

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

URN: 400950

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Bishop of Menevia

25–26 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

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

1

The school is fully compliant with the curriculum requirements laid down by the Bishops' Conference Fully

The school is fully compliant with all requirements of the diocesan bishop Fully

The school has responded to the areas for improvement from the last inspection Fully

2

What the school does well

- All at St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School understand and embrace the Catholic identity and mission of their school, living out the school mission statement; 'Together in Christ, Living, Learning & Growing,' the school is a welcoming, inclusive Christ-centred learning community.
- School leaders, governors and clergy are excellent role models, dedicated and committed to Catholic education.
- Pastoral care is a strength of the school; there is a lived sense of family and community evident in the quality of relationships and the love and care shown for all pupils.
- Pupils demonstrate a deep sense of respect for those of other faiths, religions and none. The behaviour of pupils is exemplary both in lessons and throughout the school.

- Pupils throughout the school demonstrate independence in their learning which is cross-curricular in nature, for example, the pupils' digital skills are particularly strong.

What the school needs to improve

- To continue to effectively plan, implement and monitor the Religious Education Directory and share good practice with others.
- To develop assessment processes in accordance with the Religious Education Directory curriculum, to accurately measure pupils' attainment and inform future planning and next steps.

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

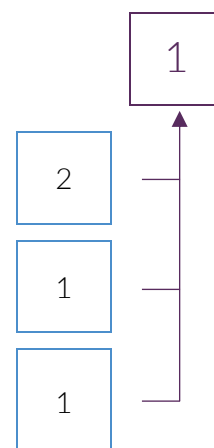
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

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



St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School is a school which is clearly Catholic in nature and knows it's Welsh identity, underpinned by a shared vision and mission statement built on Gospel values. Pupils understand how they are expected to work and play together, giving active witness to the Gospel message lovingly and respectfully. Pupils plan opportunities to grow in virtue; the current focus being, 'Compassionate and loving'. They accept their personal responsibility to care for our common home, pursue the common good and serve those in need. Pupil groups organise fundraising for charities locally, nationally and globally, including Cafod, Children in Need and the local foodbank. For example, the school received a Certificate of Fundraising Excellence for raising £65,420 over the past 27 years for Southwest Wales Cancer Centre at Singleton Hospital. Pupils show a deep respect for themselves and people of other faiths, religions and none. The behaviour of pupils is exemplary in lessons and throughout the school; pupils are happy and polite. Pupils engage in the school's chaplaincy provision willingly and thoughtfully, taking active roles in its delivery. All involved with St. Joseph's are extremely proud of their school prayer, prayed in English and Welsh and the school hymn, both of which are also communicated in Makaton.

St Joseph's mission statement is a clear and inspiring expression of the educational mission of the Church. It is known, lived and witnessed throughout the school and is based on Catholic tradition and practice. St. Joseph's has a lived sense of community, evident in the quality of relationships, welcome and inclusivity. The school environment demonstrates the strong Catholic identity with beautiful artwork and meaningful artefacts both traditional and contemporary.

Staff are exemplary role models for pupils. Through their relationships with each other and the love and care they show for one another they consistently bear witness to the school's Catholic life and mission. The chaplaincy provision is a central aspect of the school, contributing to the

education of the whole person, including the spiritual development of pupils and staff. The provision for Relationship and Health Education meets both statutory and diocesan requirements. The taught curriculum has religious education at its core and opportunities for pupils to develop the cross-curricular skills of literacy, numeracy, Welsh language and digital-competency are strong. Through the development of knowledge, skills and experiences in the expressive arts and the study of the pupils' Cynefin in humanities, authentic and purposeful opportunities have also been taken to reflect the rich Catholic culture of the school.

