



St Joseph's Catholic Infant School

URN: 101803

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

22–23 February 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

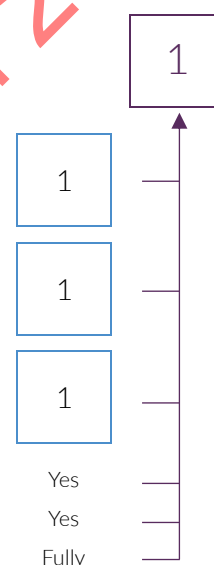
Collective worship (p.7)

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

- Pastoral care is a significant strength of the school.
- Work in Religious Education is effectively adapted in ways that ensure all pupils learn and make progress.
- The effective use of other adults ensures all pupils are cared for and included in school activities.
- Pupils have a rich and rewarding experience of Religious Education from the very start of their schooling.
- The vibrant Catholic environment reflects the school's commitment to living out the mission statement.

What the school needs to improve

- Governors and school leaders must establish a strategic plan for monitoring and evaluating prayer and liturgy.
- Create opportunities for subject team leaders to ensure the new curriculum provides pupils with high quality learning experiences.

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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

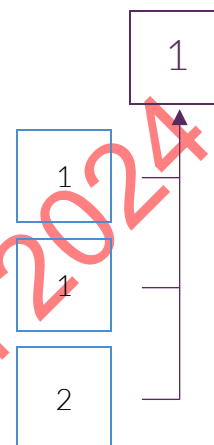
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

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



Pupils are very willing and happy learners. They enthusiastically come to this highly inclusive school knowing they will be safe and welcome. They are greeted by staff who create a nurturing Christian family that offers a rich experience of Catholic life. Children in early years and pupils in Key Stage 1, clearly know God loves them. Pupils understand that their faith brings certain responsibilities and calls them to take responsibility for serving others. The way they work and play together shows they know God wants them to be kind to others. The impact is further seen in the calm and well-ordered environment that reflects a tangible sense of belonging across the school. Throughout the nursery and school, pupils are developing a basic understanding of the commitments enshrined in Catholic social teaching. This lays a strong foundation for a deeper understanding as they go through the school. Pupils' excellent behaviour and friendliness reflect their genuine awareness of the responsibility they have to others. They understand that how they live can impact positively on the lives of others, especially those who are less fortunate locally, nationally and internationally. They participate in the school's activities to raise funds for others, for example, contributing through the Cafod boxes for Lent.

Pupils are provided with an excellent start to their school journey in a community that is genuinely warm and caring. A desire to 'love your neighbour' is clearly expressed by the whole community. The mission statement, 'Together We Can, With Christ by Our Side', is the foundation of everything that happens. The impact of the vision is evident in the warm and respectful relationships throughout the school. Even at a young age, nursery children know who Jesus is. They understand that he wants them to be good children by caring for others. All staff are committed to its implementation. Pupils speak warmly of how their teachers look after them and help them when they are upset. The school environment reflects the Catholic mission and identity of the school with a wide array of displays. Classroom prayer areas are beautifully looked after. The high level of pastoral care ensures pupils are happy and understand the commandment to love their neighbour. Parents really appreciate the way their children are looked after. Staff are positive role models for children. Pupils learn good behaviour

and the impact of bad behaviour. One new parent commented that her child can already talk about Jesus and prayer at home.

A strong partnership between leaders at all levels is helping the school provide an excellent Christian environment in which young children and pupils can grow in faith. The vision and commitment of leaders and governors is shared by all members of the community. The head teacher and all staff are bound together by an ethos of providing pupils with the best start to their school journey. Many parents acknowledge the school is having a positive impact on their children. Leaders and governors have a strong sense of vocation to provide a school that responds to the needs and strengths of staff and pupils. There is a tangible culture of care. Governors bring knowledge and experience to the school. They know the school well and are developing plans to monitor the Catholic life and mission more effectively. This is further reflected in the induction of new staff and support given to all staff. A teacher commented that she was 'welcomed as a new member of staff and immediately treated like family'. This is further evidenced by the way the community came together in faith during a recent school bereavement.

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Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

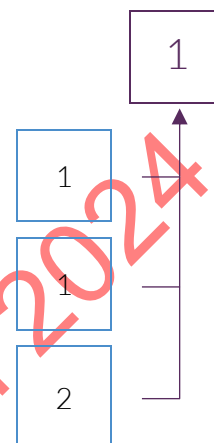
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

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



Pupils speak positively about their learning in religious education. They enjoy lessons and are always engaged in answering questions and working quietly in groups. The exuberant response from reception children in discussions, for example, reflects the happy way pupils approach lessons. Pupils are able to adapt to teachers' expectations. They are always engaged in learning but when required, they settle quickly and listen. Pupils try hard to do their best and present their learning beautifully and in a way that reflects their age and ability. Floor books, a collection of all pupils' ideas and learning in lessons, are a more effective and inclusive way of showing what pupils understand, particularly at this stage. It enables pupils to demonstrate what they know in a non-verbal way. Pupils are becoming increasingly religiously literate. Even nursery children can properly use words such as God, Jesus, Easter. Throughout the school, pupils become more confident and skilled at remembering more and thinking more independently. Pupils make good progress and achieve well in Religious Education. Outcomes in Religious Education, including for pupils with special education needs and/or disabilities (SEND), are strong and on a par with the other core subjects.

