



# St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

URN: 141566

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of Most Rev John Wilson the Archbishop of Southwark

29 February-01 March 2024

## Summary of key findings

### Overall effectiveness

The overall quality of Catholic education provided by the school

2

#### 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

## What the school does well

- There is a very good relationship with the local parish.
- Pastoral care is a strength, 'the school feels like home, like all one family'.
- The enthusiasm of the pupils for the school is a tangible reality.
- The provision of liturgical music is a real strength.
- The embedded house system creates a deep sense of belonging.

## What the school needs to improve

- Devise plans to enable greater pupil leadership within prayer and liturgy.
- Ensure sufficiently detailed assessment strategies are in place to enable pupils to know what they have done well and how to improve.
- Provide training for staff around the link between Catholic social teaching and the work done for the common good.

## 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

The inspiring vision and commitment of the head teacher, that St Joseph's will be a beacon of the Catholic faith for the community, ensures that pupils understand the distinctive Catholic identity, charisma and mission of the school. The school mission statement is child-friendly, pupils know and understand that the school community is committed to following the teaching and example of Jesus as expressed in the Gospels and the charisma of the Sisters of Mercy shown through works of mercy. Pupils are actively engaged in charity work such as raising money for Cafod, Children in Need, the Manna Centre and articulate aspects of the theology underpinning their actions, stating, 'we are a Catholic school and, in our faith, we should help people who have less than we have.' Pupils respond to the demands of Catholic social teaching but are unclear about the links between this and the common good. They are happy, confident and feel safe. In assemblies they talk about how to keep safe, for example one pupil stated, 'if you are outside school and feel worried you should go into a shop or, if the school is nearby, go back into the school and speak to a teacher.' New pupils feel welcomed into a 'loving and caring environment.' They are polite and courteous and behaviour in lessons and around the school is good.

The regularly revisited and lived out mission statement is a clear and inspiring expression of the educational mission of the Church and of the Sisters of Mercy. Staff stated, 'we live out the Gospel values and respect other religions,' and they feel appreciated and supported. All the school community have an input into the House system.. The premises manager spoke proudly of 'putting up hands display' and getting involved in house activities. Pupils spoke enthusiastically and with understanding about their Houses. They are very excited to know they are in a house group. Staff spoke about the Oscar Romero Award and its positive impact across the curriculum. Staff are positive role models for pupils and the school environment reflects its mission, charisma and identity. Parents are very positive about the school. One parent stated that 'they travel far because it is a great school.' Another spoke

of 'the message about Catholicism is always there.' The provision for relationship, sex and health education meets both statutory and diocesan requirements and 'meets the needs of the pupils.'

Leaders and governors can articulate the Church's mission in education and are thorough in exercising their duty as guardians of the Catholic life and mission of the school. There is a clearly defined role for the Catholic ethos governor enabling challenge and support of the leadership team. Governors are very proud of the school, and put into practice the Church's preferential option for the poor by ensuring that resources are used effectively to support those in greatest need, both materially and educationally. Regularly reviewed policies impact upon the development of the Catholic life and mission of the school. Links with the parish are strong with school Masses being held in the church and the parish priest leading staff training on, for example, the Mass. The parish priest's involvement is valued by parents with one stating 'I love the connectivity with Dockhead and feel very supported by the school staff with regard to the Catholic journey for my children.' Engagement with parents is very effective. A parent stated that, 'the school has supported both of my children in flourishing, helping them to identify and develop their talents,' and another parent stated, 'I feel truly blessed to be part of the St Joseph's community'.

## Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

### Religious education key judgement grade

#### Pupil outcomes

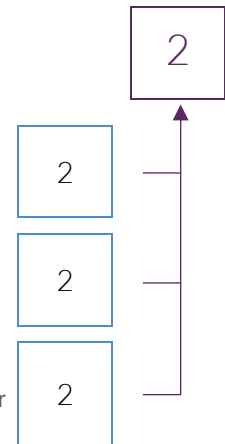
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

#### 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 learning in religious education and approach their lessons with enthusiasm. Consequently, behaviour is good. Relative to their age and capacity pupils are religiously literate young people and particularly enjoy learning about other religions and can speak with confidence about what they have learnt. For example, they can speak about the holy books of different religions, and the Jesse tree. Pupils make good progress including disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Pupils can work independently and produce good work which is well presented. Teachers give feedback to pupils either orally or using stickers, but pupils have a limited understanding of how well they are doing and of what they need to do to improve. Data shows that pupils achieve at least average attainment when compared with other core curriculum subjects. Whilst pupils produce good work that is presented well and shows signs of emerging individuality and creativity, this is not consistent across all phases.

