

# St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

URN: 141478

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Bishop of Nottingham

12–13 March 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

#### Religious education (p.5)

The quality of curriculum religious education

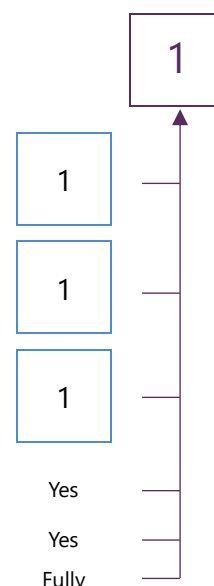
#### Collective worship (p.7)

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



## Compliance statement

- The school ensures that a minimum of 10% of the timetable is allocated to the teaching of religious education and follows a programme of study aligned with the requirements of the bishops' conference.
- The school follows all additional requirements of the diocesan bishop.
- The school has ensured that all areas of improvement from the previous inspection have been addressed.

## What the school does well

- The school is a joyful and inclusive community which fully lives out its mission statement, 'Trusting in God: creating tomorrow: helping today'.
- Pupils are polite, hardworking, respectful and reflective. They are extremely proud to be part of the St Joseph's family.
- The headteacher is an inspirational Catholic leader who ensures that every member of the school community is valued.
- The outstanding subject leader for religious education is proactive in ensuring that the curriculum not only challenges pupils' knowledge but enhances their understanding of the school's Catholic vision and mission.
- Prayer and liturgy are at the heart of St Joseph's. The outstanding chaplaincy team ensures that all members of the school community experience opportunities for spiritual and moral growth through an extensive programme of worship.

## What the school needs to improve

- Enable governors to evaluate with precision the impact of initiatives and activities on pupils in relation to Catholic life and mission.
- Provide regular opportunities for governors to reflect strategically on the provision for religious education.

## 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

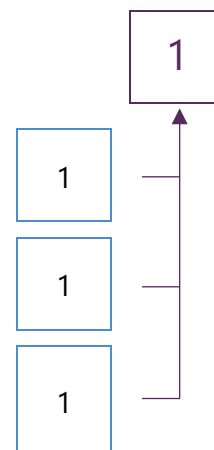
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

#### 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



As soon as you enter St Joseph's School, the Catholic life and mission is evident through the warmth of welcome, displays around school, and pupil-designed prayer stations, as well as the outdoor prayer garden and stewardship of St Joseph's church. The well-established mission statement, 'Trusting in God: Creating tomorrow: helping today', is at the heart of everything the school does. It is reviewed each year and, as a result, the whole school community has full ownership. This means that all pupils can articulate in an age-appropriate way what this means to them. Throughout the day, in structured and unstructured times pupils act as missionary disciples using every opportunity to share with others the knowledge that they are unique and loved by God. At St Joseph's, pupils are happy, confident and secure. Pupils have an excellent understanding of Catholic social teaching and apply these principles in their daily lives. They believe they are agents of change. Parents agree with this: 'Our children tell us off for not looking after God's world; it gives us hope that our children really will change the world'.

Scripture is the foundation stone of Catholic life and mission at St Joseph's. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children are immediately introduced to Catholic beliefs and traditions. One parent commented, 'my child has only just turned four and openly talks about why her Catholic life is important, what we do at Mass and why'. All staff are exemplary role models in their relationships with each other and the pupils in their care. Partnerships with parents are strong, leaders and staff know the needs of their community and parents say that 'nothing is too much trouble for the staff of St Joseph's'. All cultures are warmly welcomed at St Joseph's; it is fully inclusive. Opportunities are organised for the pupils to visit other places of worship and a market place of other faiths is held in school, into which other local schools are invited. The chaplaincy

team planned provision is superb and provides a wide range of prayer and liturgy opportunities for the spiritual and moral development of pupils and staff.

