



St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

URN: 106944

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Bishop of Hallam

22–23 October 2025

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 general norms for religious education laid down by the Bishops' Conference

Yes

The school is fully compliant with any additional requirements of the diocesan bishop

Yes

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

Fully

Compliance statement

- The school's religious education programme ensures that 10% or more of the timetable is dedicated to teaching and learning in the subject.
- The school follows the guidance of the diocesan bishop in its choice of religious education resource for teaching.
- School leaders have worked hard and effectively to have impact on those areas identified for improvement in the last inspection.

What the school does well

- Leaders and governors are inspirational witnesses to the Gospel and Catholic social teaching in their stewardship of school.
- High levels of pastoral care and the warmth of welcome to all are providing pupils, staff and the local community with a 'family', where they can come together to celebrate that they are all unique.
- Carefully structured planning by leaders is ensuring that all pupils, including those with additional needs, are making good progress in religious education.
- Leaders' commitment to regular, high quality professional development in relation to religious education subject knowledge is precisely targeted at the individual developmental needs of the staff.
- Leaders, including governors, place the highest priority on the evaluation of the quality and impact of Catholic life and mission, religious education, and prayer and liturgy on the school community. Related activities are completed with rigour and purpose and lead to positive improvements.

What the school needs to improve

- Ensure that all pupils have consistent and progressive opportunities across the school to record a true reflection of their levels of knowledge and understanding.
- Ensure that pupils have regular opportunities to evaluate the quality of the prayer and liturgy that they have planned.
- Ensure that staff knowledge and understanding of the prayer traditions of the Catholic Church is enhanced through appropriate access to high quality professional development.

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

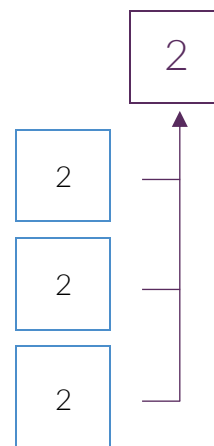
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

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



The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school is good. Pupils know the school's chosen values well and can apply them to their daily lives. They can articulate how their faith leads them to action through the principles of Catholic social teaching. They are pro-active in their support of local and global charities such as the local food bank and CAFOD. The Mini Vinnies, Faith in Action and School Council groups provide pupils across the school with leadership roles which they hold with pride. Many of the oldest pupils take the opportunity to deepen their understanding of scripture and the Church's teachings through participation in the Faith in Action programme. Pupils have a well-developed sense of respect for themselves and for those of all faiths or none. They consistently ensure that all pupils, including those with additional needs, are treated with compassion and understanding. They recognise that everyone is made in the image and likeness of God. This leads them to feel happy, safe and secure at school. They are proud to belong to the school community and value its chaplaincy provision. Pupil behaviour in lessons and around the school is good.

The school's mission statement, 'Love one another as I have loved you', is a clear expression of the mission of the Church and it is visible throughout the school. It is revisited at the start of each week, and the use of gestures and pictorial prompts is ensuring that all pupils, including the very youngest, know and understand it. There is a strong sense of community and the warmth of welcome includes everyone; both staff and parents feel that the school is a real family. This ethos leads parents to support and regularly take part in the life of the school. Staff are committed to the implementation of the mission and can articulate how they live out the mission in their daily interactions. Staff and leaders are excellent role models to pupils; they have very positive relationships with pupils and provide the highest levels of pastoral care. This care is praised by parents who feel that it extends to them too; one parent says that we 'are always listened to and school are always there to help'. The chaplaincy provision, which is effectively supported by the lay chaplain, is good with a range of opportunities provided to support pupils' spiritual and moral

development. However, this provision is not yet extended to the staff with regularity. The provision for relationship and health education is appreciated by parents and meets diocesan requirements.

Leaders bear witness to the Church's mission and they give high priority to the Catholic life of the school. As a consequence, their policies and procedures demonstrate the school's Catholic identity. Governors and leaders monitor Catholic life and mission regularly, with staff and parents, and as a result improvements have been made. The governors are very committed to their role; they are regular visitors to the school and provide regular support and challenge to leaders. The school works in partnership with the diocesan bishop and its participation in the diocesan singing programme enhances its Catholic provision. Links with the parish are secure and the parish priest is a regular visitor to the school. The school effectively engages with parents and, as a result, parents appreciate the opportunities to come into school. The school has started to make links between the Catholic curriculum and the wider curriculum through the principles of Catholic social teaching. However, this work is not embedded across all subject areas. Leaders have policies and structures in place to support staff well-being and staff report that these give them a sense of being truly valued. New staff access support from colleagues and Diocesan training in relation to the mission of the school. Leaders monitor the impact of this training and provide individualised support where needed.

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

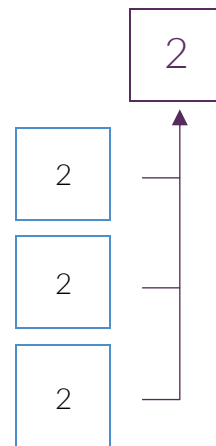
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

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 make good progress in religious education. Pupils are developing secure knowledge, understanding and skills, based on the expectations of the curriculum for each year group. Pupils' ability to speak with confidence about what they have learnt in religious education is good. For example, in a Key Stage 1 class, pupils can explain the symbolism behind the key elements of the sacrament of Baptism. Pupils across the school are developing a good level of religious literacy, including some subject-specific vocabulary, and are using this to think ethically, particularly in the older year groups. Strategies to help the pupils to know more and remember more are effective. As a result, pupils confidently ask good questions in lessons and deepen their understanding. A parent commented that their child regularly shares their learning at home. Pupils demonstrate good behaviour in lessons. In some instances, pupils' responses are limited in depth and detail, but their willingness to learn is impressive. Pupils are not consistently taking care with their written work but they can give examples of how they use their 'purple pen' for making their work more accurate.

