



St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

URN: 124354

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Archbishop of Birmingham

24–25 January 2024

Summary of key findings

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

1

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

What the school does well

- Strong parish links reflect leaders' commitment to the school's Catholic life and mission.
- Pupils' understanding that they have a mission as 'Christ's body on earth' is embedded and shared confidently.
- Staff are strong role models of faith who enable pupils to make links between the Catholic faith and their personal life choices.
- Governor links are strong and support developing the school's Catholic life.
- Pupils know that their opinions are heard and valued.

What the school needs to improve

- Support all teachers to help pupils articulate an age-appropriate understanding of the language of Catholic Social teaching.
- Improve feedback so pupils clearly understand what they need to do to improve in religious education.
- Empower pupils to plan, lead, and evaluate prayer and liturgy independently.

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

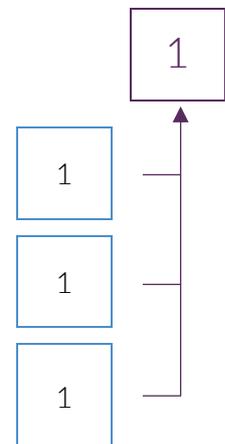
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

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 confidently share that all in the school community are valued as God's children. They confidently embrace the school motto, 'To inspire, to learn, to love with God' because they identify that it supports them in developing a better relationship with God, leading them to His kingdom in heaven. Pupils state that the gospels inspire them to make good choices every day. Being open to hearing God's calling is a well-developed and openly discussed topic with pupils, which they highly value. They enjoyed a recent vocation day, with one pupil feeling inspired to potentially follow a career in law because of a barrister speaking to her in class. Pupils clearly understand that God inspires them to 'do great things every day'. The pupil parliament, consisting of the school council, liturgy leaders' group, mini vinnies, and eco-warriors, are viewed by pupils as role models who teach others to carry out their mission to be Christ's body on earth. For example, the eco-warriors lead and inspire other pupils in working towards Cafod's LiveSimply Award, giving practical advice on being active in taking steps to be stewards of creation and protecting our world. Pupils value learning about other faiths and religions and how this supports their life in modern Britain.

St Joseph's has a strong culture of welcome for all. Staff feel honoured to be role models to the pupils and each other. They actively participate in charitable works, including reverse Advent calendars, parish fetes, and fundraising opportunities. New staff members are fully supported within this strong Catholic community. Adults within school willingly give time outside of the school day to promote and nurture the Catholic life of St Joseph's, setting an inspiring example to pupils on how to live out Christ's mission actively. The school council worked with staff to design a child-friendly behaviour policy valued by both staff and pupils. Staff consistently adhere to this policy, which ensures high standards of Christ-centred behaviours are both modelled and

celebrated by all. Staff celebrate all team members' work to develop pupils, particularly ensuring vulnerable pupils feel appropriately supported. Links with external agencies and internal support through Rainbows, the emotional literacy support assistant, and nurture groups are strong. Leaders guarantee that relationship and health education are carefully planned, ensuring pupils of all ages understand healthy relationships based on love, entirely in line with Catholic teaching. It supports pupils' awareness of how to keep themselves safe in real-life situations.

School policies clearly reflect the Catholic nature and mission of the school. The head teacher's positive and supportive outlook is reflected by all staff, who feel they are part of a team, going out of their way to nurture others' well-being. This view is reflected by parents who say, 'Nothing is too much trouble.' Staff appreciate leaders' support, acknowledging tasks are always focused on ensuring all become the person God has called them to be. School leaders recognise the family as a child's first educator, working closely with the parish to support parents in the faith formation of their children. The school proactively seeks the views of pupils and parents, resulting in a culture where people know their voices are recognised. Parental support for the school's Catholic life and mission is overwhelmingly positive. One parent shared, 'The school is very good at promoting Catholic life and values and is led by a strong head teacher.' Leaders and governors are united in their vision, supporting the archbishop's vision for diocesan schools. Staff appreciate the training and collaborative planning opportunities provided by the head teacher.

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

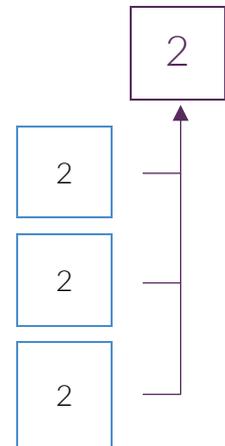
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

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



As a result of skilfully adapted activities and recapping previous learning, pupils of all ages progress in religious education lessons. For example, pupils confidently retell the miracles of Jesus, with younger pupils justifying why they like particular Gospel stories and developing an understanding of how they influence their everyday lives, whilst older pupils regularly use age-appropriate Bibles to access scripture and can compare and contrast gospels, giving suggestions of how they influence their lives. A culture of working collaboratively and supporting each other is firmly embedded, meaning pupils confidently work independently, in pairs, and groups. Pupils know that you can have different opinions from others, but you must be able to justify them. Learning behaviours in lessons reflect high expectations set by staff, which pupils rise to. Detailed planning captures pupils' interest, resulting in excellent class behaviour. The presentation of work is good, showing the impact of a recent focus on improving this. Pupils take great pride in their exercise books and know their opinions are valued; for example, a pupil voice exercise has resulted in pupil-chosen religious art being the focal point on exercise book covers.

