

# Our Lady and St Joseph Catholic Primary School

URN: 116378

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Bishop of Portsmouth

09–10 May 2024

## Summary of key findings

### Overall effectiveness

The overall quality of Catholic education provided by the school

1

#### 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

1

#### Religious education (p.5)

The quality of curriculum religious education

1

#### Collective worship (p.7)

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

1

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

Yes

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

Yes

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

Fully

## What the school does well

- The ethos of inclusivity and compassion permeates all that the school does, developing a strong moral compass in its pupils.
- Leaders are reflective and forward-thinking, creating a curriculum which galvanises pupils into acts of social justice.
- The exceptional provision for religious education leads to excellent outcomes.
- Staff are skilled in enabling pupils to develop their relationship with God through the prayer and liturgical life of the school.
- There is a strong sense that the school is a family, centred in Christ and truly caring about the needs of its community.

## What the school needs to improve

- Pupils need more opportunities to evaluate the quality of their prayer and liturgy and how it can be improved.

## 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

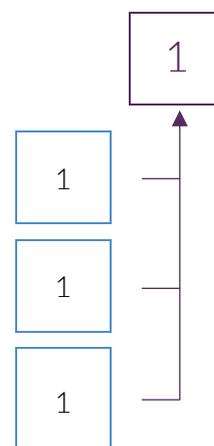
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

#### 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



As stated by a member of staff, the school's mission ripples through the heart of everything the school does. Pupils recognise themselves as architects of a better world and are keen to follow the example of other children who have shaped our world for the better. Through a carefully planned curriculum where global goals and active compassion are the drivers, staff empower pupils so that they have the knowledge and skills to have a positive impact on the world. Through initiatives such as outreach support to hospices and care homes, and the school's commitment to being a *School of Sanctuary*, their ethos of inclusivity and compassion stretches beyond the boundaries of the school. One pupil expressed that, to her, the school is a place where everyone is welcome and that it is a safe place. This feeling of sanctuary was echoed in the comments pupils made about the staff at the school. They said, 'The staff are absolutely incredible and are always there for you if something happened inside or outside of school. They are always open to talk to.' Pupils understand the mission of the school with one explaining their understanding of it as; 'We are architects of a better world. We plan out our future and how we are going to follow in Jesus' footsteps and build a better world. We need to spread the word of Jesus and get people to help make this world a better place and look after nature.'

Catholic life and social teaching are entwined into the pupils' learning journey, with opportunities for pupils to put their faith into action being spread strategically throughout their time at school. History, geography, and English books all evidence aspects of Catholic social teaching, and pupils talk with enthusiasm about the different acts of charity which they undertake as a school community. Pupils talk freely about their faith among their peers and acknowledge the impact they can have on the smaller community as well as the wider world. This is captured in a piece of artwork at the front of the school which quotes one of the current pupils. It reads, 'We may be

a small school, but we have big hearts,' which reflects the spiritual and moral development of the pupils who appreciate the responsibility they have for caring for others. The provision offered by the school helps pupils to see Jesus as a teacher; someone who, as one pupil said, 'guides us to have a better future and not take the wrong pathways.' When reflecting on some of their work on refugees, pupils recognised that, 'It helped us to know how we can help them and raise awareness so that refugees can have a better life, not seeking a safer space all the time.'

School leaders, including governors, are acutely aware of both the strengths of the school and the development points. The Catholic life and mission of the school is clearly of paramount importance to them. At every level of school leadership, adults serve as living examples of Catholic social teaching. They embody the Church's principles of preferential treatment of the poor and of welcoming the stranger through their curriculum work on welcoming refugees, and their pragmatic efforts such as termly food bank collections, collaborative work with the parish St Vincent de Paul Society and the discrete help offered to families whenever it is needed. Strategic decisions consistently reflect a strong commitment to sustaining the environment, promoting the greater good, and supporting those who are most disadvantaged. The school's self-evaluation process demonstrates a strive for excellence within all aspects of its mission, and robust monitoring ensures that actions lead to improvements. This is reflected in the significant improvements which can be seen since the previous inspection.

## Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

### Religious education key judgement grade

#### Pupil outcomes

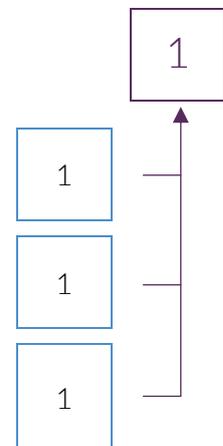
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

#### 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 have excellent knowledge and understanding, evidenced through the high-quality responses given in both class and when talking with pupils. In every year group, all pupils make good progress, and the pupils themselves are aware of this, recognising how their knowledge and understanding is building. They refer, with confidence, to their previous learning to help them respond to the question in hand. Pupils participate in theological discussions on topics such as 'Life after life'. They are aware of how their religious education learning serves to guide them in life and they think about themes and reflect upon what the Christian faith calls people to do. All pupils are articulate and confident when speaking about their religious education learning. They use relevant vocabulary and ask pertinent questions. They are animated in their discussions, showing a curiosity to explore topics and deepen their understanding. They demonstrate secure understanding of what they have learnt, including knowledge of the scriptures and the meaning they hold for their own lives. One pupil summarised their learning on temptation by stating, "All you need is food, water and God's Love". They are motivated in their work and in discussions, teachers act as facilitators with pupils taking a lead in keeping the debate going, challenging one another, and building on each other's views. Work is excellently presented, and pupils are committed to doing their best, representing their learning in a variety of ways. Pupils state that they enjoy their learning and talk passionately about the subject. Behaviour in lessons is exemplary.

