

# St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

URN: 401130

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Archbishop of Cardiff-Menevia

02–03 April 2025

## Summary of key findings

### Overall effectiveness

The overall quality of Catholic education provided by the school

#### 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

#### Religious education (p.5)

The quality of curriculum religious education

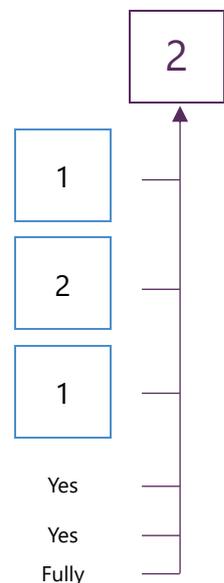
#### Collective worship (p.7)

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

The school is fully compliant with the general norms for religious education laid down by the Bishops' Conference

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

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



## Compliance statement

- The school is fully compliant with the general norms for religious education laid down by the Bishops' Conference.
- The school is fully compliant with any additional requirements of the diocesan bishop.
- The school has responded to the areas for improvement from the last inspection.

## What the school does well

- At St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, there is a lived sense of community, evident in the quality of relationships and the strong culture of inclusivity, with Christ at the centre. The Catholic ethos is tangible throughout. Pupils are safe, happy, and proud of their school. The school is an exceptionally supportive and joyful community for each of its members, valuing all without exception. Everyone is welcomed in a spirit of generous hospitality, especially those who are most vulnerable.
- The head teacher leads the school passionately and is an inspiring role model to staff, pupils, governors, and families, ably supported by the deputy head teacher and religious education (RE) coordinator. Leaders and governors can clearly articulate the Church's mission in education and are diligent in exercising their duty as guardians of the Catholic life and mission of the school.
- Pupils respond well to the experiences of prayer and liturgy by reflecting in silence, joining in community prayer with confidence, and singing joyfully, giving glory, honour, praise, and thanks to God. The learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, is vibrant, and high-quality resources are used very effectively to optimise learning for pupils.

## What the school needs to improve

- To further develop consistency in teaching throughout the school and embed engaging enrichment activities that enhance pupils' learning in RE, encouraging independence.
- To continue the excellent provision for collective worship and RE resources and share this best practice with others.

## 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

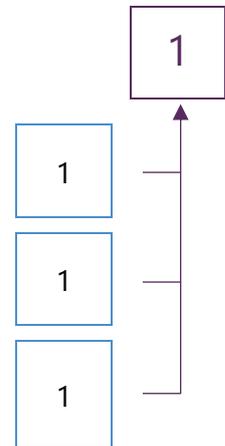
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

#### 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



Pupils understand and embrace the distinctive Catholic identity of their school. Pupils can clearly express an understanding that they are valued and cared for as unique individuals made in the image and likeness of God. They are happy, confident, and feel secure taking a leading role in responding to the demands of Catholic social teaching and are proactive in finding ways of helping those in need locally, nationally, and globally. They can clearly articulate the theology underpinning their actions. The school's chaplaincy government group is highly effective. It carries out service for others, for example, donating care packs to the local care home, Hazelhurst, and planning the Big Lent Walk. Regular activities are planned and led by the school's chaplaincy government group such as writing Pupil Profile prayers, the 'Journey with Jesus' class prayer bags, the development of the prayer garden, enhancement of prayer tables, and opportunities for class *Gweddiwn*, Mass, and feast day celebrations. The mission statement, 'Jesus: in our hearts, in our minds, in our living, in our learning', is a clear and inspiring expression of the educational mission of the Church and of the school's particular charism. It is regularly revisited and is known, lived, and witnessed throughout the school by all members of the school community. As a result, it has a significant impact on the life of the school, which excels at being a community based on Catholic tradition and practice. The life and mission of the school are deeply rooted in the Word of God. Staff are exemplary role models providing the highest levels of pastoral care and are committed to their vocation. The school environment reflects its mission and identity through explicit signs of the school's Catholic character. The care and attention given to the quality of the space reflects the dignity of each person and contributes positively to pupils' formation. For example, all classrooms have an interactive, liturgically appropriate prayer area designed to encourage prayer and reflection, which focuses on current topics, such as Desert to Garden, or relevant parts of the Church's liturgical year, such as Lent

and a Pupil Profile virtues tree. The outdoor prayer garden and the amphitheatre are beautiful additional spaces for reflection and prayer, and the staff prayer service held there was very atmospheric and gave staff the opportunity to reflect on their journey of hope in this Jubilee year.

