

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

URN: 140766

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Diocesan Administrator of Plymouth

11–12 June 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

1

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

2

What the school does well

- The head has a clear vision that the school is a part of the church's mission and his enthusiasm and energy, together with the experienced, knowledgeable and highly organised RE lead, provide strong leadership in encouraging and guiding staff and pupils alike.
- The mission statement is known by all, included in lessons, prayer and worship, drives the school and is lived.
- There is a strong sense of a family community where all are welcomed and cared for, and the highly committed staff team go above and beyond for their vulnerable families.
- The religious education class big books capture pupils' thoughts and questions beautifully.

- A common format guides all prayer and liturgy ensuring quality worship across the school.

What the school needs to improve

- Place and embed Catholic Social Teaching principles across the wider curriculum.
- Provide opportunities for all pupils to build up their skills to plan and lead worship.
- Ensure all pupils' needs are met in every religious education lesson across the school.

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

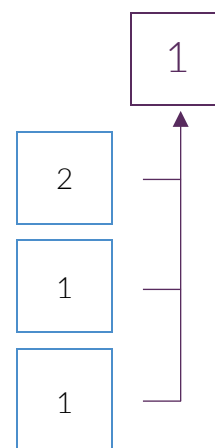
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

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 enjoy coming to school and have a clear understanding and appreciation of the mission statement that encourages them to be the best they can be. From the youngest age pupils know that they are loved by God and are special. Older pupils have an awareness that they are part of the wider church. They are happy, confident and secure as a result of strong relationships with each other and the adults in the school. They feel a responsibility to care for their common home, for example, through litter picking and environment projects; and the need to look after each other and particularly those in need, for example, through raising money for charities and collecting for the local foodbank. The school is beginning to develop pupils' knowledge and confidence in making connections with Catholic Social Teaching. Pupils' behaviour is generally good and exemplary in some classes, where they listen carefully to the adults and to each other. They support each other in their learning and in the playground, inviting those alone to play with them. They show respect for those with faith or none and enjoy learning about other faiths. The Growing In Faith Together (GIFT) team are a strong support to the religious education (RE) lead in planning and leading weekly class worship. They see themselves, and are seen by others, as role models and are proud to be part of the team.

The head sees the mission of the school as an extension of the mission of the church and is therefore highly committed to share this vision and ensure it is lived and has impact across the school. As a result of this, the staff fully embrace the Catholic life of the school and are enthusiastic to support in any way they can and through their commitment in going the extra mile to support their most vulnerable families. The school describes itself as a family and there is a strong sense of community where all are welcomed and valued and treated with dignity. All staff are exemplary role models in the way they look after each other and value each other and

the pupils. The learning environment reflects the school's Catholic identity. It is bright, vibrant, uplifting, colourful and highly valued by pupils and staff. Relationships education fully meets diocesan requirements and is adapted by the lead to accommodate the school and pupil needs, for example, using Time to Talk and introducing mental health ambassadors.

Governors are fastidious in prioritising the Catholic life and mission of the school and ensuring that Christ is at the centre. The mission statement clearly drives all policies and procedures. Governors value the leadership in the school. They provide support and challenge where appropriate, are well organised and make significant contributions to the Catholic life of the school. The Chair is in school weekly working with pupils. Leaders embrace the diocesan vision and work closely with the Trust and diocesan officers and respond to guidance offered. Leaders value the flourishing relationship with the parish, and the support of the parish priest is appreciated. Parents value what the school offers, 'The school is wonderful; staff and the new headteacher are very supportive and understanding of SEND, which creates a warm and inclusive environment.' Staff feel well supported by each other and leaders of the school, including the governors. The head is well supported by the governors and other new heads in the Trust. The school recognises placing Catholic Social Teaching across the curriculum will enhance pupils' understanding. Monitoring is well organised ensuring leaders know the school well, however areas for development identified do not always appear in action plans. Pupils and governors are involved in evaluating Catholic life. New staff value the support and training provided during induction, including a mentor and bespoke training from the RE lead, which enables them to understand and contribute to the Catholic life of the school.

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

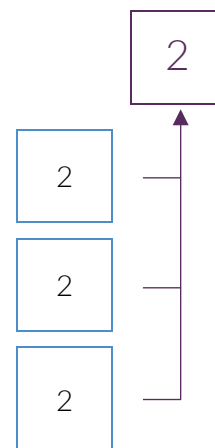
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

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



Most pupils are developing secure knowledge, understanding and skills in RE. They make good progress over the year and across the years, including those with additional needs, and attainment is in line with other core subjects. Pupils are growing in religious literacy and beginning to articulate learning using religious vocabulary, some do this with confidence and show understanding that their learning impacts on daily life. They are encouraged to remember more through reference to prior learning and recap sessions and are beginning to ask searching questions. In most classes they concentrate well and work independently. Class big books capture pupils' thoughts and questions and are recorded in a manner that shows that their curiosity is valued. In some classes this shows some deep thinking. In some classes pupils' books show that work is of a comparable standard to other core subjects. Feedback, using the green and orange pens, ensures pupils are clear what they have achieved and what they can do next, however this is not consistent across the school. 'Footsteps' ensure that there is an element of reflection and extension, with pupils beginning to show deeper thinking in some classes. On occasion tasks set do not allow pupils to achieve the learning objective, for example, when asked to explain or compare. Most pupils engage well and enjoy RE, particularly when lessons are well planned and motivating. Effective questioning is used by some teachers and where responses by pupils are delved into more deeply, pupils extend their learning. In some classes the 'I can' statements are being used by pupils to self assess.

