



## Catholic Schools Inspectorate inspection report for **St Joseph's Catholic Primary School**

URN: 301/3500

Carried out on behalf of the Right Rev. Alan Williams, sm, Bishop of Brentwood on:

Date: 20 – 21 April 2023

Overall effectiveness The overall quality of Catholic education provided by the school.....	<b>1</b>
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	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
The school is fully compliant with all requirements of the diocesan bishop	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
The school has responded to the areas for improvement from the last inspection	Fully

### Summary of key findings

#### What the school does well

- Catholic Social Teaching is deeply embedded throughout the curriculum. Pupils have a thorough understanding of the principles and can confidently articulate these principles.
- All members of the school community actively live out the mission statement; this can clearly be seen through exemplary behaviour, respect for all, and active participation in the Catholic life of the school and wider community.
- High quality feedback to pupils in religious education leads to outstanding progress and outcomes.
- There is a tangible sense of community, and parental engagement is a real strength.
- The school's physical environment promotes its Catholic faith and ethos to all.

What the school needs to improve:

- Continue to develop termly reporting to governors on Catholic life and mission, religious education, and collective worship to ensure clear systems are in place for governors to rigorously monitor and evaluate Catholic provision.
- To continue to develop the prayer garden to enable it to become a place of calm and peace where pupils and staff can spend time in prayer and reflection.

## 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:.....

1

### Pupil outcomes

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

1

### Provision

The quality of provision for the Catholic life and mission of the school .....

1

### Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic life and mission of the school .....

1



All community members embrace the mission of the school, “We love, learn and grow through Jesus Christ”. They value having been included in the recent review and launch of the new mission statement, which is at the heart of school life and is accessible to all. Pupils clearly express their understanding that they feel happy, confident, and secure in school; a view that is also shared by parents. Gospel values and Catholic Social Teaching are at the centre of the school. Pupils have an excellent understanding of the principles of Catholic Social Teaching, which they launch with half-termly assemblies. A charity is researched, by the schools' active Mini Vinnies, to reflect each principle. For example, Mary's Meals, linking to human dignity, has been chosen recently. Additionally, pupils have an excellent knowledge of our Common Home with an annual focus on *Laudato Si*. They also discuss a love of God's creation and nature. All pupils show respect for each other, staff and visitors. Their behaviour is exemplary in lessons, around the school and during prayer and liturgy. Pupils know they follow Christ's example and asked to introduce kindness awards to acknowledge the good deeds of their fellow pupils. Other faiths and all cultures, within the community, are respected in lessons and celebrated in vibrant displays throughout the school.

The school's mission statement is revisited annually with pupils in their initial weeks of school. The Catholic life and mission of the school are deeply rooted in the word of God. This is seen in the use of scripture and prayer in lessons, during liturgical celebrations, and is displayed prominently. There is an exceptionally strong sense of community embodied in the additional support offered to parents by all staff, and especially by the parent support advisor. The parents' pastoral group also fosters an exemplary community spirit, where all are welcomed. After school Stay and Pray sessions for parents and pupils provide a very

special time for reflection for all. Staff are exemplary role models, who are highly praised by parents, including one who said, “teachers are like mothers, treating all equally”. Staff are highly committed to the pastoral support of pupils, including the most vulnerable. The school environment is exceptional, including well-appointed and reflective religion tables in each class and wonderful displays celebrating the Catholic life of the school. Displays include recognition of the school’s charity fund raising. Chaplaincy provision, led by pupils, the parish priest and other staff provide high quality opportunities for the spiritual and moral development of pupils. Personal, social and health education, and relationships, sex, and health education are carefully planned to reflect Catholic teachings and principles, and details of the schemes have been shared with governors and parents.