Leaders and governors can clearly articulate the Church's mission in education and ensure that Christ is always at the heart of the school. They are impressive witnesses to the Gospel. The headteacher and deputy headteacher ensure that the school environment is authentically Catholic, and all policies reflect the priority given to the school's Catholic identity. Governors are supportive of the Senior Leadership Team and have a secure understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses as they have been actively involved in monitoring processes. Leaders and governors embrace and actively promote the bishop's vision for the diocese. They respond effectively to diocesan policies and initiatives. The headteacher, as a member of the Diocesan Education Commission, and deputy headteacher, as chair of the religious education coordinators group and facilitator of the cluster working party focusing on the delivery of the new Religious Education Directory, actively serve the diocese. Both the headteacher and deputy headteacher are Catholic Schools' Inspectors. Leaders seek to work productively with the parish, and they co-operate well in promoting the Mass, Sacraments, and opportunities for pupils to support members of the parish community. Good relationships have been established with parents and most parents, in responses to the questionnaire distributed as part of the inspection, agreed that they understood the school's Catholic mission and were supportive of it and value the quality of education their children receive.

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

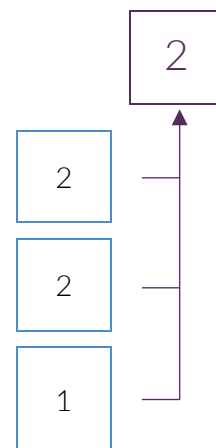
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

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



At St. Joseph's Catholic Primary school, pupils are developing excellent knowledge, understanding and skills that exemplify the learning required by the Religious Education Directory. Pupils make good progress in relation to their starting points, including the pupils whose first language isn't English and those with additional learning needs. Pupils are becoming increasingly religiously literate, and most are aware of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life. Many pupils can speak with confidence about what they have learned in religious education, for example, explaining the miracles Jesus performed, the type of miracle, and in some classes reflect on how their learning influences their own thoughts and behaviours, such as, 'how I can be like the Good Samaritan'. Pupils can work independently, concentrating well and using their literacy, numeracy, digital and Welsh skills within religious education competently. Pupils take pride in their written and digital work, which is well presented. Pupils benefit greatly from the 'Walk with the Bible', Old and New Testament sessions, stating they really enjoy the 'acting out and dressing up' of the stories.

The quality of teaching is consistently good across the school. Teachers have a high level of confidence based on their personal faith, and lessons are appropriate to the phase in which they are teaching. Planning and the use of assessment approaches are developing to ensure that pupils' learning is linked to their current attainment. Through the use of questioning during lessons, teachers and support staff adapt explanations and tasks, improving learning for pupils. The quality of feedback to pupils is good. Teachers provide pupils with relevant feedback that identifies what they have done well and, in some cases, identifies the next steps in learning. Pupils were able to articulate how success criteria and the next steps given by teachers, helped them to self-assess and improve their work. Teachers show high levels of commitment and expectations for religious education, and they communicate this effectively to their pupils.

Relationships between adults and pupils are very positive throughout the school. This applies to both teachers and support staff, who support learning effectively. Teachers provide pupils with opportunities to present their learning using a variety of forms, for example, through the exploration of religious art and the use of extended writing and digital devices. All staff recognise the impact religious education has on the moral and spiritual development of pupils. However, during the inspection, pupils were not consistently given space and time for reflection in lessons.

Leaders and governors ensure that the school curriculum for religious education is a faithful expression of the new Directory. Senior Leaders demonstrate strong commitment and expertise in supporting teachers, both at St Joseph's Catholic Primary School and across their cluster, to plan, prepare and deliver the Directory well. Leaders and governors ensure that religious education has at least full parity with other core subjects, including professional development, resourcing, timetabling, staffing and accommodation. The subject leader for religious education has an inspiring vision for teaching and learning including the development of digital, creative and independent learning. Through using the Religious Education Directory, leaders have begun to carefully plan a sequential curriculum which is increasingly demanding, builds on prior learning and meets the needs of different groups of pupils at each age phase. Excellent links are forged with other appropriate agencies and the wider community to provide a wide range of enrichment activities to promote pupils' learning and engagement with religious education. The art exhibition celebrating religious diversity is a notable example of this.

