

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

URN: 119661

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Bishop of Salford

11–12 July 2024

Summary of key findings

Overall effectiveness

The overall quality of Catholic education provided by the school

Catholic life and mission (p.3)

How faithfully the school responds to the call to live as a Catholic community at the service of the Church's educational mission

Religious education (p.5)

The quality of curriculum religious education

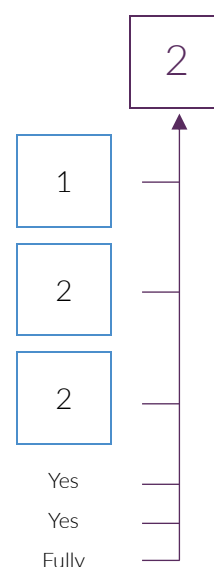
Collective worship (p.7)

The quality and range of liturgy and prayer provided by the school

The school is fully compliant with the curriculum requirements laid down by the Bishops' Conference

The school is fully compliant with all requirements of the diocesan bishop

The school has responded to the areas for improvement from the last inspection



What the school does well

- All staff members, inspired by senior leaders, are exemplary role models for their colleagues and pupils. They have a determined and clear vision for the school.
- St Joseph's works tirelessly to engage with their school and wider community, ensuring all have an equality of opportunity. The highest levels of pastoral care are provided for pupils and their families, especially for those whose circumstances have made them more vulnerable.
- The welcoming, calm and purposeful Catholic atmosphere created by the school is impressive and significantly contributes to pupils formation as individuals made in the image and likeness of God.
- Pupils enjoy and participate in religious education lessons with interest and enthusiasm.

- Pupils respond to worship opportunities with enthusiasm and confidence because they have a variety of experiences offered to them.

What the school needs to improve

- Teachers to ensure that pupils are provided with relevant and precise feedback which ensures that all pupils clearly understand what they need to do to make progress in their learning.
- To continue to develop rigorous approaches to the monitoring of religious education, using existing best practice in the school to support this, so that pupil outcomes improve across the school.
- Further provide pupils with rich and engaging enrichment activities to enhance their learning in religious education.

Catholic life and mission

How faithfully the school responds to the call to live as a Catholic community at the service of the Church's educational mission.

Catholic life and mission key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

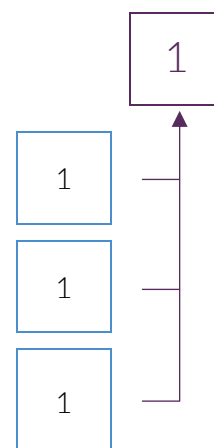
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

Provision

The quality of provision for the Catholic life and mission of the school

Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic life and mission of the school



Pupils live out the mission of St Joseph's RC Primary School, knowing that 'God wants me to be the best me I can be'. They are active in participating in the Catholic life and mission of the school, fundraising and leading on numerous occasions. Pupils, regardless of their personal faith background, feel welcomed, valued, cared for and supported as members of God's family in this unique school. Pupils behave well around school, value its chaplaincy and are exceptionally keen to lead. They understand their role of service to common good, and talk confidently about their behaviour towards one another, including 'people we will never meet'. From the early years, children experience care for creation through visits to the local woodland, producing environmental art and practising stewardship through litter picks, because the Church demands us to care for and be stewards of our common home. A Reception pupil said of Pope Francis, 'He'd be happy we are making our world better.' Caritas Ambassadors spoke confidently about their bunny-hop to raise funds for Rossendale Hospice, combining to earning the school the title, 'Supportive School of the Year 2024' in the Pride of Rossendale Awards.

The mission statement, 'Jesus is the centre of our lives' is expressed daily to inspire this community into action. There is a deep commitment to serving others because of this. The school has a living tradition of service to those most in need. The St Joseph's staff mission team, who are exemplary role models for pupils, are enthusiastic in their contribution to serving the school, for example driving pupils and their families to various events so that they do not miss out. This support for the most vulnerable is the heartbeat of this school family, where welcome is to all, with no exceptions. The highest levels of pastoral care are valued by parents and pupils who feel listened to and supported well. The school's pastoral lead runs a range of purposeful and impactful interventions and assists pupils with their emotional regulation. The quality of

space is outstanding in promoting mission, living faith and promoting the dignity of the person. Pupil's spiritual and moral development is prioritised through a range of opportunities available to pupils, enabling them to develop their own particular God-given talents. Relationships, sex and health education provision meets statutory and diocesan requirements and enables pupils to see their neighbour as 'family'.

