inspections also comment on the progress made to meet any compliance action points set out in the school's most recent statutory inspection.

ISI inspections are also carried out under the arrangements of the ISC Associations for the maintenance and improvement of the quality of their membership.

**This is a COMPLIANCE ONLY inspection and as such reports only on the school's compliance with the standards.** The standards represent minimum requirements and judgements are given either as **met** or as **not met**. All schools are required to meet all the standards applicable to them. Where the minimum requirements are not met, this is clearly indicated and the school is required to take the actions specified.

Inspections do not include matters that are outside of the regulatory framework described above, such as: an exhaustive health and safety audit; compliance with data protection requirements; an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features; contractual arrangements with parents; an investigation of the financial viability of the school or its accounting procedures.

Inspectors may be aware of individual safeguarding concerns, allegations and complaints as part of the inspection process. Such matters will not usually be referred to specifically in published reports in this document but will have been considered by the team in reaching its judgements.

Links to the standards and requirements can be found here: [Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework](#).

## Key findings

- 2.1 The school meets the standards in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, the requirements of the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, and associated requirements, and no further action is required as a result of this inspection.**

### PART 1 – Quality of education provided

- 2.2 The school's own framework for assessment confirms that teaching enables pupils to make good progress in the context of Part 1 paragraph 3(a).
- 2.3 The curriculum is documented, supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work for the pupils and covers the required breadth of material. The teaching enables pupils to make good progress, encompasses effective behaviour management and is supported by suitable resources. A suitable framework for the assessment of pupils' performance is in place.
- 2.4 Pupils receive relationships education. The school has consulted parents and published a written statement of its policy which has regard to the relevant statutory guidance.
- 2.5 The standards relating to the quality of education [paragraphs 1–4] are met.**

### PART 2 – Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

- 2.6 Principles and values are actively promoted which facilitate the personal development of pupils as responsible, tolerant, law-abiding citizens.
- 2.7 The standard relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development [paragraph 5] is met.**

### PART 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 2.8 Arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils by means that pay due regard to current statutory guidance; good behaviour is promoted; bullying is prevented so far as reasonably practicable; health and safety requirements are met, including those relating to fire safety; provision is made for first aid. Pupils are properly supervised; admission and attendance registers are maintained, as required, and there is a strategic approach to risk assessment. A disability access plan is in place.
- 2.9 The standards relating to welfare, health and safety [paragraphs 6–16], the requirement of Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010, [and] the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996 are met.**

### PART 4 – Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

- 2.10 The school makes appropriate checks to ensure the suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors, and a register is kept as required.
- 2.11 The standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school [paragraphs 17–21] are met.**

### PART 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools

- 2.12 Suitable toilet and changing facilities, and showering facilities where required by the standard, and appropriate accommodation for pupils' medical and therapy needs are provided. The premises are maintained to a standard commensurate with health and safety; acoustics and lighting are

appropriate; water provision is adequate. Suitable outdoor space is provided for physical education and outdoor play.

**2.13 The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] are met.**

## **PART 6 – Provision of information**

2.14 A range of information is published, provided or made available to parents, inspectors and the Department for Education. This includes details about the proprietor, the ethos of the school and the curriculum, and of the school's arrangements for admission, behaviour and exclusions, bullying, health and safety, first aid, details of the complaints procedure, and the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year, and the provision for any with education, health and care plans or English as an additional language. It also includes particulars of the school's academic performance during the preceding school year, inspection reports and (for parents only) a report at least annually of their own child's progress. The safeguarding policy is posted on the school's website.

**2.15 The standard relating to the provision of information [paragraph 32] is met.**

## **PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled**

2.16 Parental complaints, if any, are handled effectively through a three-stage process, (informal, formal and a hearing before a panel of three, one of whom is independent of the school). Each stage has clear time scales, and at the third stage the panel can make findings and recommendations which are communicated to the complainant. Records are kept appropriately, including of any action taken, whether or not a complaint is successful.