Leaders clearly articulate the Church’s mission and Christ is at the centre of life. The school works in strong partnership with other schools in the Good Shepherd Catholic Trust and regularly participates in Diocesan training, which is clearly disseminated to staff. Leaders are rightly proud of their relationship with parents, who acknowledge the welcome they are offered. Furthermore, staff are proud to work at St Joseph’s, with one member acknowledging, “all staff are treated as one big family with God at the heart of the family”. The teaching of religious education is at the core of the school’s curriculum, with embedded links to Catholic Social Teaching. Governors highly value the Catholic life and mission of the school and are confident in asking questions of the leadership. The school’s self-evaluation is rigorous, driving school improvements and linking well with professional development, which is all highly valued by staff.

## Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade:.....

1

### Pupil outcomes

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education.....

1

### Provision

The quality of teaching, learning, and assessment in religious education.....

1

### Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor, and evaluate the provision for religious education.....

1



Pupils are developing excellent knowledge, understanding and skills in religious education. They build on prior learning and make very good progress as they journey through the school; consequently, attainment is very high across all phases. Pupils' religious literacy is very strong throughout all key stages. During a debate observed by inspectors, pupils used scripture and religious vocabulary highly successfully to argue points or demonstrate a particular line of thought. Pupils speak fluently and confidently about their learning and demonstrate a real love of learning and a great desire to do well and deepen their knowledge and understanding. Pupils produce work of a consistently high standard. They take great pride in their work as is clearly evidenced in its presentation and the depth and thought they put into each activity. They respond extremely well to teacher feedback; this is a skill which has clearly been developed over the years. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary; they immerse themselves fully in all learning opportunities and remain focused, attentive, and engaged for extended periods of time.

Teachers' subject knowledge is strong and there is a tangible commitment to the teaching of religious education resulting from strong leadership. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils, and these are conveyed well to pupils in terms of learning, progress, participation and behaviour; as a result all pupils learn extremely well and outcomes are very high. Teachers plan high quality, engaging creative lessons which build on prior learning and take into account individual pupil's needs. Additional adults are deployed very well to support pupils' needs, re-explaining tasks or using additional resources to support understanding, and ensure the progress of pupils with additional needs is in line with that of their peers. The structure of lessons allows pupils to consolidate and extend what they have learnt. Catholic social teaching principles are seamlessly woven into all topics. Pupils enjoy

religious education lessons because teachers incorporate a variety of tasks and resources when planning lessons. Pupils enjoy learning through art, music, discussion and role play as well as different writing tasks which allow them to showcase their knowledge and understanding. Pupils' work is marked regularly providing relevant, high quality and specific feedback. Staff take advantage of frequent internal and external monitoring and moderation of pupils' work, joining colleagues from across the trust; consequently, teachers' assessments are accurate.

School leaders and governors ensure that religious education is at the heart of the school community, ensuring that the curriculum meets the requirements of the *Religious Education Curriculum Directory* in terms of time allocation, resources and budget allocation, and that it is given parity with other core subjects. The head teacher and her senior leaders ensure that staff are very well supported in implementing the religious education curriculum.

Professional development and training are not only provided within school but from across the trust and the diocese; a member of staff commented 'I feel extremely well supported by our RE lead, SLT and partner teachers in the development of my knowledge of religious education.' The dedicated and committed religious education coordinator supports her colleagues extremely well; her quiet determination and passion are an inspiration to all. She is very generous in sharing her great expertise with colleagues, and guiding them to develop their own practice; one of her colleagues reported 'I was given so many wonderful opportunities to grow and expand on my Catholic knowledge and have had so much support from our wonderful RE lead.' The dynamic head teacher, along with her senior colleagues and governors, share a clear vision and determination for St Joseph's to be the best it can be and to be forward-thinking. Together they ensure that the school lives out its mission statement to enable pupils to become beacons of faith with a love of learning.

## Collective worship

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

Collective worship key judgement grade:.....