Leaders, including governors, who are highly ambitious for the school, take their responsibility as guardians of the mission seriously, ensuring Christ is at the centre of all decision making. This is manifested in a joyful team, inspirational to their community; and in the priority given to targeting resources to those in greatest need. They prioritise the professional development and wellbeing of staff, offering them regular supervision. A staff member said, 'If anyone else came here, they'd not want to leave, like me!'. School leaders ensure that Diocesan policy is adhered to, and actively engages with Diocesan training and services, for example, Caritas Diocese of Salford have trained staff and pupils in aspects of Catholic social teaching. They are engaging with the Bishop's 2030 vision for Diocesan schools. St Joseph's is described by the parish priest as having a 'sense of happiness' where the church is seen at its best through the school's missionary approach. Family engagement through the journey in faith group promotes this flourishing partnership. Work with parents and families is prioritised at this school. Parents feel involved and value that the school treats pupils as family, going the extra mile. 'My children have always been loved, cared for, looked after and made welcome. They want to come to school every day and feel safe'. Pupils are involved in evaluating and suggesting improvements to the school's Catholic mission.

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

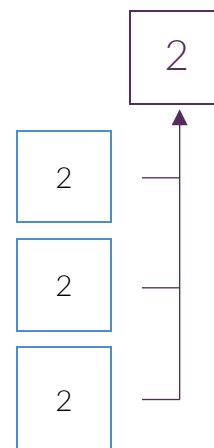
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

Provision

The quality of teaching, learning, and assessment in religious education

Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for religious education



Pupils at St Joseph's are developing secure knowledge, understanding and skills, in a curriculum closely linked to the *Religious Education Curriculum Directory* requirements. They progress well and are enabled to know, remember and do more as they journey through school. Provision for the most disadvantaged learners, and for those with special educational needs and disabilities, is prioritised, through small group provision and adaptation within lessons, ensuring they achieve well. Pupils develop a religious vocabulary that has enabled them to begin to think ethically and theologically. For example, in lower Key Stage 2, pupils reflected on social justice and inequalities in wealth distribution, and the impact this has on care for our common home. In considering the impact of *Laudato Si'*, the pupils identified concrete examples of providing sustained help to others in order to advise world leaders. They concluded that, 'being happy and grateful isn't always linked to earning the most money'. They know that they are called to be stewards of our common home and that we must look after it as a special gift from God. Pupils demonstrate awareness of key concepts in religious education, enabling them to engage well in lessons and speak confidently about their learning using some subject appropriate vocabulary. Pupils are enabled to participate and ask good questions during lessons, which helps move learning forward. Pupils say they enjoy their learning in religious education and they show interest and enthusiasm in lessons. Behaviour for learning is consistently good. Through use of 'balance wheels', pupils are helped to self-reflect on their conceptual understanding. When compared to other core curriculum subjects, pupils achieve at least average attainment in religious education.

The school has accessed a range of professional development, including from the Diocese and parish priest, meaning that most teachers have secure subject knowledge. They understand the value of religious education and plan appropriately to meet pupils' needs. Teacher questioning

and adaptation ensures that pupils learn well. In an upper Key Stage 2 lesson, when considering the Marian apparition at Lourdes, pupils made links to prior learning about reconciliation and healing. Effective teacher intervention enabled pupils to link five symbols associated with Lourdes to both recalled scripture passages and their own day to day experiences. Time is provided for pupil reflection within lessons. Work is presented in a range of ways to promote inclusivity and afford all pupils an equality of opportunity. Teaching support staff give effective assistance to pupils and teachers in lessons. They also provide additional support to pupils with special educational or emotional needs. Teacher questioning in lessons is inconsistent in being always open-ended enough to encourage high quality thinking. Teachers are aware of the impact religious education can have on the moral and spiritual development of pupils and big questions are planned into the content of lessons, to help pupils explore the implications of their learning. Teachers must now ensure that pupils are provided with relevant and specific feedback, which ensures that all pupils clearly understand what they need to do to make progress in their learning.

Leaders ensure that the religious education curriculum is well resourced to enable the intended curriculum to be delivered. Expenditure on religious education is comparable to that spent in other core subjects – St Joseph's is well resourced. Specific training on scripture has been given to some staff in readiness for the new *Religious Education Directory*. The subject leader reports regularly to governors on the quality of teaching and the progress and attainment of pupils. This enables school leaders to understand where improvements should be made. Governors visit the school regularly, often focusing their attention on specific aspects of religious education and focus on groups of pupils. The school should now continue to develop rigorous approaches to the monitoring of religious education, using existing best practice in the school to support this, so that pupil outcomes improve across the school. The appointment of a part-time associate leader from the beginning of this term is already providing the leadership team with increased management capacity and greater accuracy of self-evaluation and challenge. The school uses an approved Catholic scheme of learning and as a consequence pupils make steady and sequential progress through the content. The school should now further provide pupils with rich and engaging enrichment activities to enhance their learning in religious education.

