



# St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

URN: 105223

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Bishop of Salford

17–18 January 2024

## 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 school is seen as a 'beacon of hope' for all who are part of their community, where every child and family is welcomed, valued and supported to achieve to the best of their potential.
- Leadership at the school is highly effective and targeted upon improving outcomes in all areas. Leaders are recognised as exemplary role models who live, support and develop the school's mission and offer effective support for staff and the whole school community.
- The link between parish and school is valued by all. The school readily embraces opportunities to work in collaboration with the parish. The parish priest has a significant positive impact upon the whole school community.

- The school has embraced opportunities for professional development to develop religious provision. All staff have engaged enthusiastically and demonstrated high levels of commitment.
- Pupils are passionate about religious education and enjoy their learning. They demonstrate care and love for one another through living their mission to 'Love, Protect, Educate and Nurture'.

### What the school needs to improve

- To focus upon the opportunities presented, particularly to higher ability learners, to be able to independently demonstrate their skills, knowledge and understanding in the written responses to their learning.
- For pupils to have the skills and confidence to effectively evaluate the elements and quality of their prayer and liturgy experience leading to this having a significant impact upon themselves and the whole school community.
- For pupil leaders to be able to clearly articulate the mission that underpins their actions.

## 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**

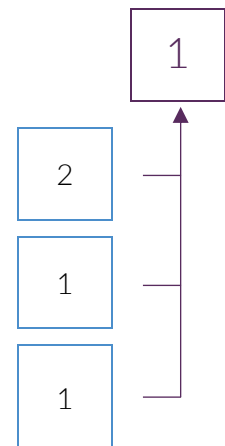
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

**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



There is clear evidence that religion is at the heart of everything at this school and that 'everyone is made to feel welcome'. Pupils thrive in the Catholic life and mission of the school. Every pupil that was spoken to felt happy, confident and secure and that they were valued at their school. Pupils clearly understood that their school is committed to following the example of Jesus and they actively seek opportunities to support those most in need. Pupils demonstrated a deep respect for their school and this was regularly echoed by all that they are 'a part of the family of St Joseph.' The mission statement, 'Love, Protect, Educate and Nurture' is clearly understood and valued by every pupil. Pupils recited the mission and explained the meaning of this with a smile and with pride. Parents spoke proudly about the support that the school offers as part of the community and how the school goes 'above and beyond to give the very best to everyone'. Both parents and pupils recognised that the school goes the extra mile to provide an exceptionally supportive and joyful community for each of its members and that staff provide the highest level of pastoral love and care for the pupils. To become outstanding pupils need to be able to clearly and independently express their understanding of their role in this commitment to following the teachings and examples of Jesus as expressed in the Gospels. Pupils and parents from a variety of cultures stated that they felt 'welcome' and 'part of the school community' and most importantly 'valued'.

The school benefits greatly from the high levels of support and direction received from their parish priest. All staff, parents and pupils spoke with appreciation regarding the significant involvement that their priest has in the school and how they have benefitted from his guidance and the large amounts of time and energy that he is able to offer to the school. The very close connections between the school and the parish are highly valued and pupils from the school are

regularly welcomed into the church. The use of pupils within the music ministry has been an effective way of developing links to the parish further with the 'party after class Mass' where parishioners and pupils have a drink and play games together. The school is seen as 'the greenhouse in the parish garden'.

The leaders and governors truly embrace the principle that parents are the first educators of their children and ensure that they are well supported in this vocation. Parents are highly supportive of the school and leaders have highly effective methods of engagement with parents including those who are the most hard to reach. Leaders, staff and governors are inspirational witnesses to the Gospel at every level. Their decisions are carefully planned over time to ensure the pursuit of the common good. This is accurately reflected in the school's plans and evaluations. Staff at the school feel fully supported in their role by the leaders of the school and feel that it is a 'privilege' to be a part of this community. Leaders ensure that the well-being is a high priority for all, including the senior leadership of the school. The Catholic life and mission of the school is a high priority for the school in all areas of the curriculum and this is consistently evidenced as a school improvement priority. Leaders at all levels regularly evaluate the effectiveness of the provision offered to all, plan for and implement developments and changes which offer an ever improving experience for every child at the school. This is reflected in the self-evaluation of the school which is an accurate analysis of the challenges and successes seen by the school and leads to planning for further enhancements and developments throughout the school. Opportunities for staff development are used regularly, closely aligned to the school's key action points and is reflective of diocesan initiatives. Staff feel that the training offered has had a significant impact upon their ability to deliver a Christ centred curriculum and to offer a school where 'Christ is at the centre'.

## Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

### Religious education key judgement grade

**Pupil outcomes**

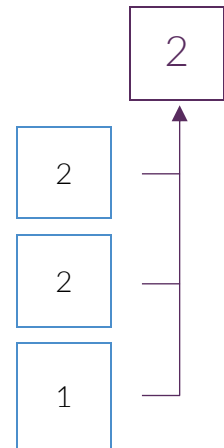
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

**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



The teaching and delivery of religious education is clearly important to all at St Joseph's. Pupils are engaged in their learning and they highly value the opportunities that are offered to them throughout the curriculum and wider opportunities. Pupils enjoy their learning and approach their lessons with interest and enthusiasm. Many of the pupils rated religious education as their 'favourite' or 'best' subject in school. Pupils are able to reflect spiritually and they can apply skills learned in their everyday life. Pupils are able to speak with confidence about what they have learned and are able to use some subject specific vocabulary in their written responses. Pupils are able to think for themselves and show a growing independence in their approach to learning. Work in books is presented to a generally high quality and shows emerging individuality and creativity. Pupils achieve above average attainment verbally and in discussions however attainment is not yet outstanding as the written responses produced by the children are not consistently reflecting the high ability and potential demonstrated by pupils in their verbal responses and discussions. The good level of engagement in learning through religion was also reflected in conversations with parents who were positive about the learning experiences offered to their children at St Joseph's.