The inspirational headteacher, ably supported by the religious education subject leader and the chaplaincy team, has created an active and thriving faith community. Leaders and governors are united in their holistic approach in ensuring that the Catholic life and mission is central to the daily life of the school. The leadership and chaplaincy teams pursue this with joy, enthusiasm and dedication. The school promotes the bishop's vision for Catholic education and offers the diocese its expertise in supporting other schools. Governors are frequent visitors to the school. Their challenge and support are greatly valued, but their evaluation on the impact of initiatives and activities provided for pupils, though good, is not forensic in nature. The partnership between the school and the parish is very robust. The school community see themselves as members of the parish family and therefore at the service of the parish. The use of the pupil parish ambassadors reinforces this and strengthens the school parish link. The parish priest and religious sister are active members of the school community and they greatly enhance the prayer and liturgy of the school as well as supporting leaders and staff pastorally. All staff appreciate the opportunities for professional development provided by leaders, the lay chaplain, diocese and the Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Multi-Academy Trust. One member of staff commented that, 'I have never been in a school where you get so much support and it is not seen as a sign of weakness'.

## Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

### Religious education key judgement grade

#### Pupil outcomes

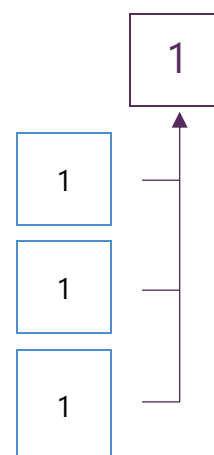
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

#### 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 enjoy their religious education lessons due to the creative, varied and interesting activities teachers plan for them. As they progress through the school, their religious literacy, knowledge and skills, and their ability to reflect on their learning, are increased and embedded. This includes pupils with special educational needs. This is due to the high expectations of all staff and the consistent structure of learning experienced throughout the school. The use of 'driver words', the 'big question' and the 'steps to success', ensure all pupils have detailed understanding of their learning and what they need to do to improve. Children from the earliest years are given a strong foundation; they can confidently retell the gospel story of Jesus calling the children to him; they understand and use the term 'lectern'. In older classes, pupils can make links between 'forgive us our trespasses' within the Lord's Prayer to the parable of the prodigal son, whilst others make links to the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Links to Catholic social teaching are frequently made in lessons. When working independently pupils are fully immersed in their learning. Behaviour is outstanding. The presentation of pupils' workbooks is of a high standard reflecting the pride they show in their work.

Teachers are confident in their subject knowledge: they demonstrate clear enthusiasm for the teaching of religious education; they recognise the importance of religious education in the formation of fully rounded individuals. Staff are very clear that the love of God runs through everything they do. Teachers make lessons engaging with an innovative but structured approach which includes extended writing, scripture analysis and evaluation of art work, as well as recreating art. In a lesson on the Last Supper, pupils interpret a painting by Paulo Medina to the life of Jesus and their own faith; during discussion, pupils comment on how the dark background could signify the betrayal of Jesus by Judas, whilst another links it to the coming darkness when

Jesus died on the cross; another pupil links the picture to their own practice commenting that 'the disciples gathering round the table is like us gathering at Mass'. Pupils are regularly given opportunities to deepen their understanding of scripture and make links to previous learning. Planning is excellent and the school measures progress systematically, with the use of pre and post assessment tasks providing pupils with clear evidence of progress. Pupils also have the opportunity to self-assess at the end of lessons by placing work in coloured trays.

Leaders and governors ensure that religious education has full parity with other core subjects in terms of time, resourcing and homework expectations. This year, the school has embedded links from religious education with history, geography, art and Catholic social teaching. The use of the 'big question' has enhanced this, as pupils are able to reflect on, for example, 'Were the Tudors peacemakers?' or, 'Does the Pharaoh empower everyone?' Parents are fully informed of their child's progress through parents' evenings and end of year reports. Attainment made by all learners is impressive, a consequence of consistently good or better teaching. Leaders and governors are united in their approach, but opportunities are sometimes missed to gather greater reflection from the governors, to further enhance the strategic approach to improvement. The subject leader for religious education has a clear vision and is inspiring in her work. Her skills are recognised beyond the school. The school follows the 'Come and see' scheme of work but the subject leader enriches this to provide challenge, so that the transition to the new religious education curriculum, next year, will be smooth.

