



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

URN: 101236

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

Date: 17-18 May 2023

| | |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| 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 | <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

- Pupils are wonderful ambassadors of the school and their manners are exemplary.
- Pupils' participation in prayer and liturgies is joyous and uplifting.
- Everyone is welcomed into the school, where there is a strong and lived sense of community.
- Parents highly value the Catholic nature of the school and the contribution staff make to the personal and spiritual development of their children.
- Links with the parish are exceptionally strong and the parish priest is a visible presence in the Catholic life and mission of the school.

What the school needs to improve:

- Strengthen the rigour of monitoring and self-evaluation undertaken by leaders and governors to further develop the Catholic life and mission, religious education, and collective worship.
- Implement the action plan for the introduction of the *Religious Education Directory* to ensure professional development impacts on consistency and creativity in the teaching of religious education.
- Continue to improve opportunities to enable pupils to take increased responsibility for planning, leading and evaluating liturgy and prayer activities.

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:.....

2

Pupil outcomes

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

2

Provision

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

2

Leadership

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

2



Pupils are very proud to be part of the school community and they play an active part in the Catholic life and mission of the school. They can express how they are committed to following the example of Jesus by being kind and respectful to all. Pupils understand that they are valued and, through their actions, pupils embody the mission statement, knowing each one is “created by God for a special purpose and is therefore uniquely special”. Pupils are also beginning to show an understanding of the principles of Catholic Social Teaching, actively engaging in the school’s Cafod club. Activities include writing to residents in a local care home, raising funds for charities and collecting for the parish food bank. Pupils’ behaviour is consistently good in lessons and around the school. They enjoy opportunities to be involved in the school’s chaplaincy provision.

The mission statement is displayed throughout the school. Although the mission statement is reviewed, there is a need to ensure all members of the school community understand the review process and are afforded opportunities to shape the Catholic life of the school. Christ is at the heart of the school, seen in the exceptional welcome that everyone receives, regardless of ability or background. There is a generosity of spirit, led by the headteacher, in caring for all, especially the most vulnerable members of the community. Staff are exemplary role models, providing exceptional levels of care and love for the pupils. The school environment reflects its mission with displays relevant to the liturgical year and celebrating stories from the Bible. There is a strong and developing chaplaincy provision, with opportunities for pupils to reflect on their faith during masses and well-planned assemblies. The provision for R(S)HE meets the statutory and diocesan requirements.

Leaders and governors are able to articulate the Church's mission in education. They support and respond well to diocesan policies and have accessed training opportunities. Leaders and governors work hard to ensure there is a flourishing partnership between the parish and the school. This is seen in regular school Masses at the parish church and involvement in the First Holy Communion programme. The school has highly successful strategies for engaging with parents, including the visible presence of senior staff on a daily basis to offer support where it is requested. One parent commented that, "St Joseph's enables my child to experience a fulfilled Catholic life". Another parent explained "I feel the school truly nurtures my child. Nothing is too much trouble and [senior staff] are welcoming and approachable." Leaders and governors are witnesses to the Gospel and Catholic Social Teaching through their support for all families. A staff well-being policy demonstrates the leaders' commitment to respecting all staff. Senior staff monitor and evaluate the Catholic life and mission of the school. However, there is a need to ensure all stakeholders, including pupils, are regularly part of the self-evaluation process and that this leads to planned and effective improvements. An increase in planned professional development on the Catholic life and mission of the school will enable staff to have a greater understanding of how they can further shape and support this mission.

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade:.....

2

Pupil outcomes

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

2

Provision

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

2

Leadership

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

2



Pupils are developing a secure knowledge and understanding of religion. Good progress is evident across the school from pupils' starting points in the early years settings, and pupils achieve at least average attainment in religious education compared to other core subjects. Support for pupils with SEND is a strength of the school; they are well supported to access the curriculum and can appropriately record their learning. Pupils approach religious education lessons with interest and enthusiasm, leading to consistently good levels of behaviour. Many pupils stated that they particularly enjoyed participating in the role-play activities during lessons. Pupils can confidently speak about their learning in religious education, showing an awareness of key concepts and vocabulary. A pupil reflected that in their recent topic work about being a witness, it gave them the strength to not be afraid to express their faith to others. Pupils' work is of a good standard, presented well in most year groups. Written approaches are often the main task in all classes. Pupils' work is regularly marked and pupils have a clear understanding of how well they are doing and what needs to be improved through a variety of strategies including verbal feedback, self-assessment opportunities and responding to 'Green R' questions written by the teachers.