**2.17 The standard relating to the handling of complaints [paragraph 33] is met.**

## **PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools**

2.18 The proprietor ensures that the leadership and management demonstrate good skills and knowledge, and fulfil their responsibilities effectively, so that the other standards are consistently met, and they actively promote the wellbeing of the pupils.

**2.19 The standard relating to leadership and management of the school [paragraph 34] is met.**

### **3. The quality and standards of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

#### **Overall effectiveness: the quality and standards of the early years provision**

- 3.1 The overall effectiveness of the early years provision is good.
- 3.2 Since the previous inspection, children have greater opportunity to investigate, problem-solve and use their imagination as the school has purchased resources, such as soft play equipment and a mud kitchen, to develop a range of activities in the indoor and outdoor environment. However, this remains an area of focus and is included in the school's current development plan.
- 3.3 The needs of all children who attend the setting, including children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are met through the curriculum and the care practices. There is a shared understanding of and responsibility for protecting children. The requirements for children's safeguarding and welfare have been fully met.
- 3.4 Children successfully gain skills and knowledge through the resources and activities available. Children display good levels of emotional security and form positive attachments with their key person. Their personal and emotional development is supported well; they are secure, happy and actively engage with their environment.
- 3.5 The curriculum meets the needs of the children at an age-appropriate level. They make good progress from their starting points and are prepared for the next stage in their education. However, planning systems are not robust which results in a curriculum that does not consistently offer challenge and support as necessary. Children's outcomes could be improved with greater oversight of the planning process. Regular opportunities to share good practice between practitioners would result in more inspiring and challenging learning experiences being offered.

#### **Quality of education**

- 3.6 The quality of education is good.
- 3.7 The curriculum is designed from the early years foundation stage (EYFS) framework and activities provided are planned to meet the children's next steps of development as well as follow their interests. Children happily choose activities around the room and are fully engaged. The curriculum provides appropriate knowledge and cultural capital for the different age children and most activities on offer are age-appropriate, but they sometimes lack the ambition to challenge and stretch the children.
- 3.8 Practitioners effectively share information with parents about their child's progress. There is good communication at the end of the day, through verbal feedback and posts on the online communication system.
- 3.9 Assessment systems are robust; children's next steps are identified and help to inform the planning. All children make good progress from their starting points. Children's vocabulary and understanding development are good but could be extended further with more opportunities for consistent adult interactions during their play. On occasion, opportunities to extend and develop learning are missed by practitioners such as when children were playing with cars for an extended period without any practitioner engagement to move the learning forward.
- 3.10 Children listen attentively and respond appropriately to songs during a music circle time. They have opportunities to develop their comprehension and understanding by listening to and joining in with familiar stories.
- 3.11 Children understand mathematical concepts appropriate to their age and stage. A child was able to fill in the missing numbers as a practitioner counted to ten. Children are physically active throughout the day as they move around the room choosing different activities. They show good control in their large and small movements for their age such as holding pencils and paintbrushes appropriately.

- 3.12 Children develop the knowledge and skills needed to ensure they are ready to move on to their next stage of education.

### **Behaviour and attitudes**

- 3.13 Behaviour and attitudes are good.
- 3.14 All children demonstrate positive attitudes to learning by confidently exploring the activities on offer. They show good levels of enjoyment and engagement with their chosen activities, for example filling and emptying buckets with sand.
- 3.15 All children are happy and active in their learning. They show good levels of concentration and perseverance to achieve the outcome that they want, as seen when a child spends a long time painting a picture and is very clear about what they want to achieve. Children take pride in their achievements and share their outcomes excitedly with practitioners. However, on occasions children are not fully supported to explore their own ideas, for example when a child chooses to carry sand to the water tray they are discouraged by practitioners.
- 3.16 Children demonstrate high levels of thinking for themselves within their chosen activities. A child spent over ten minutes trying to solve the problem of how to place wooden logs on a dinosaur's back so they would stay there securely.
- 3.17 Children develop good habits of independence, resilience and perseverance by taking an active part in their learning. All children display good levels of conduct and behaviour for their age. They manage their own feelings well and have a good sense of right and wrong. Children respond positively to adults and each other. They feel safe and secure in the setting; relationships between practitioners and children reflect a positive and respectful culture.
- 3.18 Even though parents are not allowed in the setting, partnerships are strong. Daily registers are taken, and parents are contacted if children do not arrive when expected.

