



St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

URN: 123216

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Archbishop of Birmingham

10 June 2026 – 11 June 2026

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 RE

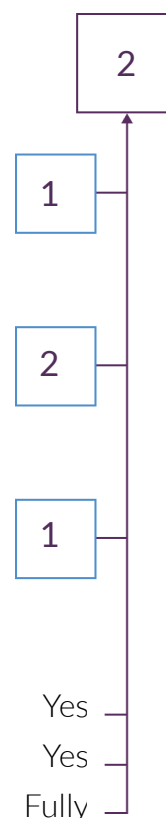
Collective worship (p.7)

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



Yes

Yes

Fully

What the school does well

- St Joseph's is a welcoming, nurturing and inclusive community that celebrates diversity. Every child is known, valued, loved, and cared for.
- Pupils are religiously literate, as learning is embedded through the teaching of subject-specific vocabulary and frequent recall.
- Pupils enjoy religious education lessons. They are well-engaged, resulting in good behaviour.
- The religious education subject leader has high expectations and ensures rigorous, purposeful monitoring, resulting in rapid improvements.
- Pupils are well supported in developing their skills in preparing and ministering prayer and liturgy.

What the school needs to improve

- Fully map and monitor the Catholic curriculum, enabling pupils to express how it influences all areas of learning.
- Develop a consistent approach to ensure the excellent presentation of work in pupils' religious education exercise books.
- Secure pupils' knowledge of traditional Catholic prayers, particularly those used at significant times within the Church's liturgical year, per the Prayer and Liturgy Directory.

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

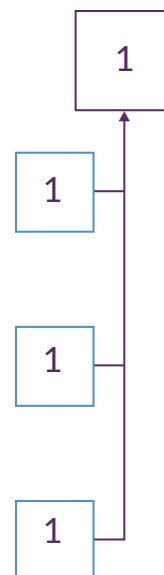
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

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 at St Joseph's embrace the school's mission, 'let us protect with love all that God has given us', and can confidently articulate how it is lived throughout the school. Pupils explain that the mission 'helps us to be inspired and follow in Jesus' footsteps,' showing that they understand how it shapes daily school life. Pupils know they are unique and loved, and take pride in being part of the school family. This is reflected in their positive relationships with one another. Pupils benefit from a highly effective restorative approach, rooted in the school's mission of protecting with love and showing forgiveness. As a result, pupils show exemplary Christ-centred behaviour throughout the school because these high standards are consistently modelled and celebrated. Pupils receive excellent pastoral support in a caring, nurturing environment; consequently, they are happy and confident. Pupils enthusiastically undertake leadership roles, including liturgy leaders, learning champions, social justice ambassadors, and eco ambassadors; through these roles, they take a leading part in responding to Catholic social teaching principles and putting their faith into action. They respond generously to charitable works, including collecting for foodbanks, raising money for Cafod and Fr Hudson's Caritas. Through the gardening club, pupils make a tangible contribution to the school's Live Simply work, demonstrating their commitment to care for our common home.

The school environment reflects and celebrates its Catholic mission; Christ is visibly at the centre of the school. High-quality displays celebrate the school's Catholic ethos from the moment visitors arrive. These displays explain and celebrate the school's core values and vision. Annual 'Ethos Days' engage stakeholders in reviewing the mission so that it remains

meaningful and relevant. Consequently, staff embrace the mission and are exemplary role models in their dedication and support of the pupils, parents and each other. Parents typically comment that school staff are 'open to talk to' and care for pupils with respect. Parents value the support and care staff provide for pupils, with one parent commenting, it is 'a wonderful school with a strong Catholic mission that it joyously shares with families.' Positive, supportive and loving relationships between staff and pupils create a strong sense of community. Pupils are proud to be part of the loving St Joseph's family. The school's diverse community reflects its commitment to inclusion, welcome, and respect for all faiths and cultures. Strong chaplaincy provision from the parish priest and parish sister engages pupils in their faith and strengthens service to the parish.