Staff value and are committed to religious education and can effectively communicate this, and they really encourage pupils to do their best. Teaching in all year groups is generally good because teachers have secure subject knowledge of the scheme of work that is used. Teachers' questioning is effective and is used to deepen pupils' learning and understanding; this helps pupils to make progress. Planning follows the diocesan recommended scheme of work and, where it is adapted, pupils' understanding of key concepts is challenged. The teaching of scripture is embedded in lessons and pupils expertly use the Bible to support their learning. Displays in some classes show and celebrate pupils' work and all classes have an 'awe and wonder' board for children to ask

questions about faith and religion. There is excellent deployment of adult support in classrooms; they have secure subject knowledge and move learning forward through effective questioning. Moderation occurs with colleagues across the Good Shepherd Catholic Trust.

Leaders and governors ensure that provision meets the requirements of the *Religious Education Curriculum Directory*. Governors are proud and supportive of the school. Religious education has full parity with other core subjects and is resourced effectively. The curriculum time is appropriately allocated in every year group. The subject leader is passionate about religious education and monitors teaching and learning through various activities. She regularly attends training which is then disseminated to staff, and religious education is a regular focus in staff meetings. The subject leader shows a real commitment to the development of staff and is in the process of organising professional development that will positively impact the teaching and learning of religious education. The headteacher presents reports to governors during governor meetings and there is a link governor who has visited the school. In order to ensure sustained improvement, leaders and governors must be rigorous in their self-evaluation.

Collective worship

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

Collective worship key judgement grade:.....

2

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



Pupils respond well to the prayer and liturgy experiences provided by the school, throughout the year, including reconciliation services during Advent and Lent, prayer of the month and weekly class prayer. Pupils' joy, engagement and enthusiasm at Mass are evident in their singing of hymns, good knowledge of responses and their respectful behaviour. As they progress through the school, pupils become increasingly aware of a variety of different ways of praying, including traditional Catholic prayers and silent reflection. Pupils know the special months for Our Lady and that during May they can pray at the rosary club. Worship leaders are enthusiastic about their roles to read at Mass and to write the bidding prayers. Pupils can articulate how prayer helps them in their daily lives. One pupil explained how prayer has helped her to 'conquer her fears' and another stated that prayer helps him 'in his life and to grow closer to God'.

Prayer is central to the life of the school. Prayer and liturgies are carefully planned to reflect the Church's year, including a Stations of the Cross evening, led by Year 5. Parents and parishioners devotedly attended this service. The daily pattern of prayer is well established in the life of school both in liturgical celebrations and in class prayer time. Older children were able to discuss how they have opportunities to reflect in prayer at the end of the day. Prayer of the month has helped to improve the pupils' knowledge of traditional Catholic prayers. Seasonally appropriate scripture is used in class prayer and liturgy, as evidenced in a Year 6 liturgy for Ascension Day. Staff are models of good practice in leading and participating in the prayer life of the school. Focal prayer areas are established in each class and the school uses the parish church to great advantage. Parents confidently articulate how the school supports them to develop their prayer life at home and as

families. Parents eagerly attend the Year 1 and 2 service in the parish church. The service was reflective and joyous, enhanced by the pupils' uplifting singing.

The school's prayer and worship policies are readily accessible on the website. Leaders have a clear understanding of how to increase pupils' skills and progress in their knowledge of prayer. In Years 5 and 6 pupils are encouraged to pray the Angelus. The parish priest works closely with leaders and pupils to ensure class Masses are well prepared with relevant scripture and hymns. Pupils are able to attend Mass on Holy Days of Obligation and access the Sacrament of Reconciliation in Advent and Lent. Governors are aware of the breadth of opportunities for prayer and liturgy afforded by the school. Leaders provide plans to assist teachers in leading weekly prayer and liturgy in classes. Both leaders and governors recognise the importance of prayer and liturgy and ensure time is allocated accordingly. Governors are beginning to review the impact of prayer and liturgy in the school's cycle of self-evaluation.

Information about the school

| | |
|--|---|
| Full name of school | St Joseph's Catholic Primary School |
| School unique reference number (URN) | 101236 |
| Full postal address of the school | 48 Connor Road, Dagenham, RM9 5UL |
| School phone number | 020 8270 6480 |
| Name of head teacher or principal | Natalie Holden |
| Chair of governing board | Glenda Spencer |
| School Website | https://www.stjosephsdagenham.co.uk/ |
| 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 | Diocese of Brentwood |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Date of last denominational inspection | 16 November 2016 |
| Previous denominational inspection grade | Outstanding |

The inspection team

| | |
|-------------------|------------------|
| Gael Hicks | Lead inspector |
| Isabel Quinn | Team inspector |
| Lisa Schaberg | 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 |