

St Joseph's Cathedral Primary School

URN: 400946

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Bishop of Menevia

14–15 March 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

2

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

St Joseph's Cathedral School is a welcoming and inclusive Catholic community.

The head teacher, deputy head teacher, Catholic life and mission leaders and governing body have a shared vision to ensure that Christ and his teachings are at the heart of this school.

Pupils have many opportunities to live out their mission 'Following Jesus as we live and learn together' through faith in action, by supporting a wide range of charities.

Teaching and learning in religious education is well planned with a range and variety of tasks and activities that engage pupils.

The school has close links with St Joseph's Cathedral and local parishes.

The headteacher and governing body have been generous in their support of other Catholic schools within the diocese.

What the school needs to improve

- Leaders should continue to engage with other diocesan schools and professional development opportunities offered by the diocese to equip staff with the necessary knowledge and skills to ensure the successful implementation of the Religious Education Directory.
- Develop the consistency of teacher feedback in religious education to enable pupils to improve their work and to know how to progress.
- To offer the Sacrament of Reconciliation to pupils on at least an annual basis.

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

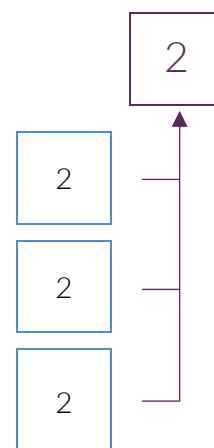
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

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



There is a strong sense of family in this inclusive school, where all are welcomed and treated equally. The mission statement: 'Following Jesus as we live and learn together' is displayed throughout the school, guiding the behaviours and actions of all. Pupils are friendly, polite and keen to reach out to those in need. They are enthusiastic in their support for charities such as Missio and Cafod and fundraise regularly to provide essential resources for their Zambian partner school. Pupils relate well to one another, understanding that they are valued and cared for as unique persons made in the image and likeness of God.

Most pupils have a good understanding of Catholic social teaching. As the first Swansea School of Sanctuary, they have empathy and show support for refugees and those seeking asylum. Human dignity is understood and promoted by the pupils and staff at St Joseph's. Stewardship is encouraged through pupil voice groups such as the Eco Committee. Pupils understand their role as stewards of God's Creation and demonstrate this in ways such as promoting recycling. Pupils respond well to the regular visits from local Catholic clergy, during which the celebration of Mass and participation in other liturgies is effective in supporting and nurturing pupils' spiritual growth.

The school is very proud of its rich heritage. Altars in communal areas, statues, crucifixes and crosses from the past are displayed in prominent positions. Recent additions include virtues and values, house saint banners, pupils' prayers, and artwork. These displays emphasise the Catholic character, history, and importance of the Catholic faith in this community. Staff are committed to the Catholic mission of the school "we are passionate about Christ and the Catholic faith being at the centre of our school." The strong sense of community is evident in the quality of relationships between staff, pupils, and parents. Staff know their pupils well and strive to meet their needs. Nurture provision provides effective wellbeing support. Internal

staff support, together with that of outside agencies, offers families practical help which includes assistance with form filling and a wide range of parenting courses, including English as an additional language and numeracy. Contributions made by staff and pupils to Y Pantri, the school foodbank, and to food donations distributed by the Sisters of Charity demonstrate the commitment of the school to the wider community. Relationships and Sex education are delivered within a Catholic context using resources approved by the Diocese.

Leaders and governors are proud of the contribution that St Joseph's Cathedral school makes to the educational mission of the Church. They are deeply committed to the delivery of high-quality Catholic education. Detailed reports on Catholic life and religious education are shared at governing body meetings. The active involvement of link governors through regular visits and book scrutiny ensures that the governing body is well informed. Rigorous monitoring processes involving stakeholders result in the school's Catholic self-evaluation document being a concise and accurate reflection of strengths and areas for development. Curriculum meetings, practical support and the school website ensure that parents are well informed.

Leaders are supportive of the diocese implementing Catholic Education Service policies. The headteacher and governing body are generous in their support of other Catholic schools within the diocese. Pupils regularly attend Mass in the Cathedral and visit local parishes annually. Few staff engage with diocesan training linked to the implementation of the new Religious Education Directory in 2025 and attend the Catholic schools' leadership programme. Induction processes are well managed by senior leaders enabling new members of staff to receive training and develop an understanding of the Catholic life and religious education at St Joseph's Cathedral Primary School.

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

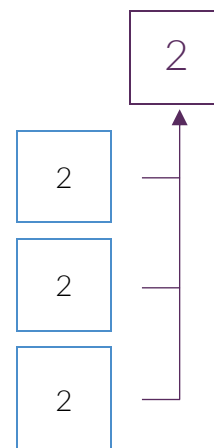
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

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 enjoy their learning in religious education. They behave well, listen, and concentrate in lessons. Consequently, most pupils are religiously literate and are making good progress from their starting points. Pupils can link the school virtues and values to scripture and human actions. Most pupils show good understanding of the events of Maundy Thursday, identifying reasons for Judas' betrayal of Jesus. Younger pupils in progression step 3 use St Matthew's Gospel to understand the concept of self-discipline and can give reasons why Christians pray, fast, and give to others during Lent. Progression step 2 pupils can create story maps showing the events of Jesus' journey to Jerusalem for Palm Sunday, use time connectives to form sentences and provide illustrations to match descriptions. Outdoor learning enables pupils to gather and use natural materials to design a Palm Sunday scene. Cross curricular links are used to good effect, with pupils using adjectives to describe Jesus' feelings in the Garden of Gethsemane. Pupils in Progression step 1 know Jesus died on the cross on Good Friday and rose again on Easter Sunday. Relative to their age and capacity, most pupils make good progress in acquiring and expanding their religious vocabulary.