### **Personal development**

- 3.19 The personal development of children is good.
- 3.20 Practitioners show a good level of care towards the children. A well-established key person system helps children form secure attachments and promotes their well-being and independence. Practitioners check children are happy and secure in their environment. When children are upset, practitioners are quick to provide comfort. Children have a developing understanding of what makes them unique.
- 3.21 The curriculum encourages high levels of independence and resilience as children follow their interests using a range of resources which are easily accessible. Practitioners support the children's development of physical and emotional health. The large, spacious rooms and various outdoor spaces allow the children opportunities to be physically active, as do planned activities such as dance and sensory play sessions.
- 3.22 Practitioners can sometimes be overly cautious regarding children learning to manage risks for themselves, for example by shutting down opportunities for children to physically explore the learning environment to find their own limitations.
- 3.23 Practitioners support the children to develop their understanding and appreciation of diversity and the differing needs within their community. Themes of diversity are successfully explored through stories. Practitioners are effective role models showing respect for one another and the children. All children are treated fairly.
- 3.24 The setting has an appropriate safeguarding policy and provides suitable related training for staff. It is effective in meeting the EYFS statutory requirements and practitioners ensure that policies are implemented consistently.

3.25 Effective hygiene practices ensure that the personal needs of children of all ages are met appropriately. There are regular nappy changing times for the younger children and regular toilet reminders for the older children. Children are encouraged to wash their hands before eating. Practitioners give clear and consistent messages to children that support healthy choices around food, rest and exercise. The snacks and meals provided promote good health.

### **Leadership and management**

3.26 Leadership and management are good.

3.27 Through robust policies and procedures, leaders successfully fulfil their statutory duties. Staff training and checks are effective. Leaders ensure that staff are appropriately qualified. Professional development is provided, including suitable training for safeguarding and first aid. There is a good system in place for staff supervision and staff are supported effectively. However, with a greater focus on improving practitioners' knowledge and understanding of how children learn by sharing good practice, leaders will enhance the teaching of the curriculum.

3.28 Leaders act with integrity to ensure that all children, particularly those with SEND, have full access to their entitlement to early education. There are effective systems in place such as the class online communication system to encourage parents to engage with the setting. Leaders have highly effective relationships with the local authority which provides support and advice when needed. The setting has links with the cathedral and children make visits to the local community such as to the market.

3.29 The setting has clearly shared values; policies and procedures are implemented successfully and consistently. Whilst there is a clearly articulated and ambitious vision, this is not yet fully embedded within practice across the setting.

3.30 Governance is strong and successfully holds senior leaders to account for the quality of education and care within the setting, ensuring resources are managed effectively and efficiently.

### **Compliance with statutory requirements**

**3.31 The school's registered provision for childcare meets the requirements of the Childcare Act 2006 and no action is required.**

### **Recommendations for further improvement**

The school is advised to make the following improvement(s) to its provision for children in the early years.

- Ensure robust planning systems result in an ambitious curriculum that consistently offers inspiring and challenging learning opportunities which are fully embedded across the setting.
- Share good practice between practitioners to improve learning outcomes through effective adult interactions which support children to explore their ideas and manage their own risks.

## 4. Inspection Evidence

4.1 The inspectors observed lessons and extra-curricular activities, had discussions with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with members of staff and with the chair of trustees and attended class registration time and assemblies. Inspectors visited the facilities for the youngest pupils, together with the educational resource areas. Inspectors considered the responses of parents, staff and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires. The inspectors examined curriculum and other documentation made available by the school.

### Inspectors

Mrs Claire Osborn	Reporting inspector
Mrs Lisa Boulton	Compliance team inspector (Deputy Head, ISA school)
Mrs Ann-Marie Elding	Co-ordinating inspector for early years (Head of prep, SofH school)