



# St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

URN: 140765

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

13–13 February 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

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

2

## What the school does well

- This is a happy, welcoming school with a strong sense of community, where all are respected and valued.
- Staff are exemplary role models and ensure that gospel values shine through all the school does, and, in particular, in their support for the most vulnerable.
- The dynamic leadership of the Executive head teacher and the head of school has led to rapid improvement in religious education and the Catholic life and mission of the school.
- Pupils' behaviour throughout the school is exemplary due to a strong sense of worth and respect for others.
- Pupils show deep respect for prayer and liturgy and sing with great enjoyment.

## What the school needs to improve

- Ensure a strategy is in place that includes a progression of prayers, Mass responses and a build-up of skills to enable pupils to develop their ability to plan, lead and evaluate prayer and liturgy.
- Extend Catholic Social Teaching across the school to include wider subject areas.
- Ensure that self-evaluation is linked to monitoring and action plans.

## 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 are proud to be part of St Joseph's and understand the unique nature of their Catholic School. The gospel values are strong and understood by the pupils who demonstrate them in their daily lives; this is celebrated weekly with Gospel guardians being identified as showing good practice. From the youngest age they understand that everyone is made in the image and likeness of God and that He loves them, and, therefore, they treat others with respect. They are clear that they have a duty to care for our common home and look after those less fortunate than themselves. Pupils know that this is the message from Pope Francis in *Laudato Si*, although they are not yet clear about the terminology of Catholic Social Teaching. They are happy, confident and secure, due to strong relationships with staff, who are exemplary role models. Pupils show great respect to each other, valuing and supporting those with specific needs. They are beginning to understand the importance of learning about other faiths. Behaviour across the school is exemplary. Pupils are regularly involved in fund raising for local and global charities, including sending books to Gambia and supporting a hospital in Nigeria. There is an enthusiastic Growing In Faith Together (GIFT) team who are highly regarded by the rest of the school. They value the opportunity to impact on the school through helping others, being role models and developing worship.

The mission statement drives the school. It is known and valued by pupils and staff alike. Staff are committed to supporting the Catholic life of the school through the high levels of support offered to all pupils and especially to those with specific needs, for example, bespoke provision to enable pupils to access the curriculum. There is a strong sense of community with staff being well-supported by school leaders and each other. Everyone is welcomed into this 'family of Jesus'. The Catholic identity of the school is reflected in the high-quality displays, for example, on faith

in action, gospel values, St Joseph, and Laudato Si. Chaplaincy provision is thriving due to the dedicated support of two parishioners who give their time willingly to enrich pupils' faith journey and knowledge of the Mass, and enable pupil participation through reading, serving and singing. Relationships education meets diocesan requirements.

School leaders are passionate about the Catholic life and mission of the school. Due to their dedication and hard work the school has made rapid progress. They ensure that Christ is always at the heart of the school and this is communicated well to the whole school community. They have actively engaged the support of the diocese and the Trust (CAST) to ensure that training and guidance offered is of the highest quality. They are hugely appreciative of the support offered by the primary religious education (RE) advisor for the diocese. Parish links are strong with the support of the local deacon, for example, pupils' art work is displayed in the church which is appreciated by parishioners. Leaders have worked hard to build the trust of their parents and families who say that 'the staff are positive role models and always greet us daily with a beaming smile'. Catholic Social Teaching principles are beginning to be linked with the whole curriculum. The welfare of the staff is of paramount importance to the school leaders who seek to go above and beyond to ensure effective support is in place. Governors are well informed at each meeting about Catholic life and offer challenge and support as appropriate. The CAST schedule for accountability is followed faithfully by the governors to ensure that they cover all aspects of school life. Self-evaluation is not yet joined up enough to ensure that the process is robust. New staff are supported through diocesan training and bespoke training from school leaders, they feel well supported.

## Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

### Religious education key judgement grade

#### Pupil outcomes

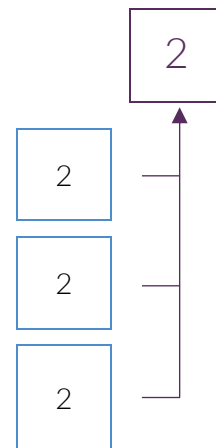
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

#### 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 making good progress through developing secure knowledge, understanding and skills that reflect the *Religious Education Directory (RED)*. They are becoming religiously literate through making links with scripture and their daily life and show understanding that what they are learning, for example, forgiveness, impacts on their quality of life. Pupils are able to use bible references in their class discussions, often quoting where they can be found in the bible including chapter and verse. Recapping in all lessons ensures that prior learning is built upon systematically, and this is valued by the pupils. Their learning is enriched through encouragement to ask questions especially using their class question boxes. They can work independently and concentrate well, and are encouraged to use bibles, class displays and notes from prior learning to complete tasks. They produce work of a good standard, with parity to other core subjects, and it is mostly presented well. Pupils are highly engaged and motivated and clearly have a great enjoyment of Religious Education learning. The use of knowledge organisers, challenge statements, 'I can' statements and feedback from staff ensure pupils have a clear idea of how well they are doing. Attainment is in line with other core subjects, with few pupils working at greater depth.