Teachers, and all staff members, are confident in their subject knowledge and plan lessons which are appropriate to the phase they are teaching. Teachers feel that they have been well supported in developing their knowledge, understanding and delivery of religion and that they have been fully involved in the development of the school's curriculum and approach to teaching religion. Staff commented that they are very well supported throughout their time at the school, but particularly when first starting at the school. Questioning is used skilfully during lessons, particularly during discussions to identify where pupils are in their understanding. The knowledge of pupil ability should now be used to ensure written evidence is consistently

produced to a high standard and to challenge pupils to push themselves to the highest levels of achievement. A range of feedback is provided to pupils and this assists pupils in knowing what they need to do in order to make progress with their learning. Teachers have carefully considered how learning can be presented in a variety of forms such as art, dance and music. These variety of approaches to learning have assisted in lessons being motivating for most pupils.

Considerable time, energy and resources have been used by the school's leaders to ensure that religious education has a high priority across the school. Leaders have considered carefully the needs of their pupils and tailored a curriculum which allows them to flourish and to develop a love for religious education from the very youngest age. Leaders engage well with local and diocesan training opportunities and consider carefully how this can be integrated into the school to further develop and enhance the provision offered. They consider whether new initiatives are relevant to the school and how these can be effectively incorporated into the existing successful curriculum. The leader for religious education has an inspiring, passionate vision and commitment to the development of religion throughout the school. Her extensive support for staff is widely recognised and appreciated. Leaders at all levels are involved in the self-evaluation of religious education and they constantly strive to ensure that there is ongoing development and learning which leads to outcomes which are at least consistently good.

## 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

1

2

Pupils respond well to the experiences of prayer and liturgy provided by the school. Pupils participate reverently with prayer and show a growing level of independence in this throughout the school. Appropriate resources are available to ensure that the environment for prayer offers the opportunity for spiritual and personal reflection. All pupils are encouraged to engage with prayer and liturgy at a level of participation and understanding that is appropriate to their age, level of understanding and ability. Silence, reflection and music are used to creatively enhance the experience of prayer for every pupil across the school. Suitable scripture is used that is relevant to the liturgical year and has relevance to the pupils and their level of understanding. Scheme resources are available for all staff to follow. As staff grow in confidence and experience there is less dependence upon these materials but it gives a consistent starting point for all. Pupils have a growing level of responsibility for the preparation and delivery of liturgy throughout the school including the selection of scripture to be used although this was more evident further up the school. Clear examples were shown as to how the school responds through prayer to a variety of difficult and emotional situations and the profound impact that this has upon pupils and staff alike.

Prayer is used regularly throughout the school day. There is a daily pattern of prayer throughout the school which develops in complexity and expectation throughout the school. Staff are skilled at leading and planning prayer and liturgy and a number of good examples of pupil led prayer were observed throughout the school, particularly in Key Stage 2. Classrooms space is used effectively, with pupils able to recognise clearly when the classroom is transformed to be a space for prayer and reflection. There is creative use made of the outdoor areas where pupils can reflect upon the natural wonders created by God and also spaces to choose to enter into private

and independent prayer. Permanent altars in classrooms would benefit from being more prominent to match the level of importance given to special areas around the rest of the school.

Leaders have completed comprehensive levels of work alongside all staff to develop an effective policy for prayer and liturgy which is regularly reviewed and fit for purpose. Leaders have a clear strategy for further developing the skills of participation for pupils as they progress through/ the school. Pupils now need to be empowered throughout the whole school to be able to provide prayer and liturgy opportunities which are consistently independent, of a high quality and accessible to the whole community. Leaders have clearly identified the next steps which they wish to follow to enhance their provision to being outstanding. This includes clear links to staff professional development highlighted in the school's action plan. The school has ensured that a generous budget is allocated for religious education and prayer and liturgy. The religion leader is highly skilled and well supported to provide the drive for this further development alongside supporting the development of consistently high quality experiences of prayer and liturgy for all pupils.



## Information about the school

Full name of school	St Joseph's Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	105223
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	3503320
Full postal address of the school	St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Shepherd Cross Street, Halliwell, Bolton, BL1 3EJ
School phone number	01204333055
Headteacher	Nicola Rabbett
Chair of Governors	Sara Smith
School Website	<a href="http://www.st-josephrcp.bolton.sch.uk">www.st-josephrcp.bolton.sch.uk</a>
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	N/A
Phase	Primary
Type of school	Voluntary Aided School
Admissions policy	N/A
Age-range of pupils	3-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	30 <sup>th</sup> November 2015
Previous denominational inspection grade	2 - Good

## The inspection team

Carl McIver	Lead inspector
Anne-Marie Bell	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