



St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

URN: 148950

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Bishop of Clifton

24–25 January 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

- The school's values are a prominent feature of school life. They are fully embraced by pupils and staff and influence the words and daily actions of the whole school community.
- Pupils at the school are happy and confident, contributing enthusiastically to the life of the school.
- Leaders and governors have created an inclusive culture where the well-being of pupils and staff is effectively supported.
- The leader of religious education has a secure vision for teaching and learning and a passionate commitment to securing high standards. She is a positive and supportive role model.
- The wide-ranging chaplaincy provision empowers pupil chaplains to discover their vocation and actively share their faith with others.

What the school needs to improve

- Provide pupils with a variety of opportunities to experience and value the richness of differing forms of prayer and worship.
- Develop staff skills and confidence in adapting learning in religious education to enable all pupils, but especially the more able, to deepen and demonstrate their knowledge.
- Strengthen pupils' understanding of Catholic Social Teaching so that they can make links between it, their actions and the teachings of Christ.

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

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

2

Pupils feel a strong sense of belonging to this happy and inclusive school. They have a deep understanding of the school values, which permeate all aspects of school life. They frequently refer to them and actively seek opportunities to link these values to their daily lives. The behaviour and attitudes of pupils are very good. They demonstrate high levels of respect and care for each other, as seen in their interactions around the school. A pupil commented, "It is a friendly school, where people look after each other." Pupils feel valued as part of the school community and through the school buddy groups, which meet regularly throughout the year, they feel they have a true voice. Pupils serve as chaplaincy leaders, well-being monitors, eco team members and sports leaders. Pupils, especially older ones, have an awareness of Catholic social teaching but this has not yet been embedded into the curriculum and the language of the school. The chaplaincy provision in the school is very strong and although the number of chaplaincy leaders is relatively small, they have a wide sphere of influence and empower many others to become involved. Pupils enthusiastically engage in activities to help others and have recently supported Cafod; Charis, a local refugee charity; the Emmaus project and The Rosary, a local care home.

The expression of the school's mission is currently focused on its work on values, which is placed at the centre of school life. Leaders are now extending this to better enable pupils to articulate the mission of the school, with Christ at the centre. Relationships at the school are positive. Staff feel proud to be part of the school and take seriously their responsibilities to be role models. Pastoral systems and staffing structures at the school provide high levels of support to pupils and families, including the most vulnerable. Each child is known and cherished with great efforts taken to meet their individual needs. The model for the provision of chaplaincy is well thought through and provides a variety of genuine leadership opportunities for those involved. The school environment reflects its Catholic identity, but this is, at times, understated and opportunities to celebrate the faith identity in the physical environment are underdeveloped.

Personal, social, and health education, and relationship, sex, and health education are well thought through, planned, and delivered to reflect Catholic teachings and principles.

Leaders and governors are committed to the Catholic life and character of the school. They recognise the importance of the school's mission as a Catholic school and are acting to maintain this during upcoming changes in school leadership. Policies and structures that demonstrate the priority given by leaders to the pastoral care of pupils and staff are in place. The school recognises the principle of parents as the first educators of their children and is active in engaging with parents and regularly invites them into school. Governors are ambitious for the school and the link governor is actively involved in promoting, supporting and monitoring the Catholic life and mission of the school. The lead for Catholic life and mission accurately monitors this important aspect of school life, seeking the views of pupils and parents. Pupil chaplaincy leaders are also involved in monitoring. The evaluation undertaken by senior leaders is not as fully developed as that of the middle leader and governors. Governors and leaders recognise the importance of parish links, and a close working relationship exists between the school and the parish. Parishioners volunteer at the school and there is a named link parishioner. The newly appointed parish priest is fully committed to the school.

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

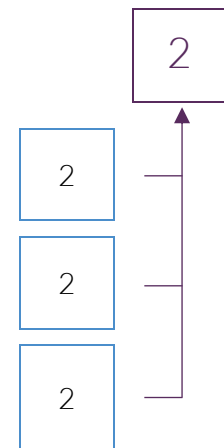
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

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



Overall, most children, from their varied starting points, make good progress knowing more, remembering more, and doing more in relation to the planned curriculum for religious education. The majority of pupils enjoy their religious education lessons and engage with their learning. They have positive relationships with their teachers, teaching assistants and peers and as a result behaviour in class is very good. Pupils express a desire to do well in religious education. They demonstrate good levels of religious literacy and relish the opportunity to use subject-specific terminology correctly. They enjoy discussing their views with their talk partners and display genuine curiosity about the topics being studied. Pupils are adept at making links between their learning and the school's values. They are confident to discuss their learning in religious education and know how well they are doing. They understand the school assessment system, regularly respond to the feedback provided by their teachers, and self-assess their progress in each topic. Pupils, especially older ones, have many opportunities for extended writing, although the tasks provided do not always enable them to show the depth of their understanding. Pupils take pride in their exercise books and present their work well.