Teachers ensure lessons meet the needs of all pupils very effectively. There is a consistent approach to planning and structure that reflects teachers' shared understanding of how to ensure young pupils engage and learn. All classes revisit prior learning at the start of their lessons. Teachers introduce key words according to the topic in every lesson, for example reconciliation and tabernacle. Teachers have high expectations of pupils and have confidence in the ability of all pupils to learn and make good progress. They are able to offer appropriate challenge and support for all pupils because they know them so well. They adapt tasks and have a range of creative ways that match the age and ability of pupils to help them access learning. For example, using role play in the story of Zacchaeus or the calming of the storm, inspired a sense of wonder and awe that captured pupils' imagination. Teachers are effective in ensuring pupils are happy, confident learners by promoting a culture of praise and encouragement. Assessment is used to identify pupils' strengths and areas that need further support. The learning and emotional support of other adults is a particularly significant strength and ensures no pupil is left out.

Leaders and governors have an effective partnership. They are ambitious for sustaining high standards of teaching and learning. Leaders at all levels understand where the school is and bring a shared understanding of how to improve teaching and learning in religious education. They are proud of the way the school has developed through the transition stage and are determined to keep outcomes on an upward trajectory. The link governor is vastly experienced at monitoring and evaluating the provision for religious education. Governors and school leaders are beginning to develop more effective monitoring procedures to ensure the standards of teaching and learning continue to improve. The religious education team is knowledgeable and know the strengths and weakness of teaching and learning in religious education. They recognise the skill and talents within the team but are also supportive of staff by providing opportunities for them to develop their knowledge and expertise. School leaders regularly monitor teaching and learning through learning walks and observations. Regular formal and informal meetings ensure staff are well supported. The coaching team, for example, is instrumental in supporting subject leaders to ensure a greater understanding of how to help pupils make further progress.

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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

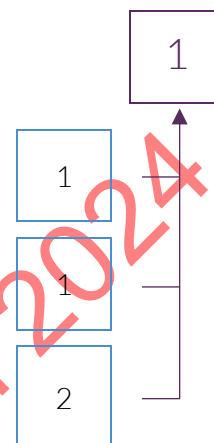
How well pupils participate in and respond to the school's collective worship

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



It is a joy to see such young children pray so respectfully and with reverence. Prayers at the start of lessons and in the assembly show that nursery children and pupils are able to participate quietly and listen intently. They also instinctively respond to music by singing hymns beautifully and adding lively dancing. Pupils, including nursery children, recognise that prayer is a part of daily life. They understand that prayer time is special. They know why they pray and how to pray, for example, praying at home and writing their own prayers. A parent commented on their child's habit of praying more at home. Pupils are able to reflect in silence and join in with others with confidence. They know when to join hands and are able to make the sign of the cross properly. Pupils know the formal school prayers and they are aware of the prayer box into which they can place their own intentions. They say they understand why prayer is important in a Catholic school. Pupils already display a good knowledge of Lent and demonstrate an understanding of how Jesus suffered and rose again. They recognise how Lent should impact on their own lives in school and at home.

Extensive provision of a wide range of varied religious experiences for prayer and liturgy reflects the central place prayer has in the school. A detailed program of religious experiences show that prayer forms the heart of daily routine of learning. It is not just at set times but a way of life. There is a clear purpose and message which enables pupils to grow in their understanding of how to pray and the value of prayer. Moments of quiet sum up the commitment the school has in providing meaningful and appropriate spiritual occasions. Staff fully embrace their role in helping nursery children and pupils pray. They serve as good role models in the way they participate and guide pupils sincerely and with reverence. Provision is enhanced by visiting priests from three local parishes. Pupils attend church for major school celebrations, such as the feast day. Priests visit the school and are available to support the growth of the spiritual life of the school. One priest confirmed that the school is an effective prayerful place.

Leaders and governors are deeply committed to the provision of effective spiritual experiences. They share common aims, providing the school with opportunities to pray. They ensure prayer and liturgy have a high priority in the school and are valued as bringing staff and pupils closer to God as a

worshipping community. Leaders at all levels understand that prayer and liturgy are integral to the growth of a Catholic, spiritual community. Governors understand the role they play in ensuring high quality provision of prayer and liturgy. Although governors know the school well and support the head teacher with their experience, they are aware that monitoring the quality of prayer and liturgy needs to be more rigorous. The head teacher ensures prayer and liturgy are a way of daily life. She is ably supported by senior staff and is proud of the way pupils come together and show respect for each other. The range of weekly assemblies and daily prayer experiences serve to ensure all pupils have opportunities to pray together and on their own.

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Information about the school

Full name of school	St Joseph's Catholic Infant School
School unique reference number (URN)	101803
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	3063412
Full postal address of the school	St Joseph's Catholic Infant School, Crown Dale, Upper Norwood, London, SE19 3NX
School phone number	02086702385
Head teacher	Danielle Ashley
Chair of Governors	Gillian Powell
School Website	www.stjosephsfederation.co.uk
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	3-7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	6 May 2016
Previous denominational inspection grade	1

The inspection team

Damian Fox
Bridget Durrant

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