

# St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Watford Way, Hendon NW4 4TY

Date of inspection by Westminster Diocese: 15 October 2021



## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### A. Classroom religious education is good

- The religious education (RE) curriculum is well planned by the RE subject leader. The school has carefully modified the curriculum to ensure pupils learn well in all key stages.
- The headteacher has provided outstanding leadership in recent years and has led curriculum design across the school. The school has an RE programme that is well planned, sequenced and ensures pupils can learn more and remember more in RE.
- Pupils achieve well in most classes and can articulate their learning to visitors.
- In class behaviour is good in every year. Some younger children struggle to contain their emotions but are well supported.
- Pupils' speaking skills are noteworthy and a key feature of this school. They are confident and eager to express their ideas.
- Quality of teaching is at least good in all classes. New teachers are well supported and quality training in RE has been provided. More is now needed.
- Assessment is developing and marking is well managed. This ensures reasonable workload and makes information useful.
- The subject has a high profile in the school and the new leader has a clear vision for the future.

### Classroom religious education is not yet outstanding because

- Staff need further continuous professional development in RE teaching.
- Pupils now need more opportunities to learn about other faiths.
- Subjects such as art, music and computing need a higher priority in the teaching and learning of classroom RE.

### B. The Catholic life of the school is good

- The effectiveness of the leadership and management in promoting the Catholic life of the school is judged to be good with outstanding aspects in much of its work over the last few years.
- There is 10% of curriculum time devoted to RE in every class, as required by the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales.
- The liturgical life of the school is planned by RE leaders at the start of every year. Pre-pandemic there was a well-planned programme of liturgies, assemblies and collective acts of worship.
- The headteacher's weekly 'Gospel assembly' is linked to, and underpins, the school's values. Pupils recall these assemblies in some detail.
- The parish priest is now a frequent and always very welcome visitor to this school.
- Pupils are encouraged to reach their full potential and use their God given gifts and talents to contribute to the Common Good.
- Pupils are keen to volunteer for positions of responsibility. Opportunities have been curtailed recently and the school now needs to provide fresh opportunities for pupils to be of service.
- Governors are well informed and play a crucial role in the development of the school.

### The Catholic life of the school is not yet outstanding because

- The prayer life of the school needs to be embedded again in daily practice.

## A. Classroom Religious Education

### What has improved since the last inspection?

All aspects mentioned in the previous inspection report have been fully implemented. The Westminster Diocesan Education Service (WDES) has provided extensive and greatly valued support in recent times. There have also been significant new developments in curriculum delivery and in planning and assessment since the last inspection. Lessons are much more carefully planned, sequenced and designed to ensure pupils remember more of what they have actually learned.

### The content of classroom religious education is good

The content of St. Joseph's religious education curriculum meets the requirements of the *Religious Education Curriculum Directory*. The curriculum is planned for by the subject leader of RE and shared with staff. Creativity in the curriculum is evident in some high-quality displays around the school. The school now needs to provide pupils with further opportunities to enhance their creative skills in such areas as art, music and computing. Pupils start to learn key vocabulary in RE in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). Pupils enjoy opportunities to learn about other faiths such as Judaism. The sequencing of lessons and content of curriculum delivery has a high priority in this school.

### Pupil achievement in religious education is good

The standard of pupil achievement is good. Older pupils demonstrate a strong religious vocabulary with good subject knowledge. Teachers have high expectations of pupils in lessons. Pupils are engaged in RE lessons and enjoy the chance to answer questions. A key feature of this school is that older pupils stand up when they wish to respond to a question. Pupils said they enjoyed this approach which helped to develop their speaking and listening skills as well as their confidence. Pupils start to learn early key vocabulary in RE in the EYFS. Pupils in the reception year were able to name religious objects and say important early words in RE learning. Good progress is made by the majority of pupils. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) make good progress from their starting points and are well supported. Assessment work is developing with valued support and guidance from the diocesan adviser. Pupils' religious literacy overall is good and older pupils for example were articulate in discussing God's compassion and how we could apply this in our own lives. There are some opportunities being provided for writing in depth.

### The quality of teaching is good

The quality of teaching is at least good in all classes seen. Children get a secure and nurturing start in the Nursery and Reception years and are well supported by staff.

Teachers have high expectations of pupils in lessons and want them to do well. Subject knowledge is varied among staff and further support and training is needed to help teachers in delivering high quality lessons.

Lessons take place in a positive climate and relationships between pupils and staff are respectful. Assessment has been carefully considered by leaders to ensure it is useful and does not lead to excessive workload.

Questioning by teachers is being well fostered by the leadership of the school and best practice is evident in some lessons.