## Collective worship

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

### Collective worship key judgement grade

#### Pupil outcomes

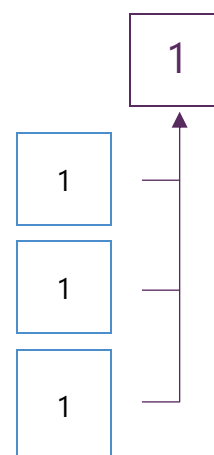
How well pupils participate in and respond to the school's collective worship

#### 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



Prayer is central to the life of St Joseph's. Pupils know that prayer is a conversation with God, that it can give them strength to cope with difficulties as well an opportunity to ask for God's blessing. They say, 'they may not be answered straight away as God is teaching me to be patient'. The chaplaincy team is highly effective. As a result, pupils not only experience traditional Catholics prayers but are also provided with contemporary forms of worship. All pupils, not just the pupil chaplaincy team, are secure in planning, leading and evaluating prayer and liturgy. Pupils are active missionary disciples to their local communities and further afield. As a result, their moral and spiritual development deepens. A governor commented, 'it is a humbling experience to participate in a pupil-led worship'. Pupils of all ages not only understand how to prepare a prayer space, but can deliver with support a whole school worship reverently, joyfully and with confidence. The quality of the spontaneous prayer during whole school worship is exceptional.

Prayer is an integral part of the daily routine of school life. The detailed prayer and liturgy progression policy document is used by all staff and enables everyone to be consistent as pupils progress through school. As result, pupil voice and participation are strong; the Cafod group numbers over 30 pupils. The chaplaincy team and leaders are inspiring models for the other staff, pupils and parents. Parents are fully involved in the prayer life of the school in school and church as well as through activities at home, with the travelling crib, bible, or crucifix. Parents say, 'so much is done to involve the parents'. The chaplaincy team and leaders have ensured that the annual plan of provision for prayer and liturgy provides staff and pupils with the opportunity to celebrate the richness of the liturgical year. Liturgical norms are embedded in the prayer life of the school: all pupils greet the gospel with joy by their singing and reverence by standing. Space is at premium in the school, yet leaders make imaginative use of the space available.

Opportunities to pray privately are greatly valued by the other pupils, whether this is through the use of prayer stations, the prayer garden or personal prayer journals.

Prayer and liturgy are outstanding because the whole staff are united in the vision that St Joseph's is a missionary school. The school's policy on prayer and liturgy is reviewed regularly and underpins all planning and provision. The chaplaincy team and leaders have carefully thought how meditation is introduced in school; the youngest children experience 'visio divina' and 'lectio divina' in an age-appropriate manner so that when they enter Key Stage 2 they can actively participate in stillness for sustained periods of time. The chaplaincy team work very closely with the parish to prepare pupils for the sacraments and provide occasions for them to receive the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist. They make sure that Catholic tradition remains part of school life, giving pupils the experience of Benediction, pilgrimage and retreats. Leaders ensure that prayer is a joyful experience. Teachers and support staff are excellent role models for pupils in their participation and leadership of prayer. Teachers and support staff model for the youngest children so that, as they progress through school, pupils confidently take a greater role in the planning and delivery of worship. Parents are proud of the headteacher and staff at St Joseph's: one parent commented that, 'St Joseph's prepares our children to be active members of their community and committed to living out the Catholic faith through their actions'.



## Information about the school

Full name of school	St Joseph's Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	141478
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	8303516
Full postal address of the school	St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Langwith Road, Langwith Junction, Mansfield, NG20 9RP
School phone number	01623 742609
Headteacher	Dani Seaman
<b>Chair of local governing body</b>	Jonathan Cummins
School Website	<a href="http://www.stjosephscatholicprimaryvoluntaryacademy.co.uk/">www.stjosephscatholicprimaryvoluntaryacademy.co.uk/</a>
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	Our Lady Of Lourdes Catholic Multi-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	19 October 2017
Previous denominational inspection grade	1 - Outstanding

## The inspection team

Angela Phillips  
Andrew Monaghan

Lead  
Team

## 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