The school's chaplaincy provision is evidence of the school's commitment to the education of the whole person. The school provides a wide range of well-planned and effective opportunities for the spiritual and moral development of pupils, staff, and governors. In October 2024, staff and governors participated in a retreat exploring the theme 'Encountering God through faith, hope, and love.' Staff and governors reflected on how these virtues shape the school community, guiding decisions. The provision for relationships and sex education (RSE) fully meets diocesan requirements. The head teacher supports the diocese through leading the *New to Catholic Schools?* primary education module, *New to RE Lead role*, and various working parties, including the Primary Prayer Toolkit and enhanced *Gweddiwn* resource. The RE curriculum leader also sits on the Archdiocesan working party for RSE. The school has strong relationships with cluster schools. A good example of this is the joint Lent service between two primary schools and the secondary school.

Leaders and governors embrace and actively promote the principle that Catholic schools are at the service of the parishes. They work hard to ensure a flourishing partnership between the school and the parish of St Joseph's, Penarth, and St Mary's, Dinas Powys. Whole school masses are celebrated throughout the year, especially at special times, Lent, Advent and feast days. The leaders and governors of the school embrace the principle that parents are the first educators of their children and fully support and empower them in meeting the demands of this vocation.

## Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

### Religious education key judgement grade

#### Pupil outcomes

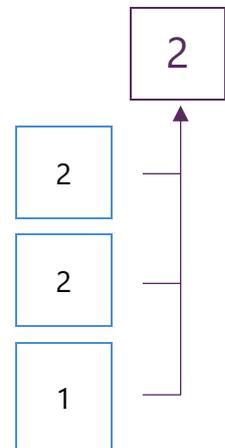
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

#### 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 are developing secure knowledge, understanding and skills that reflect the learning required by the *Religious Education Directory*. Pupils make good progress in knowing more, remembering more, and doing more as they move through the school. Pupils are religiously literate and reflect spiritually and ethically, using key concepts and subject-specific vocabulary. Most pupils in upper primary are able to work independently and produce a range of work that shows signs of emerging individuality and creativity; however, some pupils are still developing independence. This can be seen in pupils' interpretation of artwork, different genres of writing, diaries, and stories, all of which increase opportunities for active learning. Many pupils engage in lessons, enjoy their learning, and approach their lessons with interest and enthusiasm. Pupils understand how well they are doing and what they need to improve from verbal and written feedback. Pupils talk clearly about their learning. They can explain, for example, what they have learnt from scripture readings and how this applies to their lives.

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. Teachers are committed to the value of RE and they communicate this effectively to their pupils. Planning is linked to pupils' current assessment so that pupils learn well. Nearly all teachers and support staff use questioning skilfully during lessons to identify where pupils are in their understanding. As a result, they adapt explanations and tasks, however, in some lessons observed a few activities did not provide enough challenge to progress learning. Pupils' effort is often celebrated, leading to good levels of motivation. For example, they are proud to receive certificates for demonstrating the way they have lived out the virtues. Pupils receive exit tickets to consolidate their learning. Teachers recognise the impact RE has on the moral and spiritual development of pupils. Therefore, teachers give pupils

---

space and time for reflection in lessons; a good example of this is the use of retrieval grids to recap prior learning and end-of-branch quizzes. Teachers increasingly provide pupils with opportunities to present their learning using a variety of forms of expression to meet the differing needs of pupils. High quality resources are used effectively to enhance learning experiences.