1

### 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

Prayer is an integral part of daily life at St Joseph's School. Pupils deeply engage in prayer and liturgy; they are respectful and reverent, enjoying the many opportunities to pray together throughout the school day. Their enthusiasm for singing during prayer and liturgy is infectious. Pupils have a strong understanding of the variety of ways of praying that are part of their rich Catholic heritage. They talk about how prayer supports them in their daily lives and that prayer is a 'wonderful gift'. One pupil commented that when she talks to God in her prayers 'It's like a weight has been lifted off my shoulders.' From an early age pupils plan acts of worship and ensure that prayer, scripture, reflection and symbols are included. They collaborate exceptionally well when planning, preparing and leading prayer and worship. Prayer and liturgy planning sheets reflect the commitment and importance pupils and staff place on this activity. Equally important is the reflection and evaluation of the session afterwards. From an early age pupils are able to discuss what they enjoyed and how they would like to make it even better next time. Adults are adept at ensuring that the evaluation always ends on a positive note. An inspirational assembly to introduce the new Catholic social teaching principle of Human Dignity led by the Mini Vinnies team, ensured all members of the school community thoroughly understood the principle and the theological reasons underpinning it. All pupils were encouraged to share their ideas on how they could support the Mary's Meals project. Everyone's ideas were fully respected and valued.

The creative use of spaces, corridors and outdoor areas ensure that pupils are surrounded by an inspirational and faith-filled environment in which to learn and grow. The prayer garden, which is being renovated by the Eco team, and prayer room are further testimony to the importance leaders place on providing an environment conducive to prayer and worship. The school enjoys excellent links with the local parish and community. Pupils regularly join

the parish community for Mass during the week as well as for Holy Days of Obligation and Feast days. Celebrations during Advent, Lent and Holy Week further reflect the rhythm of the prayer life of the church and help to further consolidate pupils' understanding of the liturgical year. All pupils have the opportunity to participate in an Ash Wednesday service with older pupils being able to take advantage of the Sacrament of Reconciliation at certain times during the year. A Rosary group during October and May is also available for pupils. During the May procession pupils are encouraged to bring in flowers which, after the celebration, they take down to a local care home for the residents to enjoy. The school works very closely with their families thus ensuring that parents are fully included in the prayer life of the school. Parents appreciate being invited into school regularly to pray worship with pupils and join their children for assemblies. Stay and Pray sessions are welcomed by parents with one parent saying, 'I have really enjoyed joining my child at Stay and Pray'. The atmosphere during these times is very calm and respectful and the prayers written by pupils and their families are carefully displayed in the hall for all to see.

St Joseph's has a carefully formulated policy of prayer and worship; it is easily accessible. Sharing it with staff and relevant pupils, for example the Mini Vinnies and Pupil Chaplains, has ensured that it is used as a reference point when planning prayer and liturgy and so develop a consistent approach throughout the school. Priority is given by school leaders and governors to enable staff to have access to high quality professional development. As a result, staff are confident and highly skilled in leading prayer and worship and making it an engaging creative experience for all. The school benefits from high levels of support from the local parish; the parish priest is a frequent and welcome visitor, joining pupils in class as well as celebrating special events in the church's year. Along with the head teacher he makes sure pupils have a thorough understanding of Mass and the liturgy. The strong parish links means that school and parish work together to support community needs; governors have a deep understanding of the community needs and how prayer supports the families within the school.



## Information about the school

Full name of school	St Joseph's Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	301/3500
Full postal address of the school	Broadway, Barking, IG11 7AR
School phone number	020 8270 6474
Name of head teacher or principal	Rowena Lumber
Chair of governing board	Glenda Spencer
School Website	<a href="https://www.stjosephsschoolbarking.co.uk">https://www.stjosephsschoolbarking.co.uk</a>
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	The Good Shepherd Catholic Trust
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy
Age-range of pupils	4 - 11
Trustees	The Diocese of Brentwood
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	2 <sup>nd</sup> November 2016
Previous denominational inspection grade	Good

## The inspection team

Angela Podmore	Lead inspector
Gael Hicks	Team inspector
Rosie McGlynn	Shadow Inspector
Name of inspector	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