Collective worship

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

Collective worship key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

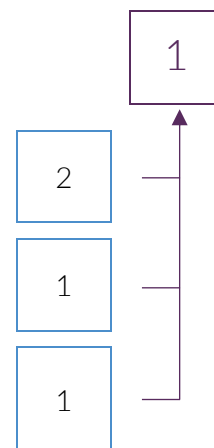
How well pupils participate in and respond to the school's collective worship

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



Collective Worship at St Joseph's Catholic Primary School is an integral part of school life, central to the Catholic tradition of the school and pupils respond positively to the wide range of opportunities provided. Class liturgies observed during the inspection were consistent in their planning, delivery and levels of participation. Pupils gathered with reverence, listened and sang well. The use of Makaton to accompany the singing is an impressive feature. In addition, pupils' participation in spontaneous prayer, from the youngest to the oldest class, was a notable strength of the liturgies observed. Across a range of prayer and liturgy, pupils behaved well, and responded to and participated well in acts of worship, prayer and meditation. For example, by singing hymns, the school's song and by joining in traditional and spontaneous prayers and responses readily and with confidence. Pupils meditate daily, they enjoy meditation and were able to articulate how it helps them to feel relaxed, focused and peaceful, giving them time to reflect and talk to God. Pupils are clearly proud to plan and share their prayer experiences with one another. Gweddiwn, used by pupils to plan a four-part liturgy including gather, Word, response and going-forth, is well established and highly valued by children. In the class worship observed, pupils reflected on 'community', the communities they belong to and how they could help and support the people in their communities. The level of independence in preparing and delivering worship evidently increases from the youngest to the oldest pupils, all of whom display confidence in their role. However, pupils have less opportunity to evaluate the quality of prayer and liturgy they have planned. Praying together is part of the daily experience for all pupils and staff. Class acts of worship take place regularly, they are meaningful and age appropriate. All members of the community speak positively about worship opportunities, for example being invited to assemblies and Family Mass, and how well they reflect the Catholic character of the school. Prayer and liturgy, both pupil and adult led, offer pupils experiences of

a range of ways of praying that are part of the Catholic tradition. These include a Harvest Mass, Remembrance Service and the Crowning of Our Lady.

All teachers and support staff are very good role models who capably guide pupils to plan and lead well-constructed prayer and liturgy. Leaders plan collective worship in accordance with the liturgical year and are models of good practice to other staff and pupils as participants in and leaders of prayer and liturgy. Well-chosen scripture passages, which ensure all present can fully and actively participate, form the heart of prayer and liturgy and there are intrinsic links between these passages and the whole of the celebration. The communal school environment effectively demonstrates the Catholic ethos and nature of the school. The school makes good use of the spaces available to provide prayer areas within classrooms, the dedicated indoor prayer space and the prayer garden. There are reflective displays around the school, including those that show how pupils demonstrate the Pupil Profile virtues. Classroom displays reinforce the topic key words and celebrate pupils' learning. However, some classroom prayer foci need to be more engaging, developed and used interactively by pupils.

Pupils receive sacramental preparation through the school, in partnership with the parish. The links with the local parish are evident and the school works well to enrich them. Pupils regularly attend Mass and support the parish community. For example, the Mini Vinnies pupil voice group proudly spoke about fundraising for resources and preparing a Christmas party for the people of the parish. Parents are invited to be involved in the prayer life of the school, including attending Mass and class assemblies. Diocesan initiatives are followed, and training is disseminated by senior leaders. Collective worship is appropriately resourced. Governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for collective worship effectively and appropriate policies for delivery are in place.

Information about the school

Full name of school	St Joseph's Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	400950
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	6703308
Full postal address of the school	St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Pontardawe Road, Clydach, Swansea, SA6 5NX
School phone number	01792842494
Headteacher	Juliet Stack Mary Mort
Chair of Governors	Paul Relf
School Website	www.stjosephscatholicps-swanea.co.uk
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	N/A
Phase	Primary
Type of school	Voluntary Aided School
Admissions policy	Governors
Age-range of pupils	3-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	31 st March – 1 st April 2014
Previous denominational inspection grade	Good

The inspection team

Caroline May
Laura Taylor

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