Leaders and governors are deeply committed to the Church's mission and living out the Gospel, placing the mission at the heart of all their work. Their determined vision ensures that the values and mission of the Church and of the school are embedded across all aspects of school life, resulting in a faith-filled community. Staff recognise and value this, with one staff member commenting that 'the Catholic ethos is woven into the fabric of the school; it is reflected in policies and practices and is always being revisited.' Leaders and governors ensure all staff receive regular high-quality training. The induction programme for newly appointed staff is rigorous, ensuring that they are confident and well supported. Staff appreciate leaders' support for their well-being. Governors are passionate, committed, and highly knowledgeable, providing both support and robust challenge in maintaining the school's high standards. Rigorous monitoring forms an integral part of this approach and leads to swift improvements. The school community highly regards the parish priest and the parish sister for developing an excellent link with the parishes, particularly through sacramental preparation. A well-planned programme of opportunities enables parents and the wider community to join in celebrating the school's Catholic life and mission, including an annual ethos day.

Religious education

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 key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

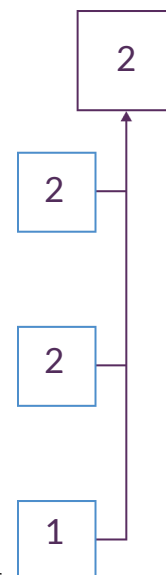
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

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 remember key learning and articulate good prior knowledge because teachers frequently require them to recall it. Consequently, pupils progress in their knowledge and recall, and their attainment is good. Pupils, including those who are disadvantaged and those with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND), achieve well and make good progress because adults in lessons support them well and because lessons are adapted to accommodate their needs. Pupils are engaged in and enjoy religious education lessons; as a result, behaviour is good, and they concentrate well during independent work. A culture of working collaboratively and supporting each other is embedded, enabling pupils to work confidently independently, in pairs, and in groups. Pupils learn through a variety of activities used to present key concepts, but their work is not always presented to the highest standards. There is a clear focus in lessons on key religious vocabulary, which is displayed and referred to regularly, supporting pupils to speak confidently about their learning using key concepts and appropriate subject-specific vocabulary. As a result, pupils' religious literacy is well-developed.

High priority is given to religious education lessons, with teachers effectively communicating the subject's importance to pupils. Teachers' confidence in their subject knowledge, supported effectively by the subject leader where needed, contributes to good teaching across the school. Teachers use questioning well during lessons to check pupils' understanding, encourage deeper thinking by asking open-ended questions, and consolidate learning. In most lessons, teachers tailor questions to the needs of specific pupils. Routine

whole-class feedback at the beginning of lessons identifies and addresses misconceptions, revisits prior knowledge, and secures learning before pupils move on. Instant feedback is used effectively, helping pupils make good progress. Teachers routinely and consistently praise pupils during lessons. This genuine celebration of effort motivates pupils to do well and gives them the confidence to contribute to lessons; for example, children in the Early Years Foundation Stage articulate confidently that Jesus is God's special son and He is present everywhere. There are opportunities for reflection in most lessons and, as a result, pupils reflect on how their religious education learning influences their lives, with one pupil explaining that these lessons inspire him to spread God's word and deepen his faith.

With her inspiring vision and exemplary commitment, the subject leader for religious education is highly valued by staff and pupils. Staff say, 'she leads the subject well and has implemented changes for the better', with pupils increasingly taking ownership of their faith. Staff feel highly supported by school leaders, which aids the subject's development. The rigorous plan for monitoring religious education involves all stakeholders. Governors are actively engaged, offering challenge and support through regular visits and dialogue with staff and pupils. This leads to clear actions, drives improvement, and ensures all voices are valued. Leaders show a deep commitment to providing impactful training. The school works effectively with the diocese through training, alongside high-quality in-house opportunities. Leaders and governors describe religious education as 'the core of the core' and enact this principle by resourcing and prioritising it equitably compared with other core subjects. For example, the required amount of curriculum time is established as a minimum expectation, which is often increased. The chair of governors and the parish sister are frequent visitors to the school. They are highly supportive of leaders, staff and pupils, while also providing opportunities to enhance staff's subject knowledge.

