



St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

URN: 140764

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Diocesan Administrator of Plymouth

22–23 February 2024

Summary of key findings

Overall effectiveness

The overall quality of Catholic education provided by the school

1

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

1

Collective worship (p.7)

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

1

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

Y

Y

Y

What the school does well

- Catholic social teaching is fully embedded in the life of the school and affects all areas of the curriculum.
- Leaders and Governors prioritise the Catholic life of the school and are committed to developing and supporting this. Their accurate self-evaluation has led to rapid improvement.
- Pupils and staff are encouraged to develop their expertise in Religious Education and supported by an enthusiastic and knowledgeable coordinator.
- Prayer and the liturgical year are central to the life of the school.
- The chaplaincy (GIFT) team are well known throughout the school and make a positive contribution to the mission of the school.

What the school needs to improve

- Further develop the knowledge of staff with regard to religious education in order to strengthen their ability to elicit deeper responses from pupils.
- Further develop the knowledge of staff with regard to religious education the impact of which will be seen in the development of tasks that develop pupils' ability to think creatively and critically, and express judgements with relevant reasons
- Formulate ways for involving more parents in the Catholic Life of the school

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

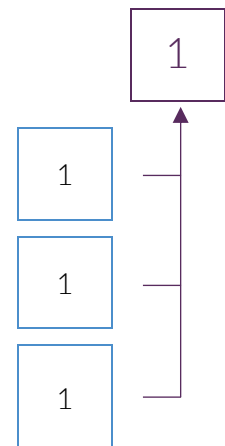
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

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 at St Joseph's not only know the school's mission statement, 'Love Jesus, Love Learning, Love Life' but are able to articulate what this means to them. One pupil for example saying, 'if you love Jesus you have to treat people like he did.' Pupils view the school as a family which embraces difference. They feel happy and secure and say that one of the best parts of school is the teachers who, 'if we are unsure about anything will always help us.' The school values are thoroughly understood by all pupils with even the youngest pupils able to connect these to the way you live. Through the school's work on Catholic social teaching, they are able to make connections between theology, social issues and practical actions. They believe that helping others is important and help organise and take part in a variety of events to support various charities. The chaplaincy (GIFT) team is highly valued by all pupils who are excited by the opportunities it provides. One pupil spoke of the joy it brings being part of a team that helps others and one of the most valued activities was visiting a local care home and they valued the opportunities to interact with older people.

The mission statement of the school together with the school values are understood by the whole community and the introduction of Gospel reflections into different curriculum areas which link the topic with scripture and Catholic social teaching ensure that the whole curriculum is reflecting the mission of the school. One member of staff commenting, "Through the curriculum, the gospel reflections demonstrate the children's ability to understand how faith, values and virtues, awe and wonder or the Catholic social teachings can link to their learning." In order to support the welfare of pupils, staff have undergone Trauma Informed Schools (TIS) training on how to best support children with trauma, including; abuse, loss, bereavement and mental health and wellbeing. The school also has a Parent Support Advisor. Staff organise a variety of clubs for pupils including support for those pupils from naval families. As a result, pupils feel happy and secure and behaviour throughout the school is excellent. The school's environment fully reflects the Catholic nature and the displays of

pupils work further reinforces their sense of worth. Chaplaincy is central to school activities with members of the team organising the 'Gospel Witness of the Week' award which strengthens both pupils' awareness of what it means to live out the values and the role of chaplains. PSHE is well organised in keeping with diocesan requirements and has been reviewed and adapted to meet the needs of pupils

Leaders and governors are passionately committed to developing and supporting the Catholic nature of the school. The school has, under the leadership of the executive head, developed a culture where the mission of the school is prioritised and put strategies in place to ensure this is lived out. The leadership team have made significant changes in a relatively short space of time and this reflects their commitment. The governors conduct monitoring visits to the school and ensure that both Religious Education and Catholic Life are discussed at governor meetings and they view these as a core area for both resources and development. Professional development opportunities, with regard to Catholic Life, are provided for all staff on a regular basis which has increased staff confidence. The parish priest is a regular visitor to the school and well known by pupils. Pupils and parents are involved in the school's self-evaluation through pupil and parent voice activities. The school is seeking to further develop its relationship with both parents and parish and this has been identified as a priority area for the school moving forward. The school's self-evaluation is extremely accurate.

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

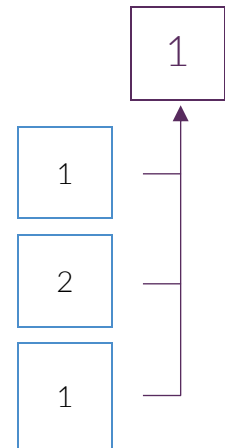
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

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 are excited and engaged by their Religious Education lessons. They are reflective, committed to developing and improving their knowledge. The work the leadership team has put in place ensures that they recognise this is an important subject and as a consequence they work hard and produce work of a high quality and behaviour in class is excellent. They are religiously literate, able to think spirituality and ethically and make connections between faith and life. In one class for example a pupil studying the miracle of the feeding of the five thousand reflected that if Jesus fed others we need to also reach out and feed those who lack food. In a key stage 1 class when talking about baptism pupils used the word symbolise with confidence and were able to talk about the candle symbolising the light of Jesus in our lives. Pupils like discussing issues in religious education and pose thoughtful and reflective questions often drawing on their own experiences as well as classwork. All pupils make progress relative to their starting points. Pupils have a clear understanding on how to improve their work, explaining that ‘staff challenge us to go deeper.’

