



St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

URN: 100833

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

01–02 May 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

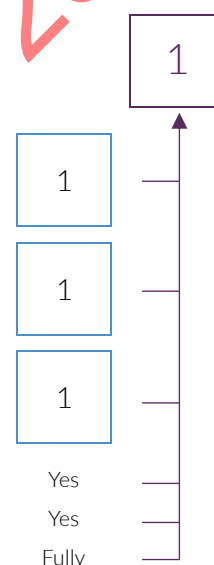
Collective worship (p.7)

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

- A vision, shared by all leaders and governors and driven by an exceptional, inspirational headteacher, where Christ is truly at the heart of this school.
- The creation of a safe, loving and welcoming community which celebrates its diversity and embraces its inclusivity.
- Creating an environment wherein all are treated with love, respect and kindness – the St Joseph's Way.
- Every member of the community knows Catholic social teaching, understand its meaning and importance, and how this impacts their own life in school and beyond.
- Empowers children to be inspirational leaders and role models.

What the school needs to improve

- Develop an age appropriate in-school retreat programme or day of reflection for all pupils.
- Share best practice in teaching and learning so that over time less confident teachers learn from colleagues and become more secure in their practice.
- Share the unique qualities and expertise of child-led prayer and liturgy with other schools in the diocese.

Date Published: 24th May 2024

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

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Pupils understand and embrace the distinctive Catholic identity, charism and mission of their school. Their participation significantly enhances the Catholic life and mission. The children know they are valued and loved; they are happy, confident, feel safe and secure. The highly visible pupil peacemakers ensure conflict at playtime is quickly resolved through restorative justice and the St Joseph's Way - love, respect and kindness. Equally, they value and love the staff, describing the school as a 'family' and how the school 'makes me feel really loved'. One parent stated, 'bigger children take responsibility for the smaller children'. There is a clear understanding of what it means to follow in the footsteps of Jesus. Consequently, pupils flourish, seeking opportunities to grow in virtue, embracing responsibility for the common good. Catholic social teaching is central to the life of the school; the pupils respond positively to its demands, engaging in raising money for a variety of charities specifically chosen by the pupils, for example Wings of Hope. Behaviour is exemplary in lessons and throughout the school. It is deeply rooted in the Word of God and the St Joseph's Way, the impact of which goes beyond the school to home and the wider community. Indeed, it has been and is 'lifechanging.' Pupil voice is central; they know they are listened to and confident they will get a response. For example, friendship benches are in response to pupils' suggestion. The Friends of St Joseph's is actively engaged in raising money for the school and other charitable causes. Such funds enabled the school to create the external prayer spaces in the play areas.

The mission statement, St Joseph's way, virtue and Catholic social teaching are known well by the whole community and witnessed to in a very clear and tangible way. They have a significant impact on all areas of the curriculum. For example, in science pupils discuss how honesty and resilience affect the study of science. All staff are exemplary role models for the pupils. Their relationship with each other, and with the pupils is a 'shining beacon' bearing witness to the school's Catholic life and mission. The school environment, wall displays and prayer spaces, all speak volumes to the respect

and dignity shown to all members of the community. Using Character Education and Ten:Ten resources relationship sex, health and education, interwoven with personal, social, health education, is well planned, meets statutory and diocesan guidelines. It is firmly rooted in Catholic teaching celebrating a holistic vision of the human person. St Joseph's achieved the United Nations Rights Respecting School Silver Level and the Oscar Romero Participator Level Award; the school is now fully engaged in achieving the next level for both awards.

Leaders and governors regard their duty as guardians of the Catholic life and mission to be the highest priority; one which is undertaken with great joy and enthusiasm. Governors are frequent visitors to the school; there is a mutually respectful relationship between school leaders and governors. As one governor stated, 'you said, we saw'; governors hold the leadership team fully accountable, going to see what is being said. The relationship between the school and parish is strong; the parish priest is a regular visitor to the school, celebrating the sacraments, leading pupils in prayer and reflection, and providing training and guidance for staff. The example and leadership of the headteacher is phenomenal; her drive and enthusiasm are inspirational. Through mutual cooperation significant change has occurred in a relatively short period of time. Parents and carers greatly appreciate regular communication through the headteacher's weekly newsletter, pupils' newsletter and religious education newsletter.

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

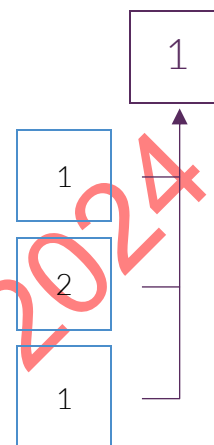
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

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 love their religious education lessons, they are focused, actively engaged, challenged and responsive to the variety of activities. They consistently make good progress over time. Pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and disabilities achieve the best possible outcomes. Relative to their age and capacity, their religious literacy is outstanding; they use their knowledge, understanding and skills effectively to reflect spiritually, think ethically and respond theologically, all rooted in Catholic social teaching and virtues. They demonstrate independent learning, concentrate exceptionally well, love the challenge of learning, are curious and interested learners. Pupils take pride in their work; presentation in exercise books is very high quality. There is much evidence of thoughtful, extended writing. Behaviour for learning is excellent, enabling all pupils to participate at their own level. Clearly differentiated work, supported by the skillful use of teaching assistants, ensures all pupils over time make very good progress. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are confident using a Bible to find scripture passages.