As a result of diocesan training alongside bespoke training provided by the local deacon, both of which are highly valued, staff subject knowledge is developing well, increasing their confidence to deliver inspirational teaching in most classes. Most teachers adapt planning to accommodate their pupils' needs. Effective questioning adapted to pupils' understanding and clear explanations lead to rapid progress in some classes, this is not consistent across the school. Staff ensure that gospel values are highlighted in lessons and are clear that this provides good spiritual and moral development of pupils. Careful planning provides extensive opportunities for pupils to present their work in a range of ways including drama, hot seating, art and extended

writing; and ensures that tasks enable pupils to achieve the learning objective. High quality resources are used well to enhance Religious Education learning, alongside the Religious Education boards which pupils and staff refer to throughout the lessons, for example, the Religious Education display in the Early Years Foundation Stage is used to enable the youngest pupils to retell bible stories. Bespoke resources are adapted to ensure that pupils with specific needs can access the curriculum with enjoyment, engagement and understanding. There has been a period of improvement in the teaching and learning of Religious Education and staff appreciate the training and support that they have received.

The *Religious Education Directory* is taught throughout the school with resources adapted to meet the needs of all pupils. This ensures continuity for staff and pupils and ensures the opportunity to progress sequentially through the subject content. Religious Education enjoys parity with other core subjects in terms of training, timetabling, and resourcing. School leaders support staff following diocesan training where needed. The Religious Education lead has a clear vision for Religious Education across the school, including ensuring that Religious Education is valued by staff and pupils, for example, the high quality class floor books which show the breadth of Religious Education learning. This has led to a rapid transformation in the quality of teaching and learning. Regular staff questionnaires ensure that specific training can be put in place as needed, staff value being heard and that the new curriculum had been introduced at a pace that is appropriate for the school. Monitoring is thorough, including moderation across the whole school, and has led to improvements in Religious Education outcomes.

## 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 are highly respectful and prayerful in whole school and class worship. They join in with singing joyfully and with enthusiasm. From the youngest age pupils know traditional prayers and have opportunities for silent prayer and writing their own prayers, to be used in worship. Pupils are not yet clear about the liturgical year. They participate in worship by reading from the bible, reflecting, for example, about times they need to say sorry, and reading out their own prayers. The older pupils are good role models and are proud to support the younger pupils during whole school worship in a caring manner. They are beginning to plan and lead their own worship in some classes; they are proud to do this and are keen to develop their skills. Pupil chaplains have highlighted this on their action plan and look forward to supporting others to lead worship. They have also developed pilgrimage passports to celebrate the year of Jubilee and show good understanding of what a pilgrimage is. The messages of whole school worship are taken back to the classroom, for example, rainbow fish made by younger pupils for each class, as a visual reminder throughout the week. Pupils are clear about the impact of prayer on daily life, for example, 'I made the wrong choice when I pushed someone and I am sorry for this,' and offering prayers for 'love and happiness in our country.'

Prayer is central to the daily life of the school, with class prayers throughout the day, and whole school worship each day of the week, which reflects the liturgical year. The Sunday gospel features throughout the week enabling a deep understanding by pupils. Pupils have been taught how to pray the Rosary with resources and training provided by Aid to the Church in Need. Scripture is at the heart of whole school and class worship. Following modelling from school leaders, staff are confident to lead class and whole school worship and they are models of good practice for the pupils in their delivery and participation. Dramatising gospel readings, and the delight pupils show in singing enrich their prayer experiences. All classrooms have prayer areas reflecting the liturgical colours, with age appropriate artefacts, prayers written by the pupils and the gospel values displayed. These are well maintained by the GIFT team and well used by the

pupils. Other prayer areas around the school offer opportunities for silent prayer and reflection. Families and parishioners are invited to attend class and whole school Masses and services. There is no prayer progression in school that ensures pupils know a wide range of age appropriate prayers and Mass responses.

There is a useful policy in place which outlines the expectations of the school clearly. Staff are mindful of pupils' capability in building up skills to plan and lead worship but there is no clear strategy in place. Prayer and liturgy is well planned in advance and reflects the liturgical year. Feast days and holy days of obligation are celebrated. Reconciliation services do not currently take place. Staff feel well supported by school leaders and high-quality resources to plan and lead worship. The GIFT team help to set up for assemblies and Masses and assist through doing the readings, saying the bidding prayers and serving on the altar. School leaders recognise the value of quality prayer experiences and this is reflected in the training for staff and resources that are in place to enhance teacher and pupil-led prayer, for example clear, thought-provoking PowerPoint presentations using quality artwork. Monitoring takes place in the line with the CAST schedule and leads to identifying areas for priority in the action plan.



## Information about the school

Full name of school	St Joseph's Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	140765
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	8783610
Full postal address of the school	St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Coombeshead Road, Highweek, Newton Abbot, TQ12 1PT
School phone number	01626352559
Headteacher	Nichola Day
Chair of Local Governing Body	Andrew Kennedy
School Website	<a href="http://www.st-josephs-primary.devon.sch.uk/">www.st-josephs-primary.devon.sch.uk/</a>
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	5-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	April 2018
Previous denominational inspection grade	Good

## The inspection team

Dawn Summers-Breeze   Lead inspector  
Louise White   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

