



# Saint Joseph's Catholic Primary School-The Borough

URN: 100834

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf Most Rev John Wilson of the Archbishop of Southwark

18–19 January 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

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

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

2

## What the school does well

- Saint Joseph's is a welcoming cohesive community which celebrates both its diversity and its Catholicity with joy.
- The school's mission statement is proudly known and lived by the whole community.
- Pupils respect themselves and each other, so that behaviour is consistently excellent.
- Children with special educational needs are cared for especially well and supported effectively in religious education lessons and beyond.
- Saint Joseph's is a school which is rapidly evolving. Leaders and governors are reflective and analytical; they show capacity and passion to continue their exciting journey.

## What the school needs to improve

- To review relationships and health education (RHE) provision to ensure that pupil knowledge and understanding builds systematically on prior learning.
- To provide regular and ongoing training for all teachers of religious education to build their confidence in the subject knowledge needed to teach and assess using the new *Religious Education Directory*.
- To implement a clear strategy to build pupils' leadership skills in prayer and liturgy, supported by the new *Prayer and Liturgy Directory*.

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## 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

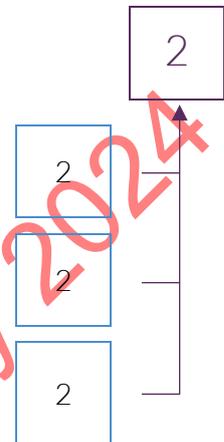
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

#### 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



*'We welcome all God's children into our learning family. Growing together, forming future leaders.'* The recent redevelopment of the Saint Joseph's mission statement is recognised as a transformative experience by the whole school community. Pupils are proud of their involvement and they understand how this links to their mission to welcome others. A Year 3 pupil explained: 'We welcome everybody. We have different skin colours and different religions but we are all God's children.' Pupils have high expectations of themselves and of each other. They understand elements of Catholic social teaching through half-termly themes which link to their everyday lives. A Year 5 pupil linked this half-term's theme 'Solidarity' to his religious education topic of 'Mission' saying: 'God loves everybody equally so we should treat everybody with respect, no matter who they are.' Pupils have not yet proactively made the links between Catholic social teaching and support for local, national and global charities but the newly formed chaplaincy team are excited about the possibility to take the lead in wider charity work. All pupils recognise that they are loved and respected at Saint Joseph's; a Year 1 pupil expressed the feeling, 'Saint Joseph's is a big family.'

Governors feel that two things are at the heart of Saint Joseph's welcoming community – 'our children and our faith.' All parents agree that Christ is at the heart of this school and the high quality of relationships between staff and pupils is clearly evident. Staff are positive role models and the provision of pastoral care, including for the most vulnerable, is a real strength of the school. The school follows *'Life to the Full'* which is a Catholic programme of relationships and health education (RHE) approved both by the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales and by the Department for Education. Children speak confidently about their learning in RHE but school leaders recognise that this is not yet systematic and plan a review of RHE implementation. Chaplaincy provision is strongly supported by the parish priest and all parts of the community regard him as 'part of the fabric of the

school' and greatly value his input. A Year 6 pupil reflected on the impact of his presence: 'He can inspire us to be a priest like he is.'

The passion and dedication of the head teacher and wider senior leadership team have allowed Saint Joseph's to evolve rapidly over the last eighteen months. The newly reconstituted governing body have made an excellent start getting to know the school through regular visits, which allow them to triangulate information received in the head teacher's reports. Leaders and governors are determined to develop Saint Joseph's into an outstanding Catholic school through their regular engagement with the diocese and with local schools, both Catholic and secular. Parish links with Our Lady of La Salette and St Joseph are valued and parents appreciate the many positive changes leaders have made. Catholic social teaching is a focus at Saint Joseph's and leaders recognise that they can build on this good foundation in future, for example by participating in the Bishop's recommendation for Year 6 to have the opportunity to achieve their *Faith in Action Award* at primary school. All staff speak passionately and positively about the school leadership and echo the view that the school has, 'never been better.' New staff report that leaders supported them well when they started at the school and all respondents to the staff survey agreed that they enjoy working at Saint Joseph's.

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## Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

### Religious education key judgement grade

#### Pupil outcomes

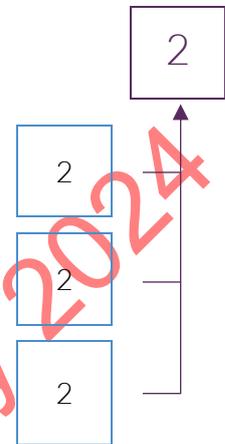
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

#### 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



Saint Joseph's is at the start of the journey towards implementing the *Religious Education Directory* and there is engagement with diocesan training to support this. However, pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills do currently develop progressively through the use of the *Come and See* programme. Outcomes for pupils achieving age-related expectations in religious education are generally in line with outcomes in other core subjects and sometimes better. However, data shows that few pupils currently achieve above average outcomes in religious education and pupils' books reflected this pattern. Pupils with special educational needs and disabilities are particularly well-supported to achieve appropriate outcomes, for example through the use of *Widgit* to symbolise text or by completing work in the sensory room. Opportunities for pupils to work independently were not widespread in the lessons observed although a Year 6 class engaged well with a group discussion about the relevance of the Bible to the modern age. A Year 6 pupil asserted: 'The Bible is the Word of God. It is relevant all the time.' Pupils' religious literacy is good and parents note that their children's 'Biblical knowledge' often surprises them. Lessons are engaging and pupils enjoy opportunities to reflect and express themselves creatively as evidenced in their class portfolios.

