



## Catholic Schools Inspectorate inspection report for St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, North Shields

URN: 148449

Carried out on behalf of the Most Rev Malcolm McMahon, Archbishop of Liverpool and Apostolic Administrator  
of the diocese of Hexham and Newcastle on:

Date: 18-19 May 2023

### Overall effectiveness

The overall quality of Catholic education provided by the school.....

2

### 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.....

2

### Religious education (p.5)

The quality of curriculum religious education.....

2

### Collective worship (p.7)

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

2

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

Fully

## Summary of key findings

### What the school does well

- The contribution of pupils to the school's mission, their active involvement in Catholic life and their sense of pride in belonging ensures that this is a school with Christ at the centre.
- The behaviour, enthusiasm, and attitudes to learning of pupils is a strength.
- The creative ways in which the curriculum has been adapted enable learners to access vocabulary and record their learning in various forms.
- High levels of pastoral care and support enable pupils to be confident, happy, and secure.
- The clear vision and relentless determination of the headteacher and school leaders keep the Catholic life of the school at the core of the school's work.

This Catholic Schools Inspectorate inspection was carried out under canons 804 & 806 of the code of canon law. For maintained schools and academies in England it fulfils the statutory requirements of s.48 of the Education Act 2005. For maintained schools and academies in Wales it fulfils the statutory requirements of s.50 of the Education Act 2005.

What the school needs to improve:

- Accelerate progress in religious education by tailoring the curriculum to build on pupils' current assessments.
- Systematically use the full range of self-evaluation strategies to enable school action plans to be well-targeted, precisely focused and effectively monitored.
- Further develop pupil leadership of prayer and liturgy, ensuring evaluation strategies are included to bring about future improvements.

## 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:.....

2

### Pupil outcomes

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

2

### Provision

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

2

### Leadership

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

2

Pupils at St Joseph's understand the distinctive Catholic identity and mission of the school. They actively and willingly participate in the Catholic life of the school. They understand that all pupils are valued and cared for as unique people made in the image and likeness of God and are happy, confident, and secure. They can articulate that their school is committed to promoting and following the teaching and example of Jesus as a way of living. Pupils take advantage of opportunities to grow in virtue through projects like the Kenyan water project, making cards for local care home residents, or taking actions to promote awareness of environmental issues. They respond to the demands of Catholic Social Teaching through their Faith In Action projects, Mini-Vinnies and Eco Clubs. However, their understanding of the theology underpinning their actions is not fully developed. Pupils demonstrate respect for themselves and others, recognising that their school is a place of welcome for all. Pupils have a strong sense of identity. They are proud of their involvement in renewing the school's mission statement, and their writing and singing of the school mission song. Behaviour in lessons and throughout the school is good.

The recent revision of the school's mission statement involved all stakeholders in the process. This revitalised expression of the school's core purpose has had a visible impact on school life. Staff are committed to the implementation of the mission and have worked with pupils to create a song linked to it which is known and loved by all. They promote and participate in activities and experiences which enable pupils to develop knowledge of Catholic Social Teaching. The school environment, including the website, reinforces the school's mission through displays reflecting the school's faith and values. The school is a harmonious, caring,

and supportive community with Christ at the centre. Everyone is welcomed, especially the most vulnerable, as well as pupils and families of other faiths. Their beliefs are respected, with provision made to accommodate their faith commitments. Good relationships at all levels bear witness to the school's values. Pastoral care is a strength, with a strong commitment to meeting the diverse needs of pupils. The school uses the diocesan approved scheme for the delivery of relationships, sex and health education (RSHE).

School leaders articulate the Church's mission and exercise their duties as guardians of the Catholic life and mission of the school. The head teacher is a key strength in driving this mission as a core leadership responsibility. The school works well in partnership with the diocese, trust, and local community of Catholic schools. Strong links with the parish have enabled a flourishing partnership to develop. The parish priest is a regular, valued, and influential visitor and is a visible presence around the school. Strong evidence exists of effective partnership working with parents. The school recognises and respects their role as the first educators of their children. Catholic Social Teaching drives the direction of the school at every level and leaders demonstrate their commitment to service of those in greatest need. Staff are respected and valued and there is a strong team approach to their work. This is reflected in the pastoral care for the physical and mental well-being of staff. Staff are supported well in their professional development, including supportive induction processes. Governors are ambitious for the school and see the promotion of the school's Catholic life and mission as central to their work. They are actively involved in school life. However, their evaluation of this area through gathering the views of parents, staff and pupils is not fully developed.

## Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade:.....

2

### Pupil outcomes

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education.....

2

### Provision

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

2

### Leadership

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

2

Pupils make good progress in religious education demonstrating secure knowledge, understanding and skills that reflect the requirements of the *Religious Education Curriculum Directory 2012*. Most pupils achieve well in all age phases. However, some pupils do not achieve as well because they are withdrawn from lessons for other activities thereby missing important parts of the curriculum. Pupils demonstrate an age-appropriate level of religious literacy and can articulate their current learning clearly. They understand the demands of religious commitment in everyday life. Pupils speak with confidence about prior learning and can articulate how they know more, remember more and do more as they progress through the planned curriculum. Behaviour in lessons is good because pupils enjoy their learning and have positive attitudes towards religious education. Pupils understand how well they are doing and can articulate how marking and feedback helps them to improve their learning. They take pride in the presentation of work in their books. Pupils take opportunities to respond to their learning in creative ways and this enables all pupils to demonstrate their progress. This includes the spirited artwork with which they respond at the end of each topic. Their attainment in religious education is in line with attainment in other subjects.