Overall, teacher subject knowledge is good: teachers teach with confidence, including those new to the religious education curriculum. Teachers understand the value of religious education and bring enthusiasm and commitment to their work. In the strongest lessons, teachers assess pupils' knowledge acquisition accurately, provide challenge to all learners appropriate to their starting points and create an environment where pupils can respond in a range of creative ways. Task design across most classes does not enable pupils to fully express their growing knowledge and understanding. Religious education displays in some classrooms support pupils' independent learning development. The emphasis on developing a good understanding of vocabulary has been particularly effective in raising standards, particularly in upper Key Stage 2. In the most effective lessons, teachers use questioning to identify where pupils are in their

understanding, and to give positive feedback. Sometimes, this interaction lacks challenge in responses, missing opportunities to develop deeper reflection and articulation. Teaching assistants give discrete and helpful support to identified pupils. Some teachers provide pupils with opportunities to present their learning using a variety of forms; this is not outstanding because the variety offered is limited in range and response. Teachers do not consistently enable pupils to respond as individuals, relying more frequently on learning tasks which give pupils less opportunity to show signs of individuality and creativity. Choice of presentation style for pupils is at an early stage of development.

Leaders and governors ensure that the religious education programme fulfils the requirements of the *Religious Education Directory*. This enables staff to deliver lessons that are well resourced and influenced by bespoke staff training. Monitoring of religious education lessons, and pupil outcomes by leaders, supports teacher development. Where feedback to staff has had the greatest impact, teachers use a range of effective teaching strategies which maximise pupils' acquisition of religious knowledge. The subject leaders for religious education have an inspiring vision of outstanding teaching and learning. Recent planned developments have provided staff and pupils with a consistent approach to the structure of lessons. This has resulted in regular 'knowledge retrieval' practice across school which is beginning to deepen the recorded responses by pupils. The leaders' good levels of expertise are readily shared with staff. The religious education curriculum, including the study of other world faiths, enables learners to progress sequentially through the content. Leaders have ensured that regular enrichment opportunities, such as visitors presenting assemblies about their own faith practices, engage and enhance pupils' experiences.

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 respond well to the experiences of prayer and liturgy in school. They show reverence and respect at all times and most pupils understand the importance of this area of school life. There is an atmosphere of calm during worship and pupils join in communal prayers with increasing confidence from their earliest years. Prayerful guided meditation, under the leadership of the lay chaplain, is embedded in the school's prayer life and is providing pupils with opportunities to develop their personal relationships with God. Pupils, particularly in Key Stage 2, interact positively with class Prayer Journals, they voluntarily write their own prayers of intercession and thanksgiving. Pupils recognise the singing of hymns as another way to pray and do so joyfully. Pupils plan and lead celebrations of the word with increasing independence and confidence. These occasions include listening to scripture, traditional prayer and music. However, opportunities for silent and personal reflection in celebrations of the word are not consistently embedded in the practice across the school. Pupils do not routinely evaluate the quality of prayer and liturgy that they have planned. As a result, pupils cannot articulate how it could be improved without adult guidance.

Prayer is woven into the daily life of the school. Daily morning prayer is well structured and pupils respond with prayer at times of significance in the Church's year. The regular celebrations of the word provide pupils with a good understanding of how to be a good example to others, following Jesus' example in the gospels. Pupils regularly attend Mass in the local parish church and in school. Links with the parish have been well established over time. Families appreciate the welcome they receive when they attend school Masses and other celebrations. Leaders, including the lay chaplain, are skilled in supporting pupils to plan and lead celebrations of the word. However, other staff do not have a secure understanding of the prayer traditions of the Church and, as a result, do not always effectively support pupils in planning well-constructed celebrations. St Joseph's benefits from leaders who are pro-active in giving pupils the opportunity to learn new hymns and sing well through the Diocesan singing programme. The school makes good use of spaces available for prayer including classrooms, the 'Cottage' in the

Reception class outdoor area, and the new school chapel. School is pro-active in seeking ways to enable pupils to participate in and lead elements of liturgical celebrations in church. Pupils enjoy these opportunities and speak about them with pride.

A graduated policy for prayer and liturgy is in place and staff use this as a guide. However, due to some limitations in staff knowledge of the prayer traditions of the Church, pupils' planning skills and depth of knowledge do not increase at pace as they progress through school. The opportunity to celebrate Mass on a frequent basis as well as taking part in other events, including celebrating St Joseph's feast day and praying the Rosary in May, are appreciated by the pupils and central to the school's calendar. Regular professional development for staff related to collective worship is having a positive impact in some areas of school. Leaders and governors prioritise resources of time, staffing and money to ensure there are regular opportunities for pupils to pray and meditate in special prayer spaces both inside and outside. Although leaders review the quality of prayer and liturgy, these reviews are not regular or rigorous enough to move the school to outstanding.

Information about the school

Full name of school	St Joseph's Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	106944
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	3723339
Full postal address of the school	Green Lane, Rawmarsh, Rotherham, South Yorkshire, S62 6JY
School phone number	01709 710270
Executive headteacher	Not applicable
Headteacher	Christie Williams
Chair of governors	Catherine Ratcliffe
School Website	http://www.rsjp.org.uk
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	Not applicable
Phase	Primary
Type of school	Voluntary Aided School
Admissions policy	Non-selective
Age-range of pupils	5-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	December 2018
Previous denominational inspection grade	Good

The inspection team

Alixena Lubomski

Bernadette Twomey

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