Teachers have grown in their confidence in subject knowledge due to the effective and extensive training from the diocese and the RE lead. Staff are highly committed to the value of RE and therefore pupils value it also. The RE lead has ensured that the *Religious Education Directory (RED)* accommodates the needs of the pupils in the school and the teaching staff through adapting resources to ensure there is more ownership and creativity is promoted. Staff value the model

of what a good RE lesson looks like with a 'menu' of what could be included provided by the RE lead. Staff are clear that RE lessons contribute to the spiritual and moral development of the pupils in terms of expectations of attitudes to learning, relationships and putting their faith into action, for example, giving the flowers from the Crowning of Mary to the local care home, and getting involved in walk to school week. Good quality resources enrich RE lessons along with a wide range of tasks set, including high quality pieces of art, pupils' own art work, drama, freeze frames, posters and quality texts.

The *RED* has been successfully implemented in all classes except Years 5 and 6, who follow Come and See. The RE lead has ensured that there is a consistency across the school with the Year 5 and Year 6 teachers benefitting from the high quality training on the *RED*, for example, the use of sentence stems and driver words. Governors ensure that RE enjoys parity with other core subjects and is a priority in terms of timetabling, finance, staffing, training and resourcing. The experienced RE lead, along with the head, has a clear vision and a passion for RE. The RE lead provides strong leadership, for example, modelling lessons, being available for bespoke support with RE curriculum and rigorous monitoring which has led to improvements in the quality of teaching and learning and identifying where improvements are still needed. Pupils with additional needs are effectively and sensitively supported by high quality teaching assistants, using effective questioning, encouragement and praise. RE is enriched through visits including to Buckfast Abbey, and dressing up as saints on All Saints day. The expertise of the RE link governor, who is a regular visitor, is highly valued by the school and ensures that the Trust schedule of accountability is adhered to, ensuring governors are well informed of priorities in RE.

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 engage well with prayer and liturgy and understand its importance. Some pupils pray and sing with enthusiasm and confidence and use appropriate responses. Pupils of all ages are able to reflect in silence and 'be in the moment'. They all join in with the St Joseph's school prayer as well as traditional prayers. They describe different parts of the liturgical year and understand this is reflected in their prayer tables. A timeline displayed in 'The Street' includes feast days and holydays of obligation supporting pupils' understanding of the liturgical year. Pupils are excited by the celebrations for the Jubilee year of hope, which include a tree growing in 'The Street' decorated with flowers, and the parish priest coming in to bless the school doors, leading to a greater understanding of this special year. The GIFT team are a gift to the school as they work with the RE lead to plan weekly class worship which is aligned to the Monday gospel assembly and follows a common format. They are proud to be role models and lead worship in the classes. Currently the opportunity to plan and lead worship for all pupils is not in place. Pupils know that their prayer life impacts on daily life through the call to action leading to some insightful reflections, for example, asking Jesus for courage when it is dark.

Prayer is central to school life, with a daily pattern in class. Scripture is at the heart of all worship and the weekly plan for whole school and class worship is based on the Monday gospel Celebration of the Word. Links with gospel values are woven into lessons and prayer. Pupils are offered a variety of ways to pray including traditional prayers, writing their own and reflecting in silence. Staff value the training and modelling received from the RE lead and feel confident to plan and deliver whole school and class worship. Using the guide that has been provided by the RE lead ensures that prayer and liturgy is engaging, high quality and accessible to all pupils. Prayer and liturgy is enriched with song and also pupil led signing some of the responses. Prayer tables in each class contain age appropriate artefacts, prayer books and bible story books. There

is an outdoor prayer space with a cross made by pupils with the Chair of Governors from recycled materials. Parents are invited to join the school for Masses, celebrations and worship and attendance at these is increasing. The parish priest is a regular visitor to the school and the head has worked hard to ensure that there is a flourishing relationship between the school and the parish.

Alongside the Trust policy, detailed guidelines and resources provided by the RE lead for staff are useful in planning and delivering prayer and liturgy. This has provided a consistency of approach and is highly valued by the staff, leading to increased confidence to plan and lead worship. From a young age, pupils are able to lead parts of prayer and liturgy. Holydays of obligation and feast days are celebrated with Mass or service at the school or in the church and these are planned in advance with the parish priest, the head and the RE lead. Other celebrations include a Crowning of Mary service, Epiphany and Ash Wednesday and All Saints, and a pilgrimage walk to mark the year of hope. Staff feel well supported by the RE lead and value the opportunity to see high quality prayer and liturgy modelled. The RE lead is well supported by the governors in ensuring that classes have quality resources to celebrate the different parts of the liturgical year and to enhance the prayer life of the school, for example, holding crosses and new bibles. Pupils and governors are involved in monitoring the prayer life of the school in line with the Trust schedule of accountability.

Information about the school

Full name of school	St Joseph's Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	140766
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	8783310
Full postal address of the school	St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Regents Gate, Exmouth, EX8 1TA
School phone number	01395264875
Headteacher	Jon Willcox
Chair of Local Governing Body	Lynn Cook
School Website	www.stjosephsprimaryschool.com
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	Plymouth Cast
Phase	Primary
Type of school	Academy
Admissions policy	N/A
Age-range of pupils	2-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	2019
Previous denominational inspection grade	Good

The inspection team

Dawn Summers Breeze - Lead Inspector

Paul Cotter - Team Inspector

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