Teachers demonstrate secure subject knowledge and plan collaboratively across year groups to ensure that the curriculum is cohesive. Teachers understand how pupils learn and the curriculum includes a wide range of relevant and engaging activities. Lessons are made accessible to all through adaptations to learning activities, including the provision of key vocabulary. Opportunities to introduce pupils to passages from scripture are carefully planned across all year groups, enabling pupils to develop their knowledge and to make links in their learning. While the curriculum includes planned assessment opportunities, these are not used routinely to inform next steps in teaching and learning. This results in restricted opportunities for some pupils to achieve higher levels. Support staff are deployed effectively during lessons, working with pupils across the full ability

range. A particular strength in the provision is that pupils are given opportunities to present their learning in a wide variety of ways, for example by using QR codes. Pupils access good quality resources to aid their learning and they are supported by having access to technology, including tablets. Good feedback, reflecting the policy used in other core areas, ensures that most pupils understand what they need to do to progress.

Leaders ensure that the curriculum is a faithful expression of the *Religious Education Curriculum Directory 2012*. Religious education has parity with other core subjects with regards to the provision of continuing professional development, resourcing, and staffing. The headteacher describes religious education as 'the core of the core curriculum' and ensures that whole school policies, such as marking, are equitably applied across the curriculum. Staff are well-supported in their professional development by the leadership team. The religious education lead is well-respected by colleagues due to her depth of expertise. The curriculum is planned to ensure learners progress sequentially. However, current expectations limit the ability of some pupils to achieve a higher level of attainment. Opportunities are planned into the school calendar for staff to work together to moderate work in religious education and this extends to working alongside staff from other schools. School leaders ensure that the school provides pupils with a wealth of enrichment activities that enhance provision in religious education. Leaders undertake self-evaluation through monitoring, analysis and self-challenge, utilising pupil voice to identify actions for improvement. However, the involvement of governors in holding the school to account as part of the self-evaluation cycle in religious education is under-developed.

## Collective worship

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

Collective worship key judgement grade:.....

2

### 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

Pupils respond well to prayer and liturgy. They enjoy taking part and are respectful and reverent in their responses. Liturgical prayers are structured around scripture and include opportunities to reflect silently and to pray together. Pupils describe their enjoyment and involvement as opportunities when they 'can be peaceful, calm and reflective'. They see prayer and liturgy as a time that helps them to 'build relationships with God'. Pupils enjoy leading and preparing prayer and liturgy and do so with increased skill, knowledge, and independence as they progress through the school. They work well with adults and other pupils to prepare engaging prayer experiences. They understand a variety of ways of praying that are part of the Catholic tradition. Pupils can articulate how prayer and liturgy influence their lives and have inspired their actions. They are enthused by music and dance and their singing is passionate and joyful, especially when singing the school's mission song. Pupils can describe the parts of the Church's liturgical year and how the prayer life of the school links with this. Whilst pupils undertake the various ministries involved in prayer and liturgy, they are not systematically involved in evaluating the quality of prayer and liturgy they have planned.

Prayer and liturgy are central to the life of the school and form part of any routine gatherings of pupils, staff and leaders. The school day features prayer at key times and pupils have experience of praying in a range of ways, including traditional Catholic prayers. Prayer times reflect seasonally appropriate scripture and themes. Staff model good practice when leading prayer and liturgy and this in turn enables pupils to lead with confidence and increasing independence. Music and dance and other art forms are included to enhance experiences for participants and reflect the riches of the Church. The school environment is used well to promote prayer with every class having a well-resourced and cared for prayer space. Staff

work with pupils to prepare these prayer spaces, and this promotes the value and respect in which they are held. Opportunities to include parents in class prayer and liturgy are not fully developed although parents are invited to attend the regular Masses which take place in the parish church. The parish priest and parishioners are very appreciative of the involvement of pupils in parish Masses and of their participation in the liturgy. The school website and social media are used effectively to share a wide range of opportunities for prayer and liturgy.

School leaders ensure that the school calendar is populated with prayer and liturgy events which reflect the liturgical year. Holy days and special days are recognised and celebrated, and the school community gathers for Mass in the parish church on those days. Professional development for staff includes liturgical formation and is well-planned by school leaders. As a result, all staff understand and appreciate the importance of prayer and liturgy and are supported in developing their skills to lead this. Leaders ensure that all staff, including those recently appointed to the school, are able to plan prayer and liturgy opportunities that are engaging, of high quality, and relevant to pupils. School leaders ensure that prayer and liturgy is effectively enhanced through identifying new resources which are purchased through the school budget. Informal monitoring by leaders and governors of the quality of prayer and liturgy takes place, but this does not yet feed into the school's cycle of self-evaluation around which governors can hold the school to account.



## Information about the school

Full name of school	St Joseph's Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	148449
Full postal address of the school	Wallsend Road, North Shields, Tyne and Wear, NE29 7BT
School phone number	0191 257 3097
Name of head teacher or principal	Claire Hedley
Chair of governing board	Anne-Marie McCann
School Website	<a href="http://www.stjosephsrc-primary.co.uk">www.stjosephsrc-primary.co.uk</a>
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	Bishop Bewick Catholic Education Trust
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy
Age-range of pupils	3 to 11
Trustees	The Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	March 2016
Previous denominational inspection grade	2

## The inspection team

Michael Ewing

Lead inspector

Fiona Moore

Team inspector

## 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