Working in partnership with other local Catholic schools, the school has successfully created new unit markers, which challenge pupils' understanding and encourage them to know and remember more, and has successfully implemented their use. Training on developing questioning skills has enhanced teacher questioning, which is now strong, encouraging further thinking and justification of pupils' opinions. Accurate planning and adaptation of teaching strategies that understand everyone's needs give pupils time to reflect and deepen their understanding of how their learning impacts their choices. The use of 'Godly play' supports younger pupils' understanding. Some teachers promote ethical awareness with precise links to Catholic social teaching and real-world news stories locally and internationally. Where this is fully developed, pupils respond positively and can make links between scripture and their lives.

Religious artwork is used skilfully to engage and motivate all pupils; this shows the impact of recent training for teaching staff and is used well in all year groups. A wide range of resources is carefully selected to optimise learning. This is evident in pupil outcomes and data; for example, paired talk is embedded across the school, ensuring pupil responses are valued and responded to appropriately, which helps their learning.

Leaders ensure the *Learning and Growing as the People of God* curriculum is fully delivered. The subject leader articulates a clear vision for the subject. She has a rigorous plan for monitoring provision and outcomes in religious education. The monitoring process includes teaching staff, governors, and pupils. This results in all stakeholders feeling valued and having a shared understanding of areas for development. Quality assurance is embedded through regular book monitoring across phases and local cluster group. School leaders value the importance of investing in high-quality training and support, ensuring sufficient time is dedicated to improving the subject. For example, following recent training, religious artwork is now used to enhance religious education lessons. This results in high levels of pupil engagement, questioning, and discussion. A recent review of the school's marking policy has made pupils better understand what they have done well in religious education. The chair of governors, who is also the parish priest, is a frequent visitor to the school and is very supportive of leaders and staff, providing opportunities to enhance staff subject knowledge. His contribution to lessons and training further supports all becoming the people God calls them to be. The school has identified areas for staff development in religious education, which some teachers have fully implemented.

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

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

2

Pupils value opportunities for a quiet, reflective time in prayer and enjoy the recently implemented 'praying in colour'. Pupils are confident in their knowledge of the liturgical year, referencing displays in school that support their understanding of this. They value the opportunities to build a relationship with God through prayer, including traditional prayers linked to the liturgical year. They share that this is important for life beyond school. Pupils confidently speak about using music and artwork to develop their prayer life. Engagement in prayer across all ages is reverent and respectful. Careful planning by adults results in appropriate mood and setting being in place; this enhances spiritual reflection. Pupil liturgy leaders are proud that they are trusted to monitor classroom prayer areas. Pupils know that teachers value them in the role of critical friend and monitor and will act on feedback appropriately. Both staff and pupils select relevant scripture. Pupils work well with their teachers in planning and preparing classroom liturgy, though they cannot yet lead this independently. They value the 'go forth' message, understanding they must act for their faith.

Prayer and liturgy are central to school life. Regular opportunities for worship are embedded within the school timetable, reflecting a variety of prayer opportunities and promoting regular pupil involvement. Stay and pray sessions offer occasions for parents to worship with their children in the classroom. Technology is used skilfully to share appropriate visual resources which enhance prayer and liturgy. Pupils respond positively to prayer and liturgy using hymns, prayer, and scripture. St Joseph's benefits from parishioners supporting pupils to pray in school Mass; pupils enjoy this cross-generational link. The school has invested in developing pupils' understanding and involvement in celebrating the Eucharist. Linked to the parish priest and school leaders' passion, Mass is a joyful celebration for all stakeholders. This results in a more profound knowledge of the Rite of Mass. This is well-utilised in religious education lessons; for

example, a Year 6 pupil successfully linked religious artwork with Jesus being the Lamb of God. Excellent provision from the lay chaplain positively impacts celebrating special times of the year. Investment in enhancing pupils' praise through singing results in joyful worship by pupils of all ages.

Staff are well trained and supported to lead prayer and liturgy in school with regular opportunities to share their faith. The recently implemented prayer and liturgy policy is clear, understood, and followed by all staff. The excellent role modelling of the head teacher results in staff who lead prayer with a genuine passion for the Catholic faith, linking appropriate scripture and examples of saints' lives to the school's values and virtues. Consequently, staff explain how these messages support spiritual growth, supporting pupils' lives in modern Britain. Adults in school are good models for faith and practice at all levels. Pupils follow the example set by these leaders in school, responding reverently and thoughtfully, welcoming the challenge of a 'go forth' task to live the gospels' messages actively. Continuous monitoring of sacramental preparation has resulted in the school collaboratively working with the parish to provide the best preparation for the pupils and families. Governors are actively involved in detailed monitoring and feedback, leading to an accurate knowledge of leaders' evaluations. Financial resources are allocated appropriately, prioritising developing the school's mission. Link governance roles further embed links with the parish. Governors are keen to invest in staff formation but have not yet taken this action.

Information about the school

Full name of school	St Joseph's Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	124354
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	8603461
Full postal address of the school	Hill Top, Hednesford, Cannock, WS12 1DE
School phone number	01543 227225
Headteacher	Bernadette Corbett
Chair of Governors	Jeremy Howard
School Website	www.st-josephs-hednesford.staffs.sch.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 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	June 2016
Previous denominational inspection grade	2

The inspection team

Julie-Anne Tallon
Rebecca McKinney

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