

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

URN: 139350

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Bishop of Leeds

23 June 2026 – 24 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

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Yes

Yes

Fully

What the school does well

- The headteacher shows passionate commitment to living out the school's mission, fully supported by a dedicated leadership team.
- Pupils fully understand their role in 'journeying with Christ through love, compassion and humility' through developing their virtues and actively supporting those in need.
- The quality of pupils' work in religious education is excellent: it is a true reflection of their understanding.
- The school's approach to the teaching of religious education, emphasising creativity, reflection and challenge, is highly effective.
- Pupils' ability to respond confidently to prayerful experiences and to articulate their reflections is a strength of the school.

What the school needs to improve

- Review the strategy for partnership between school, home and parish to enable a wide range of involvement of parents and carers in the Catholic life and mission of the school.
- Adapt the implementation of the new religious education curriculum to meet the needs of pupils and the context of the school.
- Adapt the weekly schedule of prayer celebrations to enable a wide range of engaging and creative experiences of the breadth and richness of Catholic tradition.

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

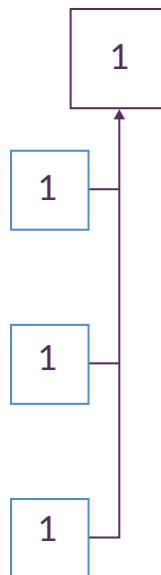
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

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 have a full understanding of the Catholic identity of the school, embodied in its mission – ‘Journeying with Christ, through love, compassion and humility’. Their active participation has a significant impact on the life of the school. This can be seen where pupils in each class choose their own charity for the year, often identified by a link with personal experience, and they respond willingly to its support through fund-raising and other activities, prompted by visitors from outside the school. The pupils are happy in their school, and feel very secure. A child commented, ‘We are a very Catholic school. Everyone helps each other and creates a happy learning space.’ Pupils know that they are following the teachings and example of Jesus. For instance, they see why they are involved in caring for others ‘to spread God’s message and his love, it’s what God wants us to do’. They are encouraged to grow morally and spiritually, and have a deep knowledge of Catholic virtues, and the principles of Catholic social teaching. They show respect for each other, and for pupils of other faiths or none. Behaviour is exemplary in all areas of school: pupils are respectful, friendly and ready to demonstrate good manners.

The school’s mission statement is known by all the community. All stakeholders have played a part in revising it, and it therefore has a significant impact on the life of the school. Staff strive hard to implement the mission statement across all areas of school life. There is a tangible sense of community, exemplified by the quality of relationships between pupils and staff, and among staff and pupils themselves. There is a welcome for all in the school community,

especially families whose children have particular needs. This is evidenced in the care and compassion shown, and the concrete commitment, to the most vulnerable. Adaptations for pupils with special educational needs are excellent. The school's physical environment fully evidences the Catholic identity. How deeply the pupils and their work are valued is seen in the quality, variety and creativity of display throughout the school. The chaplaincy programme provides well for the spiritual and moral development of pupils and staff. Personal, social and health education outcomes provide further evidence of the depth and range of opportunities for pupils to develop themselves and their understanding.

Leaders and governors are passionate about their roles in upholding the Church's mission in education, ambitious for the school and the quality of its provision. Governors feel 'proud to be part of its development, acting strategically in challenging and supporting the leadership in implementing the vision for its Catholic Life. Leaders and governors are fully engaged with the diocese, and collaborate regularly with other schools in the Bishop Wheeler Catholic Academy Trust. Parish links have been developing strongly, with staff and governors a visible presence. Partnership with parents has seen a number of strategies used to engage parents in the Catholic life, the mission statement revision being a typical example. These strategies are in the process of development in order to ensure that the partnership between home school and parish can be as flourishing as possible in parent and carer active involvement. Parents appreciate the witness of leaders and governors in promoting Catholic social teaching: 'The school's Catholic mission is evident in the caring and respectful atmosphere. It helps children develop strong moral values and a sense of community.' Leaders have worked hard to ensure that all subjects in the curriculum reflect the richness of Catholic culture. Evaluation of Catholic life and mission is very effective, particularly in the significant role that pupils play in suggesting improvements.

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

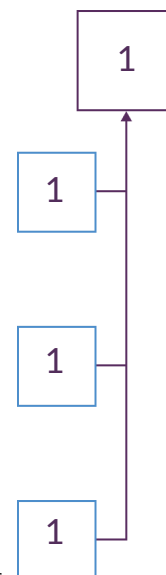
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

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 are developing excellent knowledge, understanding and skills in religious education. For many, it's their favourite subject, and they recognise the importance of it in their development. Pupils make consistently good progress when measured against the demands of the curriculum, with all groups of pupils fully supported in achieving the best possible outcomes. Pupils with additional needs achieve because of the adaptations made for them. They are well supported by teaching assistants. Pupils are religiously literate and engaged in their learning. From the earliest years, they develop specific religious vocabulary. Their knowledge of scripture increases markedly as they move through the school, so that by the end of Key Stage 2 they can use their knowledge and understanding to reflect on and discuss religious issues at a challenging level. Recall of previous learning is excellent, helped by consistent use of 'flashbacks'. Pupils' work is well presented, and they are very proud of what they produce. They are actively engaged in lessons, collaborate willingly with each other, and their behaviour in class is exemplary. They show deep thinking skills in reflective times. Pupils can talk easily about assessment of their work, about how well they are doing, and what they can do to improve. They enjoy the challenges they are given. Attainment in religious education outperforms other core subjects.