Teachers demonstrate a commitment to, and have high expectations of, Religious Education. They celebrate effort, display pupil work within the classroom and plan their lessons to try and build in different forms of expression. Some of the younger groups for example are particularly successful at using art to enhance learning. Resources including other adults are used well. All staff seek to improve their knowledge through regular professional development and as a result feel more confident in their teaching. Subject knowledge however is not consistent across all year groups, this affects the ability to plan for deeper more evaluative questions. Whilst questioning is often a strength deepening pupils understanding, this is inconsistent across all year groups. Lessons are planned to provide opportunities to allow pupils to make connections between faith and life and take account of pupil needs.

The subject leader for Religious Education is an exceptional leader focused on securing interesting lessons and high-quality learning. They have an inspiring vision for the subject which is shared by

the school leadership. They bring a high level of expertise and are able to use this knowledge to support and encourage others. This expertise is greatly valued by other teachers. The coordinator is forensic in the way they monitor and analyse data about religious education using it to develop strategic actions and improve outcomes for pupils. The results of their improvement strategies produced through regular monitoring can be seen within pupils' work. Leaders and governors ensure that the Religious Education curriculum faithfully expresses the bishops' requirements. It is clearly placed at the heart of the curriculum. The way the subject is linked to Catholic social teaching ensures that the learning is relevant to life. Pupils are also inspired to learn about and value the views of others by the inclusion of encounter and dialogue built into the curriculum. The new Religious Education Directory has been successfully implemented into the curriculum

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

1

Provision

The quality of collective worship provided by the school

1

Leadership

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

1

1

Prayer engages pupils and they participate fully through the singing, their responses to prayers and their attentive silence. Even the youngest pupils are able to reflect quietly. Older pupils lead whole school prayers and class prayers with younger pupils. They make use of planning sheets to help them structure prayer but are now less reliant on these. However, the next step would be for pupils to be more creative with liturgy. They are able to evaluate the prayer they lead and suggest ways in which it might be improved. For example, one member of the chaplaincy team suggested that if the Our Father was signed as well as said it might engage younger pupils more effectively. Through the celebration of different liturgies connected with the Church's year they appreciate the use of scripture and symbols and the different forms prayer can take. They make good use of Pope Francis' five finger prayer and this together with their prayer journals helps them be more reflective. Pupils understand that prayer is central to the life of the school community and understand the importance of praying for others. They like the opportunities provided to 'talk to Jesus.' Many pupils attend a voluntary prayer club on Fridays where they engage with a variety of creative activities.

Prayer is central to the life of the school, there is an embedded daily pattern of prayer that serves as a reminder of the presence of God within the school community. The liturgical year is well planned and pupils offered opportunities to celebrate traditional catholic practices like the Rosary, Stations of the Cross and Nativity plays. Within this framework the school is sensitive to the needs of those children from other faiths and supports them in the choices they make. Scripture is at the heart of prayer within the school and care is taken to try to make the scripture relevant to pupils. The children regularly attend mass in the local parish church and pupils undertake various ministries like reading and serving. Parish and parents are invited to attend liturgies within the church and the school and the leadership is exploring ways of strengthening this connection. During Advent nativity sets are sent home with younger pupils to help families reflect on the season. The school makes creative use of the space available with many vibrant displays. Although the school does not have

the space for a dedicated prayer room the nurture room doubles as a prayer room on specific days and is carefully set out to reflect a prayerful atmosphere. Focal areas in class help pupils reflect on the liturgical season. Chaplaincy pupils are taking the lead in planning a prayer garden.

Leaders and governors plan the school calendar carefully to ensure that there are regular opportunities to celebrate the Eucharist and the liturgical year. Prayer and liturgy are given a high priority by leaders and provide professional development opportunities for staff to develop their skills. Each half term, the religious education coordinator delivers various sessions on the formation and planning of liturgy. This has enabled staff to feel more confident in supporting pupils to develop their skills. There is a strategy in place for building up the skills of participation with pupils and this has already led to increased pupil participation however the strategy now needs reviewing to ensure even greater progress. The school seeks the views of pupils through pupil voice activities and this together with regular self-evaluation drives initiatives. The development of prayer journals to help support pupils making connections between faith and life is an example of an initiative that came out of the school's self-evaluation.

Information about the school

Full name of school	St Joseph's Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	140764
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	8793765
Full postal address of the school	St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Chapel Street, Devonport, Plymouth, PL1 4DJ
School phone number	01752563185
Headteacher	Roisin Wright
Chair of Local Governing Body	Mark O'Keeffe
School Website	http://www.st-josephs.plymouth.sch.uk
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	Plymouth Cast
Phase	Primary
Type of school	Academy
Admissions policy	N/A
Age-range of pupils	2-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	01/06/2016
Previous denominational inspection grade	2

The inspection team

Ann Fowler
Paul Cotter

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