Leaders support staff in gaining a deeper understanding of the assessment of religious education to ensure that provision is tailored to exactly what each pupil needs. In all lessons, questioning was utilised effectively to assess learning and deepen pupils' responses. High-level vocabulary is modelled and then used by pupils. Staff have a profound understanding of how religious education, spiritual and moral development, and the prayer life of the school all impact on the lives of the pupils. Therefore, time is given for pupils to reflect on different issues discussed and they can talk confidently about how these experiences may shape their lives.

Feedback is specific and relevant to the learning. Pupils understand what they need to do to progress and can explain how feedback helps them to do this, even in Year 1, where a pupil was able to explain how the teacher's comment had made her further explain how she could follow Jesus' example in her own life.

Leaders, including governors, view religious education as the most important subject in their curriculum. In lockdown, remote learning was developed in a way which ensured that the usual amount of religious education was delivered, demonstrating the importance the subject has in the school. Regular, high-quality professional development takes place to ensure that effective practice is shared. Additionally, the parish priest provides workshops and other support to ensure that staff fully understand the theology behind the topics which they are teaching. Leadership structure of the Partnership is strong, utilising expertise across the Trust to ensure the best provision for the school. Consequently, progress and attainment in religious education is better than average. The curriculum is appropriately structured to ensure progression in learning and demand. Pupils recognise this too. High-quality, inclusive teaching is assured through frequent formal book looks and observations. Leaders recognise that it is not just this formalised monitoring which improves standards, but that it is the triangulation of these alongside a coaching culture and professional dialogue which makes the most difference within the school. Coached conversations, alongside team teaching and planning, all help to provide a highly effective professional development programme.

## 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

1

#### Provision

The quality of collective worship provided by the school

1

#### Leadership

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

1

1

Pupils engage fully in acts of prayer and liturgy, showing reverence, sharing thoughts and reflections, and singing joyfully. Pupils were able to refer to the Celebration of the Word later in the day, drawing on it to support their learning. Pupils talk in detail about a wide variety of ways of praying, such as using the rosary, using music, the use of items such as milk and food dye to demonstrate Christ's love spreading, and using cut-out hearts as paper aeroplanes to represent spreading the Good News. Pupils work together, supported by adults, to help prepare engaging experiences of prayer and liturgy. They willingly undertake ministries, and the role of spiritual leader is a sought-after position. The school now needs to hone the pupils' liturgical formation so they can carry out these ministries with greater confidence, understanding and skill. There is currently little evaluation of the quality of prayer and liturgy, although there are defined plans of how this is going to be improved. Pupils can speak confidently about how prayer and liturgy guides them in their lives and supports them in difficult times. One pupil said that before next week's national assessments, she will be praying to help calm her nerves. Pupils demonstrate an understanding of how prayer can lead to action but cannot clearly articulate the ways in which these experiences shape how they think about themselves or how it has inspired them to action.

The liturgical life of the school is carefully planned so that there are a wide range of significant moments in the life of the school community being recognised in prayer. Whilst some of these are spontaneous, those scheduled are carefully planned. Intrinsic links between the scripture and liturgy provide pupils with a deeper understanding of the scripture. The parish priest has identified how selecting appropriate scripture can be challenging for pupils and is looking to support them in this. Staff provide models of exemplary, creative practice. Pupils have ownership over how the new liturgy shelter is being developed, including what they want to have in it so that they can utilise it fully. *Prayer Bear Bags* in all year groups help to foster a love of prayer at home. The strong parish links mean that families feel welcome in the church and children are comfortable and confident ministering there. Governors mentioned a time when parishioners were taken aback by the confident way a child told them, 'Remember that God loves you'.

The school's policy on prayer and liturgy is well formulated and fit for purpose; however, it is fairly brief and lacks specific guidance for staff on how to structure Celebrations of the Word. The importance of the prayer life of the school is demonstrated in the dedication to further develop the provision to ensure consistently high-quality experiences, with the financial commitment for the new liturgy shelter highlighting this. There is a clear strategic plan for the next steps in developments which formalise the effective practice already in place in order to provide a strong succession plan. This plan includes developing prayer leaders so that they can lead spontaneous prayer enabling them to support pupils who want to pray at break times, and inviting younger prayer leaders to discuss with the older ones how they plan and evaluate liturgies. Several elements of this strategic level of thinking comes from the experiences and voices of the pupils which epitomises how Christ and the needs of the pupils are central to all that the school does.

## Information about the school

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|--|--|
| Full name of school                            | Our Lady and St Joseph Catholic Primary School   |
| School unique reference number (URN)           | 116378   |
| School DfE Number (LAESTAB)                    | 8503409  |
| Full postal address of the school              | Our Lady and St Joseph Catholic Primary School, 83a Ramley Road, Pennington, Lymington, SO41 8GY |
| School phone number                            | 01590672711  |
| Executive Headteacher                          | Gerida Montague  |
| Co Headteacher                                 | Sarah Hendricks  |
| Chair of Governors                             | Helen Ruane  |
| School Website                                 | <a href="http://www.olsjschool.co.uk">www.olsjschool.co.uk</a>                                   |
| 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                            | 4-11   |
| Gender of pupils                               | Mixed  |
| Date of last denominational inspection         | June 2018  |
| Previous denominational inspection grade       | Good   |

## The inspection team

|              |      |
|--------------|------|
| Jeff Sendall | Lead |
| Tara Sharp   | 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 |