Collective worship

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

Collective worship key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

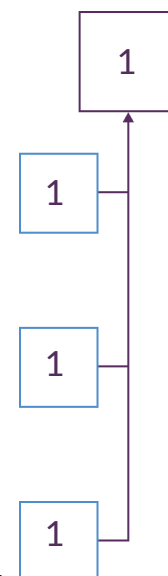
How well pupils participate in and respond to the school's collective worship

Provision

The quality of collective worship provided by the school

Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for collective worship



A rich variety of prayer and liturgy is central to life at St Joseph's. Pupils are prayerful and respectful, participating and engaging with reverence through sustained prayerful silence, attentiveness, and joyful singing. Prayer and liturgy are inclusive, creative, and rooted in Scripture, inspiring pupils to grow spiritually and live out Gospel values with confidence and joy, deepening their understanding that faith leads to action. Pupils articulate how prayer and liturgy influence their lives through the actions that they take in school and in the wider world. Leaders and staff model prayer well and support pupils in planning and preparing engaging experiences of prayer and liturgy. Pupils are involved in preparing and ministering prayer and have the skills to do so independently and confidently, in line with the year group expectations set out in policy. Pupils have a well-developed understanding of the richness of Catholic prayer traditions, including Scripture, symbolism, silence, reflection, and liturgical music. Pupils are involved in regular evaluation of the prayer and liturgy they prepare, identifying what they enjoyed and what they desire to improve next time. This meaningful and regular pupil evaluation ensures worship remains engaging and impactful, inspiring charitable action and embedding Gospel values at the heart of school life.

Prayer at St Joseph's is always purposeful and enables pupils to engage with their faith in a meaningful and reflective way. Scripture is given the highest priority and is carefully chosen to support the current liturgical season. Consequently, pupils have a well-developed understanding of the Church's cycle of seasons and feasts. Prayer spaces are used effectively throughout the school. Each classroom has a dedicated prayer area, alongside the school prayer room, forest school, and the grotto, developed with the support of the whole school

community. These spaces offer pupils varied opportunities for prayer and reflection while emphasising the beauty of the natural environment created by God. Pupils value these spaces and, with support from their teachers, take clear ownership of them. There are many opportunities for families to engage with and participate in the school's prayer life, and these are greatly valued. These include praying the Rosary during May and October, joining the Stations of the Cross during Lent, participating in the annual Crowning of the Holy Family, and attending the blessing of the grotto. Prayer bags further support families in praying together at home. Parents feel well supported and value the regular invitation to pray through newsletters and emails.

Leaders and governors articulate a clear, ambitious vision that ensures that prayer and liturgy are at the heart of school life. A carefully planned calendar of liturgical events, including holy days of obligation, saints' days, the Sacraments of the Eucharist and Confirmation, opportunities for Reconciliation, and regular Masses, deepens pupils' understanding of prayer and the rhythm of the Church's prayer life. Sacramental preparation is given a high priority through a collaborative approach between the school and three parish communities. Leaders model best practices through shared planning, observations, and feedback. This is reflected in the formation of liturgical leaders, who confidently support their peers in preparing and evaluating prayer and liturgy, ensuring that these experiences are reverent, inclusive, and meaningful. Evaluation of prayer and liturgy involves key stakeholders and is rigorous and regular. Emerging priorities are clearly identified and addressed through targeted training. This reflective culture continually drives improvement. Leaders place a high priority on staff training, with a strong focus on spiritual formation and the confident planning of prayer and liturgy. Staff value these opportunities, including the retreat day. Staff comment that the support, professional guidance, and kindness shown by leaders are invaluable in their development and formation.

Information about the school

Full name of school	St Joseph's Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	123216
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	9313838
Full postal address of the school	St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Headley Way, Oxford, OX3 7SX
School phone number	01865 763357
Headteacher or Head of School	Jessica Tweedie
Chair of Governors	Mervyn Tower
School Website	www.st-josephs-pri.oxon.sch.uk
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Phase	Primary
Type of school	Voluntary Aided School
Admissions policy	Non Selective
Age-range of pupils	4 - 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	26 June 2019
Previous denominational inspection grade	Good

The Inspection Team

Bernadette Corbett

Lead

Maureen Collier

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