The head teacher and RE co-ordinator have an inspiring vision for RE. Leaders and governors ensure that the school curriculum for RE is a faithful expression of the Directory and that RE has full parity with other core curriculum subjects. Leadership is excellent in RE because it includes high quality professional development, resourcing, timetabling, staffing, and accommodation. Leaders' and governors' self-evaluation of RE is informed by thorough monitoring, analysis, and self-challenge.

## 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

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

1

Nearly all pupils respond well to the experiences of prayer and liturgy by reflecting in silence, joining in community prayer with confidence, and singing joyfully, giving glory, honour, praise, and thanks to God. This is a strength of the school. Pupils lead vibrant acts of collective worship that enhance their spiritual understanding and appreciation. Experiences engage nearly all pupils' interest and inspire them to reflect and respond in a prayerful and meaningful way. Nearly all pupils can use traditional prayers and pray spontaneously for personal intentions. Pupils experience a wide range of ways of praying that are part of the Catholic tradition through the use of scripture, symbol, silence, meditation, reflection, and liturgical music. They demonstrate an excellent understanding of the shape and meaning of the Church's liturgical year and how it is expressed in the prayer life of the school. 'Journey with Jesus' prayer bags, Christian Meditation and Examen, and Prayer Club in the prayer garden are some ways in which their experiences shape how they think of God and the Faith and how this influences them, others, the world, and their actions.

*Gweddiwn*, a prayer service planning toolkit, produced by the head teacher for the Archdiocese, is used effectively across the school. Prayer and liturgy are central to the life of the school. Senior leaders are inspiring models of exemplary practice to other staff and pupils. As participants in and leaders of prayer and liturgy, they make intrinsic links between scripture and liturgical season, such as Lent and prayer for the Jubilee Year 2025, Pilgrims of Hope. Elements of collective worship are thoughtfully chosen to ensure that all present can fully and actively participate, including the use of British Sign Language to accompany hymns. Whole-school singing is excellent. Nearly all relevant staff are highly skilled in helping pupils to plan and lead well-constructed prayer services confidently and regularly. This was evident in a class worship that was planned and delivered independently by the 'Guardian Angels' (Year 6) to their 'Cherubs' (Reception). The school is well resourced for acts of

prayer and liturgy, and leaders ensure there is access to everything that is necessary for celebrations. Time and attention are given to ensure that spaces are used appropriately, are well cared for and conducive to prayer. All classrooms are designed to encourage prayer and reflection that focuses on current topics or relevant parts of the Church's liturgical year. Relevant staff thoughtfully plan how to work with families to include them in the prayer life of the school and support the developing prayer life of pupils. The school works hard to secure a flourishing partnership with the local parish to help pupils participate more fully in the liturgy. The school's guidance on prayer and liturgy is carefully formulated, regularly reviewed, and fit for purpose. The school fully meets the requirement to provide a daily act of collective worship.

Leaders, including governors, have a developed understanding of the different levels and skills of participation that are reflective of the age and capacity of pupils. Upper primary pupils apply to become members of the Chaplaincy Government Group. Leaders, including governors, have carefully planned a comprehensive school calendar and timetable to ensure that opportunities to celebrate the Eucharist are regularly offered to the whole school community, particularly at key times in the liturgical year and at significant moments within the life of the school. This includes all holy days of obligation and other significant days, such as the Feast of St Joseph. Provision for prayer and liturgy is prioritised when setting budgets and allocating resources, such as time, staffing, facilities, and listening to pupil voice.

## Information about the school

Full name of school	St Joseph's Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	401130
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	6733368
Full postal address of the school	St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Sully Road, Penarth, CF64 2TQ
School phone number	02920702864
Headteacher	Laura Taylor
Chair of governors	Anthony Rogers
School Website	<a href="http://www.stjosephsrc.com">www.stjosephsrc.com</a>
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	N/A
Phase	Primary
Type of school	Voluntary Aided School
Admissions policy	Non-selective
Age-range of pupils	3-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	23 – 25 November 2015
Previous denominational inspection grade	GE

## The inspection team

Caroline May  
Julie Beaumont Rees

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