Collective worship

The quality and range of liturgy and prayer provided by the school

Collective worship key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

How well pupils participate in and respond to the school's collective worship

2

Provision

The quality of collective worship provided by the school

2

Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for collective worship

2

2

Pupils at St Joseph's are enabled to have active involvement in a variety of prayer and liturgy experiences. They participate actively, by leading celebrations of the word, proclaiming sacred scripture and reflecting in silence. Trained pupil prayer leaders plan prayer experiences using a Lectio Divina rhythm, which ensures they place prominence on scripture, symbol, silence, meditation, reflection and liturgical music. Pupils are able to describe parts of the liturgical year of the church and link this to the prayer life of the school. From the early years, children prepare, with adult help, aspects of communal prayer. In Key Stage 1, in their class celebration of looking after God's world, pupils were keen to read and sing with conscious participation and prayerful silence. By Key Stage 2, pupils applied for liturgical ministries, confidently leading class and whole key stage prayer as well as informal prayer at break- and lunch- times. Pupils spoke about how their repeated leading of prayer led to the experience being refined and improved – one prayer leader said, 'I have a loud voice which is perfect for assemblies!'. More consistent evaluation of the quality of prayer and liturgy is needed to inform next steps. Pupils talk about how prayer influences, and is influenced by, the wider life of their school and community. In a Year 6 class, spontaneous prayer reflected on those in their school family and actions that could be taken to live prayer in their lives. In a Key Stage 2 pupil-led worship, pupils considered silently how they could be a light for others. Proud of their contribution, one Year 5 pupil said, 'I believe I am a superb role model for the younger ones because I am kind to my classmates and all members of staff. I will always try to be the best I can be and follow in Jesus' footsteps.'

Pupils, staff, and leaders at St Joseph's talk confidently about the strong and established routines for prayer and liturgy. There are clear daily and weekly routines for prayer, which are accessed by all the school community. Scripture is central to liturgy, with pupils greeting the spoken scripture with respect and reverence. Prayer is both engaging and creative. Pupils observed led

prayer in the school's peace garden, encouraging stewardship. School leaders are positive role models, and as a result, pupils participate enthusiastically. Staff training has impacted their confidence in participating actively in prayer and liturgy, setting a clear example for pupils. Teachers and leaders support pupils in planning prayer; however, pupils do not routinely evaluate their impact. The school's beautifully presented floor books demonstrate the use of prayer scaffolds to help develop pupils' own prayer structures. Staff guide pupils' planning and delivery of celebrations of the word. Next steps are for the school to consider more widely choosing scripture passages informed by the liturgical season, across pupil- as well as adult- led prayer. All classroom prayer areas are prominent, well-cared for, and linked to the liturgical year cycle. They include age-appropriate Bibles, religious artefacts, and liturgical colours reflecting the Church's seasons. The school has established ways to engage parents with the school's prayer life, and parental feedback is positive. Year 6 pupils were proud to be attending their Leavers' Mass. The school has a secure vision for engaging with the broader community and parish to support pupils participating more fully in the liturgy.

The prayer and liturgy policy is effective and lays out the expectations for all stakeholders, outlining clear expectations when coming together to pray. Staff and pupils articulate how this supports them in planning prayer and liturgy. Leaders have developed a long-term plan to ensure that significant liturgical events and significant days are celebrated, with regular opportunities for the school community to attend Mass. Furthermore, the parish priest is a supportive and regular visitor to the school. Leaders have provided many opportunities for whole-staff training to enhance the school's prayer life further. Consequently, staff confidence has increased, which has resulted in pupils having opportunities to engage meaningfully in prayer and liturgy. Leaders and governors recognise that prayer and liturgy are central to the school and, as such, allocate appropriate resources, as seen in the school environment and prayer areas. Routine monitoring influences the school's self-evaluation; however, leaders recognise the need for rigour in their monitoring and evaluation of prayer, ensuring that it directly influences the quality and impact of it throughout the school.

Information about the school

Full name of school	St Joseph's Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	119661
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	8883768
Full postal address of the school	St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Huttock End Lane, Stacksteads, Bacup, OL13 8LD
School phone number	01706873177
Headteacher	Michelle Scott
Chair of Governors/Trustees	Jacquie Williams
School Website	http://www.stjosephsbacup.co.uk
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	N/A
Phase	Primary
Type of school	Voluntary Aided School
Admissions policy	N/A
Age-range of pupils	3-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	22nd March 2016
Previous denominational inspection grade	Outstanding

The inspection team

Martin Johnson
Chris Horridge

Lead
Team

Key to grade judgements

Grade	England	Wales
1	Outstanding	Excellent
2	Good	Good
3	Requires improvement	Adequate and requires improvement
4	Inadequate	Unsatisfactory and in need of urgent improvement