Teachers have well-developed subject knowledge that they use to best effect in lessons which are challenging and well-paced. Planning is very thorough, following the school's agreed expectations, which enable pupils to benefit from both creative and reflective approaches to

learning. Teachers use questions with confidence and skill to challenge and support pupils in their learning. Praise is used consistently to motivate pupils, both orally and in written work. Teachers give time and space for purposeful reflection in appropriate times in the lesson. They expect the best of their pupils and ensure a wide variety of learning tasks that engage their independence. They give pupils opportunities to present their work in a variety of forms. Parents recognise the impact of religious education lessons on their children: 'Our children love learning about God in their RE lessons and we often hear more about this at home time than about any of their other learning!'

The school curriculum is a faithful expression of a mixture of the Religious Education Curriculum Directory (2012) and the *Religious Education Directory* (2023). It has been designed and enhanced thoughtfully to meet the needs of pupils. The greater opportunities for learning about other world faiths has increased pupils' understanding and respect. Religious education has full parity with other core subjects. Leaders' development of the approach to learning through 'creative' and 'reflective' lessons, alongside additional challenge, has significantly increased motivation and engagement of pupils. Preparation for the full implementation of the new model curriculum is at an early stage of development. Leaders have already recognised the need for some adaptation of the designated scheme of work. Continuing professional development has been very effective in disseminating developments and improving the pedagogical skills of teachers. The subject leader, supported by other members of the leadership team, has a high level of expertise which she has used to plan and organise a uniform curriculum effectively, as well as contributing to developments within the Trust. The support given by the subject leader and the wider leadership team is valued by all staff. There are excellent links with other faith communities that enhance the curriculum. Leaders' and governors' monitoring of religious education is thorough and searching.

Collective worship

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

Collective worship key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

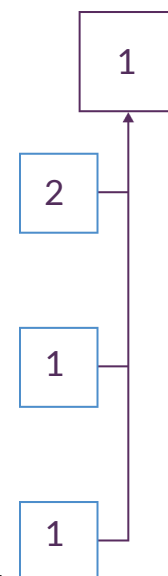
How well pupils participate in and respond to the school's collective worship

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



Pupils enjoy their experiences of prayer and liturgy. They are able to reflect in silence, join in community prayer and are confident in offering spontaneous prayers of their own. They enjoy the opportunity to record thoughts and prayers in their journals. They understand the variety of ways of praying that are influenced by the seasons of the Church's year. Pupils have grown in confidence in planning and leading celebrations of the word, making appropriate choices according to a selected theme, for instance, in preparing the altar, singing of hymns and responding to scripture. They collaborate well with teachers and their peers, using the school's planning proforma to give their class members this type of experience of prayer. Occasionally, the structure of the celebration is over-emphasised at the expense of the centrality of scripture. Their skills develop in complexity as they move through the school. They demonstrate confidence in explaining ways in which prayer has influenced them in their daily life: "It makes us ready for the day, it's our prayer time with God." They make connections with ease and speak about them in their own language. They can say how prayer has inspired them to action.

Prayer and liturgy are a central feature of school life, occurring at regular moments throughout each day and week. Prayer is always well-planned and made appropriate to the age and ability of pupils. Prayer and liturgy offer a range of ways of praying that are part of the Catholic tradition. Celebrations of the word, utilising the four-part structure that reflects the Mass, are the most common experience for pupils, and they benefit from the consistency of this approach. A wider range of experiences in the weekly schedule is not yet evident. Scripture is selected well, informed by the liturgical season and the school's designated focus

on the Catholic virtues. Relevant staff are highly skilled in helping pupils to plan and lead well-constructed prayer. They model practice very well, demonstrating the importance of prayer to pupils. Music and other art-forms are used confidently to enhance prayer and liturgy. The school has used space creatively and imaginatively, ensuring that there are reflective areas throughout the school and outside; these are well cared for and used appropriately. Each classroom has a prayer table, yet every opportunity for prayer is made special by thoughtful changes to the classroom environment. Families and parishioners are able to join in the school's prayer and liturgy regularly, examples are the Family Masses, the travelling crib, rosary bags, and celebrations of the word in school.

The school has recently revised its policy for Prayer and Liturgy. This gives extensive and helpful advice to staff, and reflects the demands of the Prayer and Liturgy Directory. Leaders and governors have a developed understanding of how prayer and liturgy is offered to pupils, and they ensure that practice is monitored and evaluated regularly, so that improvements can be made. The school's annual plan of provision is carefully thought-out, to include regular celebrations of the Eucharist at significant moments in the Church's year and the life of the school. Leaders' weekly schedule of planning focuses well on celebrations of the word, but other varieties of prayer are less frequently evident. Professional development and formation have been regular and effective. The school's retreat for Year 5 is an enriching experience for pupils that is an important part of their formation. The school supports sacramental preparation taking place in the parish and pupils' first Reconciliation and Eucharist are celebrated in school. The parish priest's regular visits are much appreciated by staff and parents.

Information about the school

Full name of school	St Joseph's Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	139350
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	3833361
Full postal address of the school	Mount Pleasant Road, Pudsey, Leeds, LS28 7AZ
School phone number	0113 2565407
Headteacher or Head of School	Mrs Clare Barker
Chair of Governors	Mr Joe Miller
School Website	www.stjosephspudsey.org
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	Bishop Wheeler Catholic Academy Trust
Phase	Primary
Type of school	Academy
Admissions policy	Non Selective
Age-range of pupils	3 - 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	14 June 2019
Previous denominational inspection grade	Outstanding

The Inspection Team

Alan Dewhurst	Lead
Emma Everett	

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