Pupils are well behaved in most classes. A few of the young children struggle to manage their emotions in class and need extra support from adults to manage behaviour.

Homework and home learning is provided in various RE tasks but many surveyed parents said that this is an area they would like to see reviewed.

**The effectiveness of leadership and management in promoting religious education is good**

The leadership and management of RE is at least good. There is a new and enthusiastic subject leader who is keen to see the subject develop further. She knows what needs doing and is being well supported by senior leaders. Upper KS2 pupils are forthcoming in highlighting the mission statement of the school and enjoy any leadership roles and opportunities to be of service that are provided. The leadership has worked hard over the pandemic to provide remote learning in RE and ensure that it has a high priority in the school.

Self-evaluation is both very accurate and realistic. Leaders are aware of the strengths and areas for development of the school.

Governors take a keen interest in all aspects of religious education and are well informed.

The leadership of the headteacher in recent years in driving school improvement has been outstanding.

**What should the school do to develop further in classroom religious education?**

- Provide professional development for all staff to develop their expertise and knowledge in RE.
- Enhance RE further by ensuring there are opportunities to develop their creative skills in for example art, music and ICT
- Plan and structure the curriculum to teach pupils about other faiths.

## B. The Catholic life of the school

### What has improved since the last inspection?

Leaders of religious education have worked hard over the last eighteen months of the global pandemic to maintain the strong Catholic ethos and life of the school. They have used remote learning effectively and communication has been well used to maintain links. Plans are being implemented to fully renew all aspects of participation in the Catholic life of the school.

### The place of religious education as the core of the curriculum

is good

There is 10% of curriculum time devoted to RE in every class, as required by the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales.

RE is central to the curriculum in this school. An appropriate budget is allocated to the subject every year and the school is well resourced. The building is well maintained and RE displays in halls and corridors are of a high standard.

Relationships are based on respect at all levels between adults, parents and pupils.

The school is committed to the teaching of Catholic religious education, and this is evident from discussions with governors and the senior leadership team.

Training opportunities are well planned and welcomed by staff.

The governing body are kept very well informed about developments in RE.

### The experience of Catholic worship – prayer and liturgy – for the whole school community

is good

The prayer life of the school is well developed. The liturgical life of the school is planned by RE leaders at the start of each year. This follows the liturgical cycle of the church and aims to ensure a wide experience of the Catholic tradition of prayer and worship.

Pre-pandemic there was a well-planned programme of liturgies and collective acts of worship including: Masses, prayer and reconciliation services, Gospel and class assemblies, phase liturgies, daily prayers, child-initiated prayer, Eucharistic procession and whole school adoration in the chapel. The school is now finalising plans for the re-commencement of this programme.

The headteacher's weekly 'Gospel assembly' is linked to and underpins the school's values. This supports the spiritual development of the pupils, including those who are not Catholic or are of other faiths. Pupils can recall these assemblies in some detail.

The parish priest is now a frequent and always very welcome visitor to the school. During this inspection he took part in a liturgy on Baptism in the school's beautifully appointed chapel.

Pupil in Years 2 and 6 spoke with inspectors about their contribution to the prayer life of this school.

Prayers are said throughout the day and time is given for pupils to offer their own thoughts and prayers. Pupils' responses were always reverent. Not all pupils spoken to were sure what prayers were being said or why. More work needs to be done to reinstate previous practice across the school.

Opportunities for spiritual development and reflection are offered across the school. The school has effectively developed its extensive outdoor space to include areas for prayer and contemplation. Prayer and worship are central to the Catholic life of the school.

Child-initiated prayers are planned, prepared and led by the pupils from Nursery to Year 6. This enables the children to learn about and focus on the concepts of gathering, listening to and reflecting on the word of God. This practice is now resuming in the school.

Every classroom has a well presented, interactive prayer or display area which includes the appropriate liturgical colour, prayers, scripture, Bibles and references to key learning in RE. The school endeavours to help non-Catholic pupils feel welcomed into the school community. The Chapel is available for quiet reflection and prayer for both staff and pupils. The teachers regularly book time in the Chapel with their classes, for prayer, sharing and reflection

### **The contribution to the Common Good – service and social justice**

**is good**

The headteacher and senior leadership team (SLT) have worked hard to inculcate the core values that stem from the school mission statement. The school encourages pupils to overcome challenges in order to reach their full potential and use their God given gifts and talents to contribute to the Common Good

The school states that it is driven by gospel values and firmly believes that the faith life of the school is enriched by the support of pupils' families. Respect for different cultural, social and religious backgrounds underpins all relationships and behaviour in St Joseph's. Events planned by the school, such as 'Multicultural week' have further developed respect and unity, and strengthened links with families.