Teachers are committed to the value of religious education so that pupils recognise this as an important part of their school life. The parish priest on the governing body identified that the school: 'provides a space for pupils to interpret and understand their lived experience.' In the lessons observed, links were made effectively between the content of religious education lessons and pupils' real-life experiences. Skilful questioning is a feature throughout the school, giving pupils the opportunity to make links across their knowledge and demonstrate their progress. School leaders recognise that teachers currently teach using the *Come and See* resources quite tightly; building teacher confidence in their subject knowledge would support them to give pupils greater independence and opportunity for creative thinking, driving higher outcomes in religious education. Saint Joseph's has a high percentage of pupils who have English as an additional language; explicit

teaching of target vocabulary in religious education occurs throughout the school and was especially beneficial to these learners. Pupil responses in lessons are valued and respected by adults and fellow pupils alike, so that the learning environment is conducive to responding to questions freely.

The subject leader for religious education has a clear vision for her subject and is well supported by leaders and governors. She in turn supports class teachers with training and support for subject knowledge, resulting in lessons which are consistently good. Leaders access diocesan training and are now engaging with local Catholic schools to support robust moderation of assessment outcomes. In the Catholic School Evaluation Document, leaders correctly identified the need for further work developing class teacher subject knowledge and confidence to assess pupil outcomes in the future. Enrichment activities are organised regularly by leaders, for example Cafod workshops on Catholic social teaching, *Time to Change* workshops and a pilgrimage to St George's Cathedral. These enhance children's understanding between their learning and the wider world. Leaders have an open-door policy which is valued by staff who note: 'someone will always help if you have a question.' Governors have a clear understanding of their role to support and challenge the school leaders; they have a diverse set of complementary skills which are used effectively to drive progress. Governors visit the school regularly in their monitoring role and share a common vision for the school.

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## Collective worship

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

### Collective worship key judgement grade

**Pupil outcomes**

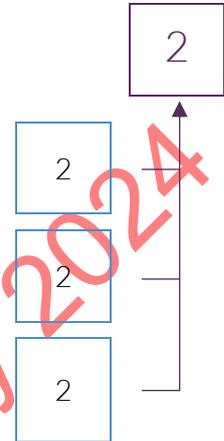
How well pupils participate in and respond to the school's collective worship

**Provision**

The quality of collective worship provided by the school

**Leadership**

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



Engagement in the regular prayer life of the school is consistently enthusiastic in all year groups. A Year 1 pupil recognised that what makes Saint Joseph's one family is 'our prayers'. Pupils enjoy a variety of ways of praying, ranging from quiet reflective moments to enthusiastic singing and signing of favourite hymns. Class prayer boxes are in use throughout the school; a Year 5 pupil explained how their prayer box holds sentence starters to help them use different types of prayer. Upper Key Stage Two pupils are confident to lead class prayer independently using planning sheets based on the structure: Gather; Listen; Respond; Mission. The newly formed Year 6 chaplaincy team are growing in confidence to lead whole school liturgy supported by school leaders and they are looking forward to evaluating their work and welcoming more pupils to the team of five as it develops further. Pupils value the opportunity for reflective prayer, sometimes using *Mark 10: Mission* resources to consider what they want to say to Jesus when he is with them in a moment of quiet. A Year 6 pupil said she enjoys this very much because, 'it makes you feel nice and calm.'

Prayer and liturgy at Saint Joseph's are strongly linked to the liturgical calendar and daily prayer routines are well-established. Staff provide pupils with role models of participation and calmly help pupils with special educational needs and disabilities to join in if support is needed. Pupils have opportunities to use their gifts to enhance prayer life, for example by writing prayers in their home languages and collective worship in Early Years Foundation Stage was enhanced by the teacher accompanying the children's Gather song on the ukelele. Space within the school is well-used to give opportunities for prayer and reflection and there are plans to further develop an outside prayer space in the new gazebo, which Year 6 enjoyed using for their class prayer during inspection. All pupils enjoy contributing to the whole school prayer tree in the centre of the school and a Year 3 pupil explained that the large crucifix is displayed by the pupil entrance, 'to help us remember that God loves us all.' EYFS have a dedicated prayer shed which the children enjoy using for 'quiet times'. All parents agree

that they are invited to be part of the prayer life of the school and links with the local parish of Our Lady of La Salette and St Joseph are valued by the whole community.

Leaders including governors have a shared vision for understanding and meeting the needs of their community, which informs their planning of prayer and liturgy. Leaders organised diocesan prayer and liturgy training for teaching staff in Autumn 2023. The pupil-led collective worship observed was well-planned and supported by school leaders. Pupils are valued and respected, enabling them in turn to value and respect each other's personal responses in prayer and worship. Even the youngest children show this respect and support; during prayers one child spontaneously calmed a classmate by stroking his back. This demonstrates pupils learning the respect and support modelled by teachers and leaders. The quality of self-evaluation and analysis is very high; leaders are reflective and keen to build on the foundation they have laid. The subject leader has identified the *Prayer and Liturgy Directory* as an opportunity to review and further develop practice in pupil-led prayer across the school. Parents value the close links between home, school and parish which are also prioritised by leaders, governors and the parish priest. These links are particularly evident in support for the parish sacramental programmes such as First Holy Communion.

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## Information about the school

Full name of school	St Joseph's Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	100834
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	2103484
Full postal address of the school	St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Little Dorrit Court, Redcross Way, London, SE1 1NJ
School phone number	02074072642
Head teacher	Catherine Fulton
Chair of Governors	Tracey Cotterill
School Website	<a href="http://www.saintjosephsborough.co.uk">www.saintjosephsborough.co.uk</a>
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	N/A
Phase	Primary
Type of school	Voluntary Aided School
Admissions policy	Non-selective
Age-range of pupils	3-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	3 <sup>rd</sup> October 2017
Previous denominational inspection grade	Outstanding

## The inspection team

Catherine Burnham  
Vera Jajechnyk

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