Teachers are confident in their subject knowledge and have a good understanding of how pupils learn, appropriate to the phase in which they are teaching. A range of well-planned differentiated activities meets the needs of most pupils. Music is used to good effect as pupils use a range of instruments to compose ostinato patterns such as 'Praise God,' 'The Lord is coming.' Pupils in progression step 3 can analyse the work of artists such as Mantegna, El Greco and Bellini, recording their findings on Venn diagrams. Accessing VR headsets enables pupils to explore the Church of All Nations. These cross curricular opportunities consolidate and extend learning effectively.

Most lessons observed had good pace and levels of challenge with teachers using questioning skilfully to draw out prior learning. The tracking system in place enables staff to plan according to need. Assessment for learning techniques such as think, pair, share and talking partners, deepens pupils' thinking and understanding. When pupils had misconceptions, rephrasing or repeating questions was evident, allowing most pupils to succeed. Most teachers have high expectations of pupils in religious education. While all work is marked, pupils would benefit from feedback which challenges their thinking and allows for further improvement.

Leaders and governors are deeply loyal and committed to the mission of the Church and success of the school. The Chair has a longstanding association with the school. She plans strategically with the headteacher and deputy headteacher, and together with the staff and governing body they have a shared vision for Christ to be at the centre of this community.

The religious education curriculum meets Bishops' Conference requirements with 10% curriculum time protected. The Come and See programme is in use. Religious education has the same priority as other core areas of learning and experience. The school plans to update provision and move towards the implementation of the new Religious Education Directory. A minority of staff have attended training and are sharing messages. The majority of staff however, are not aware of the new approaches to the teaching of religious education that the implementation of the RED will require.

The committed religious education coordinator and team support the development of the Catholic life and religious education effectively. The faith council makes a significant contribution to prayer and liturgy, enhancing the religious life of the school. This shared involvement ensures that the religious education coordinator has the necessary support to raise standards, train staff and implement curriculum developments effectively.

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 at St. Joseph's respond well to the experiences of prayer and liturgy provided by the school. They reflect in silence, join in prayers, both traditional and spontaneous, with confidence, and sing readily. Pupils are particularly proud of their school prayer and their sung playground prayer. Pupils are familiar with the liturgical year and understand how it influences the prayer life of the school, for example, choosing scripture relevant to Lent and St. Patrick's Day for whole school and class celebrations. Pupils work with increasing independence to prepare pupil led worship. Class worship boxes which enhance prayer and liturgy include a range of liturgical colour cloths and various resources including candles, rosary beads and pebbles. Pupils throughout the school use the same format to plan and deliver class worship; in the younger years supported by adults and in older years, planning independently. However, in larger gatherings for assemblies and Masses, more pupils could have the opportunity to be more actively involved. Pupils throughout the school understand and can explain how the curriculum and wider life of the school influence prayer and their own lives, expressed through writing their own Lenten promises and praying for their link school in Zambia.

Prayer and liturgy are integral to gatherings throughout the daily life of the school and reflect the rhythm of the prayer life of the Church. Throughout the year pupils have opportunities to experience many forms of worship. Weekly assemblies include the head teacher leading a Gospel assembly, children learning new hymns and assemblies led by members of staff who are good role models. Pupils spoke about being nominated by their classmates for demonstrating the virtues and values. Clergy are regular visitors to school and facilitate worship including penitential services and the blessing of the Advent wreaths. The school makes good use of space. All classes have a focal prayer area which are current and display key word vocabulary linked to their topic.

Welcoming communal areas are well used for larger worship gatherings. Collective worship is well resourced with recent purchases including Bibles, liturgical cloths and altar furniture. Parents are welcomed and encouraged to join the school for prayer and to support the developing prayer life of pupils. A lovely example of this is 'The travelling crucifix' for each class going home for pupils to talk to their families about Lent. The school has strong partnerships with the local parishes which helps pupils and families to participate more fully in the liturgy. On Feast days, for example on St. David's Day, pupils participated in Mass in two of the churches. During Advent a carol service was held in the Cathedral. Pupils play an active role in the church services.

Policies for prayer and liturgy are in place. Leaders understand the different levels of participation which build upon their independent skills of planning and participation as pupil's progress through school. Leaders plan the school calendar to celebrate the Eucharist at key moments in the liturgical year and on special occasions. However, the Sacrament of Reconciliation during Lent and Advent isn't offered. Leaders have provided training for the professional development of staff within the area of collective worship. All staff understand the importance of prayer and liturgy and relevant staff are well supported to lead liturgy and prayer in school. Leaders and governors recognise the importance of prayer and liturgy as part of the school's cycle of self-evaluation and planned improvements. Ways forward are identified, and relevant training is provided by the capable religious education coordinator to move the school forward.

Information about the school

Full name of school	St Joseph's Cathedral School
School unique reference number (URN)	402306
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	670/3309
Full postal address of the school	Caepistyll Street, Greenhill, Swansea SA1 2BE
School phone number	01792 653609
Headteacher	Angela Heald
Chair of Governors	Mary Clare Pitson
School Website	www.stjosephscathedralprimary.swansea.sch.uk
Trusteeship	Diocese of Menevia
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	10 th – 12 th March 2014
Previous denominational inspection grade	Good

The inspection team

Catherine Power
Caroline May

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