Teaching overall is good and teachers are confident in their subject knowledge, but this needs greater depth. Questioning is used effectively during lessons to identify where pupils are in their understanding. In a Year 6 lesson on death, one pupil stated, 'Death can bring growth because it teaches you to spend more time with your friends,' another stated, 'Death brings you in the presence of the Lord.' Pupils are given time for reflection using talk partners. For example, in a Year 1 lesson on Palm Sunday using a picture of Jesus entering Jerusalem, pupils were asked, 'How Jesus felt?' and the teacher shared their own cultural experience of Palm Sunday. During a nursery lesson on the Bible the teacher created a sense of awe and wonder by picking out names from the Bible and distributing them. The children were visibly excited to get their name and the teacher said, 'Your name is inside the book. God loves all of his family. That's why you are in the book. God and Jesus love us all'. This was linked to the children's moral development by the question, 'How can we show love to one another?' Parents stated, 'I am impressed with the religious education which my children receive at St

Joseph's. They have a growing knowledge of Jesus and his teachings and the impact of these on how we should live our lives as Catholics'.

Leaders and governors ensure that the school curriculum for religious education is a faithful expression of the *Religious Education Curriculum Directory* using *Come and See* and the subject leader is undertaking training on the new *Religious Education Directory* to ensure this continues. The subject leader for religious education has a clear and inspiring vision for teaching and learning and a good level of expertise in securing this vision which leads to improvements in teaching and learning. The quality of teaching and learning is monitored by the subject leader and constructive feedback is provided which leads to improvement. Assessment systems used in other core subjects are equally applied to religious education and data is analysed in line with other core subjects. Work scrutiny show a variety of tasks for example, roleplay, and extended writing. Staff stated they are supported by leaders and regularly draw on expertise to enhance their work. Using *Come and See* leaders plan a sequential curriculum which meets the needs of all pupils however there are limited opportunities for pupils to engage in enrichment activities. Leaders' and governors' self-evaluation of religious education is informed by monitoring, analysis and self-challenge which results in strategic action taken by the school.

## 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 respond well to the experiences of prayer and liturgy provided by the school and their behaviour is exemplary showing reverence and respect. As the pupils entered the hall they processed with hands joined together, modelled by the staff. They prayed the community morning prayer joyfully, and with confidence. Pupils listened attentively and joined in 'with their quiet voices' with opportunities for pair and share reflection. Pupils were able to clearly articulate knowledge and understanding of the work of the Manna Centre, speaking with a confidence and clarity showing a high level of maturity. Pupils were able to articulate simply why we go to Mass and can describe the parts of the Church's liturgical year articulating how it influences the prayer life of the school. Pupils understand how to reflect on their experience of prayer and liturgy. The Spiritual Life committee help with readings at assemblies and in Mass. One parent stated, 'My son was the representative of the Spiritual Life Committee for his class and found this to be an immensely positive experience'. However, the school recognises that pupils have limited opportunities to work with others, to plan, prepare and lead prayer and liturgy and it is in their future planning to create such opportunities.

Prayer and liturgy are part of school life. They form part of routine gatherings of pupils and there is a daily pattern of set prayer four times per day, which is shared on the school website. In addition to set prayers in class time there is a liturgy assembly, a head teacher's assembly and a house assembly. Senior leaders and staff are models of good practice impacting upon the exemplary behaviour of the pupils. The vast majority of parents said that the school works well with the parish. A parent stated, 'The weekly Gospel assemblies have given my children an excellent knowledge of Scripture. Very often when hearing the Gospel at church on Sunday, the story will be familiar to them as they have seen their friends perform it for them at school, the previous Friday.' A particular strength is liturgical music. The music teacher ensures there is a high standard of enthusiastic hymn singing which gives the pupils experience of a broad range of the hymnody of the Church. Links with the local parish are strong, the

parish priest stated that 'there is a lot of growing happening.' Prayer spaces in classrooms, while not being in a focus position, are well cared-for and reflect the liturgical calendar.

The school's policy on prayer and liturgy is well formulated, fit for purpose and most staff agree that it is useful to them in carrying out their role. Leaders and governors have a clear strategy for building the planning and leadership of pupils in prayer and liturgy. Regular opportunities for professional development are provided which includes liturgical formation. For example, the parish priest has led staff training for all staff on the importance of the Mass which has helped in staff modelling appropriate behaviour during Mass. Holy days of obligation and other significant days, such as the patronal feast are celebrated with school Mass held in the parish church. Leaders and governors ensure that there is a substantial budget for resourcing of prayer and liturgy and regularly review its quality and impact as part of the school's cycle of self-evaluation and planned improvements. The Spiritual Life Committee meet regularly with the head teacher to share their own views about the development of prayer and liturgy. An outcome of this is there is a plan to create a prayer garden reflecting the school's houses: Mercy, Hope, Faith, Peace.



## Information about the school

Full name of school	St Joseph's Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	141356
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	210/3475
Full postal address of the school	George Row, Bermondsey, London SE16 4UP
School phone number	02072374267
Head teacher	Michael Coffey
<b>Chair of Local Governing Body</b>	Evelyn Holdsworth
School Website	<a href="http://www.stjosephsgeorgerow.org">www.stjosephsgeorgerow.org</a>
Trusteeship	Academy Converter
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	South East London Catholic Academy Trust (Selcat) Limited
Phase	Primary
Type of school	Academy
Admissions policy	N/A
Age-range of pupils	3-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	6 <sup>th</sup> February 2017
Previous denominational inspection grade	1

## The inspection team

Stephen C Horsman  
Catherine Quirke

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