Pupils are keen to volunteer for positions of responsibility, such as becoming a member of the school council, a Caritas ambassador or a prayer leader. Opportunities have been curtailed recently and the school is now working to provide fresh opportunities for pupils.

The school has previously had close links with Caritas St Joseph's Pastoral Centre, which is part of the site community. Students and staff from the Centre joined the school for a day of Eucharistic adoration and also attended benediction and a Corpus Christi procession. Pupils at St Joseph's have a very good awareness of the need for inclusion in our Catholic community and within the wider society.

### **The partnership with parents, school and parish, and collaboration as an integral part of the diocese through its relationship with the diocesan Bishop and those acting on his behalf**

**is good**

The Mission Statement, 'Inspired by St Joseph, together with Christ, we learn, we grow, we love' is integral to school policies and school life. The school endeavours to create strong and meaningful links with pupils' families and the local Catholic parishes. The school now works closely with the local parish priest, who is pro-active in encouraging families to participate in the Catholic life of the school.

From the start of their school experience, families are made aware that the school values and wishes to support them in their role as the first educators of faith.

Parents/carers are invited, by email, text or letter, to join the school for occasions such as class assemblies, Masses, and Christmas and Easter celebrations.

Parents/carers are generally positive about the school's efforts to involve them in the life and work of the school. However, in a questionnaire a significant number of parents raised concerns about work provided at home, and about the opportunity to come into school for events such as assemblies and liturgies in the same way they did before the pandemic. The school is currently reviewing its procedures in line with health and safety guidelines and local needs.

The diocese provides strong support from an RE adviser in all aspects of the Catholic life of the school.

**The effectiveness of the leadership and management in promoting the Catholic life of the school**

**is good**

The effectiveness of the leadership and management in promoting the Catholic life of the school is judged to be good. The governors, headteacher and SLT fully promote the Catholic ethos of the school. RE is given a high priority in governors' meetings and governance is strong. They are well informed and provide a good balance of challenge and support.


There are outstanding aspects in the leadership and management in promoting the Catholic life of the school, and the school is in a strong position to move forward with confidence in its leadership.

**What should the school do to develop further the Catholic life of the school?**

Embed Catholic Social Teaching into the life of the school by further developing links with Caritas.

## Information about this school

- The school is a nominally three form entry Catholic primary school in the London Borough of Barnet and in the locality of Hendon. In 2021 the school has reduced to one form of entry into the Reception year.
- The school serves the parishes of Our Lady of Dolours, Hendon, St Patrick's, West Hendon and St Edward the Confessor, Golder's Green
- The proportion of pupils who are baptised Catholic is 68%.
- The proportion of pupils who are from other Christian denominations is 21% and from other faiths is 5%. The remaining pupils are from families who have not declared a faith.
- The percentage of Catholic teachers in the school is 59%.
- The number of teachers with a Catholic qualification is 1.
- There are 53 (9%) of pupils in the school with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) of whom 6 have Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP).
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is above average.
- The number of pupils speaking English as an Additional Language is above average. There are 223 pupils (50.7%) in the school registered as EAL and 36 additional languages spoken at the school
- There is an above average rate of families claiming free school meals.
- 106 pupils receive the Pupil Premium (21%).

<b>Department for Education Number</b>	307/3509
<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	101337
<b>Local Authority</b>	Barnet
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary Aided School
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3-11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on roll</b>	468
<b>The appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Richard Gaskill
<b>Headteacher</b>	Dr James Lane
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8202 5229
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.stjps.org">www.stjps.org</a> 
<b>Email address</b>	office@stjosephs.barnet.sch.uk
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	26 March 2015
<b>Grades from previous inspection:</b>	
<b>Classroom religious education</b>	Grade 2: Good
<b>The Catholic life of the school</b>	Grade 1: Outstanding

## Information about this inspection

This inspection was carried out (i) under the requirements of the Canon 806 and (ii) in accordance with the Framework for Diocesan Inspections 2015 approved by the Archbishop of Westminster and (iii) under section 48 of the Education Act 2005.

- The inspectors would like to thank the governors, headteacher, staff, pupils and parents for their co-operation over the conduct of the inspection.
- During the inspection 18 lessons or part lessons were observed.
- The inspectors attended acts of prayer and worship in classes and in the chapel.
- Meetings were held with school staff, pupils and governors.
- Other evidence was gathered from contacts with parents through a questionnaire, scrutiny of a sample of pupils' work, observation of pupils in and out of lessons and examination of school documents.

## Inspection Grades

- Outstanding
- Good
- Requires improvement
- Causing concern

## Inspection Team

The inspectors are appointed by the Archbishop.

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