Teaching and learning in religious education is never less than good, with some outstanding features. Teachers' subject knowledge is very good, enhanced by the school's commitment for them to complete modules of the Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies. In some classes teacher questioning is skillful eliciting explanations which are thoughtful demonstrating a deep understanding of the topic, Catholic social teaching, its application to the topic and relevance to their own life. In lessons where pupils do not demonstrate a similar depth of understanding, sharing best practice across the school will enable less confident teachers to become more secure in their practice. Class Spiritual Journey books are ways in which pupils reflect creatively in religious education; the Year 6 book in particular contained beautiful artwork, poetry and prayers. One pupil said they especially enjoyed 'painting how God was the light of the world'. There is a written dialogue between teacher and pupil through questions posed which extends knowledge and develops evaluative skills. In Key Stage 1 assessment is continuous with photographic and written evidence of each child's progress. Through the use of

key performance indicators, Key Stage 2 pupils know how well they are doing, and what needs to be done to progress

The subject lead is outstanding in her leadership of the subject. She shares the same passion, drive, vision and enthusiasm as the headteacher. The curriculum is well planned; training, resources and support is frequently provided by the subject lead and parish priest so that teachers, and assistants, are confident in delivering the curriculum, especially those not familiar with the Catholic faith. She has a clear vision of how to develop the subject. She recognises the need to challenge the more able pupils through adaptive teaching. She intends to incorporate music into the religious education curriculum. Through the *Come and See* programme pupils learn about the beliefs and practices of other faiths, enhanced by planned visits to non-Christian places of worship. One parent stated, 'the RE lead does an amazing job'. For example, one homework project was to write and record the Lord's Prayer in the child's first language. The results of this are on display, and by scanning a QR code can be watched and listened to. Her regular newsletter keeps parents abreast of what the pupils are doing, things to focus on at home and any forthcoming events. Governors have been proactive in ensuring religious education has parity with other core subjects, it is seen as foundational to the whole school curriculum. This is evidenced by the subject lead being a member of the senior leadership team. She is also a regular attendee at governor's meetings.

Collective worship

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

Collective worship key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

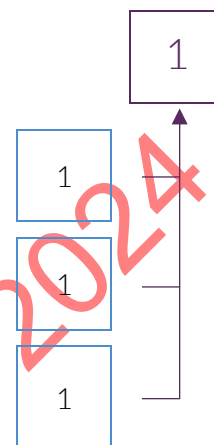
How well pupils participate in and respond to the school's collective worship

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



Child-led liturgy has been one of the core principles of the school. Consequently, pupils are proactive and fully engaged in the school's prayer and liturgy. Pupils confidently lead prayer and liturgy, have due regard for the message being promoted and for the atmosphere needed to create a prayerful environment. Their understanding of the variety of ways to pray, their use of scripture and symbol, silence, and allowing time to reflect, as well as choosing suitable hymns and music is exceptional. In one child-led morning assembly the use of the Circle Song, as the pupils entered reverently and respectfully, was not only inspirational but also invitational to the whole community to come together to pray and to worship; it was very beautiful and very moving. Their capacity to evaluate the quality of their prayer and liturgy is seen through their immediate evaluation of what went well and how to make it even better. For example, one Year 5 pupil said, 'we need to involve the infants more'. Pupil faith leaders are exceptional role models. In this capacity they ensure the class prayer tables, prayer garden and Our Lady and St Joseph prayer shrines in the play areas are neat, tidy and reflect the liturgical year.

Prayer and liturgy is absolutely central to the life of the school. Daily whole school morning prayer has had a very positive impact throughout the school. It has a very calm, peaceful atmosphere, seen not only in lessons but also in the way pupils move around the building and interact with each other. The liturgical life of the Church is deeply ingrained in the life and rhythm of the school. Pupils have the opportunity to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation during Lent; a class group attend morning Mass once a week in the local parish. Mass is regularly celebrated in school to mark important feast days and holy days. There is a well-attended Friday morning rosary or stations of the cross to which parents and carers are invited, as well as a voluntary Monday prayer group led by the parents. Parents report they are frequently invited into school to share in prayer and liturgy. The child-led prayer and liturgy enable the pupils to develop leadership skills, with minimal adult guidance. From planning to execution, pupils take the lead, producing high quality prayerful acts of worship. The new Wednesday

hymn singing, led by the diocesan choral director, has introduced the pupils to the wealth and richness of liturgical music from traditional Latin to modern, contemporary music. Their singing is truly uplifting and accessible to all through the use of Makaton signing. Pupils' experience of prayer and liturgy could be enhanced through an in-school day of spiritual reflection or retreat, as appropriate for their age.

There is a very clear policy on collective worship and prayer and liturgy. Leaders, including governors, have planned the school calendar ensuring there are many opportunities to celebrate the Eucharist, holy days and other significant days in the liturgical year. Governors are regular visitors to the school attending prayer and other liturgical activities. As a result of the high priority given to prayer and liturgy, all staff understand its centrality to the school; it is the beating heart of St Joseph's. The school is working towards enabling all staff to be confident leading prayer and liturgy. Leaders and governors have a drive and enthusiasm to continually build upon the current provision to provide more opportunities and to broaden and deepen the pupils' spiritual experiences. This vision is shared and embraced by the whole community.

Information about the school

Full name of school	St Joseph's Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	100833
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	2103476
Full postal address of the school	St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Gomm Road, Lower Road, Rotherhithe, London, SE16 2TY
School phone number	02072374036
Headteacher	Catherine McLoughlin
Chair of Governors	Eduardo Petrilli
School Website	www.stjosephsprimary.org.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	22 nd February 2018
Previous denominational inspection grade	Outstanding

The inspection team

Mrs Patricia Horsman	Lead Inspector
Mrs Fatima D'Mello	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

Date Published: 24th May 2024