Teachers have a good understanding of how pupils learn and have created a classroom environment that is safe, nurturing, and respectful. Teachers are committed to the teaching of religious education and have high expectations of learners. All teachers use Trust lesson plans and benefit from regular opportunities to discuss lesson planning with teachers from across the Trust. This approach strengthens staff skills and confidence. The teaching of religious education is further strengthened by ongoing support and intervention of the school leader for religious education. Teachers deliver lessons which identify learning outcomes and enable pupils to retrieve and consolidate prior learning. They are skilful in their questioning and consequently adapt their explanations to ensure that there is clarity of understanding. Teachers further support pupil learning by scaffolding and modelling tasks for them. This is extremely beneficial to pupils but on occasion, for some older pupils, is too prescriptive and limits independence. Teachers know their pupils well and provide regular feedback to pupils, indicating how work can

be improved. Teachers do not make sufficient use of their knowledge of individual pupils to adapt written tasks to enable pupils to succinctly demonstrate the depth of their understanding.

Leaders and governors ensure that religious education is at the heart of the curriculum and that the content of the taught curriculum meets the requirements of the *Religious Education Directory*. Ten per cent of curriculum time is given to the teaching of religious education, and it has clear parity with other core subjects in the school. Parents now receive information about their child's target and progress in religious education, as they do for other core subjects. The curriculum for religious education is carefully planned to enable pupils to progress. Leaders ensure that staff teaching religious education receive regular, relevant updates and training at school, Trust and diocesan levels. The leader of religious education is an excellent role model. She has a clear vision for the subject, high expectations and effective systems for tracking and monitoring the delivery of religious education. These include lesson observations, scrutiny of pupils' work, seeking the views of pupils and staff and analysing pupil progress data. In addition to regularly meeting with the lead for religious education, the link governor has a well-established programme of robust monitoring, which is reported to the governing body. The improvement plan for religious education identifies priorities and progress against them is tracked. The assessment of the impact of actions taken is currently underdeveloped.

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 positively to the experience of prayer and worship provided by the school. They are respectful and participate willingly. Pupils, appropriate to their age and capacity, are familiar with traditional Catholic prayers and use the school prayer book as a support. Pupils are familiar with the use of scripture in prayer and identify this as the most frequent approach to collective worship at the school. Limited opportunities for experiencing a variety of prayer styles or spontaneous prayer exist. Pupils have a strong understanding of the liturgical year, which is reinforced on the prayer tables in each classroom. They understand the importance of prayer, but many find it difficult to explain how it influences their lives. They can explain the importance of praying for others, particularly in response to world events and for those in hardship. Members of the pupil chaplaincy team lead and model collective worship across the school. They undertake this responsibility enthusiastically. They are also instrumental in running the Friday Prayer Club, which is attended predominantly by younger pupils. All pupils are involved in weekly class worship. Older pupils take full responsibility for using planning grids to prepare, lead and evaluate class worship. Younger pupils are guided to participate by staff.

Prayer and collective worship are part of all routine gatherings at the school. There is a daily pattern of prayer, with pupils and staff praying together at the start and end of each day and before meals. There are regular gatherings for the celebration of the Word, hymn practice, class worship and a headteacher celebration assembly. Class masses have recently been reintroduced, with the parish priest giving generously of his time. Pupils and staff are familiar with the main traditional Catholic prayers and also the school prayer. They are not routinely offered a variety of ways to pray and as a result, most prayer and worship follow the same format. The use of Scripture in worship is well established and strong links are made to learning from it and taking action in life. Each week pupils are asked to identify something to take away from their collective worship. These 'takeaways' are part of the language of the school and are recorded on fish-shaped notes which are displayed in the school hall and classrooms. The school provides a prayer table in each classroom as well as in the school hall. Resources to

enhance prayer and worship are made available in classrooms. The provision of a dedicated prayer area in the school has not been prioritised but this is something the pupil chaplaincy leaders are keen to develop.

Leaders and governors understand the importance of prayer and worship in the school. This is reflected in the school policy on prayer, the school calendar and in school planning documentation. A member of staff commented, "Reflection and time for prayer is prioritised which benefits the children and staff." The liturgical calendar is observed, and leaders have gone to great efforts to ensure that opportunities for the celebration of the Eucharist have continued, even when no parish priest was available. The induction of staff covers collective worship and staff value the support provided to them, through professional development opportunities and staff meetings. Some staff would welcome additional personalised training to enable them to better understand and support a range of worship. The governing body is active in its commitment to the prayer life of the school and governors frequently attend and support whole school worship. Leaders and governors regularly monitor compliance and participation in relation to collective worship but do not yet review the range and impact of this important area of school life.

Information about the school

Full name of school	St Joseph's Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	148950
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	9333401
Full postal address of the school	St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Park Avenue, Bridgwater, TA6 7EE
School phone number	01278422786
Headteachers	Richard Simmonds and Alison Setter
Chair of Local Governing Body	Bernadette Simmons
School Website	https://www.st-josephs-bridgwater.somerset.sch.uk/
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	The Dunstan Catholic Educational Trust
Phase	Primary
Type of school	Academy
Admissions policy	N/A
Age-range of pupils	4-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	26 -27 January 2017
Previous denominational inspection grade	2

The inspection team

Basia McLaughlin
Samantha Land

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

