



# Archdiocese of Birmingham

## Section 48 Inspection Report

### ST JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Part of The Pope Francis Multi Academy Company  
Fiennes Road, Banbury, OX16 0ET

Inspection dates: 18 – 19 May 2022  
Lead Inspector: Melanie Elliott

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**OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS:** **Good**

Catholic Life: Good

Religious Education: Good

Collective Worship: Good

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*Overall effectiveness at previous inspection:* *Good*

### SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR PARENTS AND PUPILS

This is a Good Catholic school because:

- Leaders, staff, and pupils appreciate, value, and accept the responsibilities of living within a Catholic school community and are purposeful in supporting the needs of others in school and beyond.
- All staff are positive role models and uphold the good standards of Catholic Life.
- The quality and consistency of pastoral care for pupils and staff are the highest priority.
- Religious Education is well planned, leading to the pupils' enjoyment of learning.
- Effective questioning in lessons identifies prior learning, deepens understanding and accesses new learning.
- All staff and pupils know the Church's liturgical year well.
- Pupils demonstrate reverence and respect during prayer.

It is not yet Outstanding because:

- Leaders and staff need to develop a more coherent understanding of the school's mission and how to translate this effectively to pupils.
- Leaders and governors need to ensure a more rigorous monitoring and evaluation schedule for Catholic Life, Religious Education and Collective Worship.
- Leaders and governors need to ensure that Catholic Life, Religious Education and Collective Worship are aligned accurately with the school's self-evaluation documents for more focused improvements.

- More opportunities need to be provided to ensure pupils plan and lead Collective Worship.
- Pupils need more opportunities to understand other faiths and religions better.

## FULL REPORT

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that leaders, staff, and pupils clearly understand the school's mission, and all are part of evaluating its impact on school life.
- Develop a more rigorous monitoring and evaluation schedule for Catholic Life, Religious Education and Collective Worship.
- Align self-evaluation more accurately with school improvement plans for Catholic Life, Religious Education and Collective Worship to achieve accelerated, focused improvements.
- Consistently provide opportunities to develop the role of pupil-led liturgy.
- Provide more opportunities for pupils to understand other faiths and religions better.

## THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

<b>The quality of the Catholic Life of the school</b>	<b>Good</b>
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school	Good
The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school	Good
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision of the Catholic Life of the school	Requires Improvement

### CL1 The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school

- Pupils appreciate, value, and actively participate in the Catholic Life of the school. They have begun to participate more actively in the school's evaluation of its Catholic Life and are starting to be part of planning improvements to it.
- Pupils are respectful, and their behaviour is good. They show an ability to listen, give thanks and show consideration for others.
- Pupils' understanding of the school's mission and mission statement is inconsistent; they are unclear about its impact on aspects of school life.
- Pupils are thoughtful and seek justice for others within and beyond the school community. They are keen to have greater responsibility and would benefit from more opportunities to lead activities that promote the school's Catholic Life and mission.
- Pupils respond well to the opportunities the school provides for their personal development; as a result, they are content, confident, and largely secure in their emotional and spiritual growth stage.

- Pupils value the school's chaplaincy provision as faith stewards and are starting to participate in more opportunities provided by the school, particularly when planning class liturgy and assemblies.
- Pupils understand the importance of service and respond generously to the needs of others. They participate in supporting charities, for example, the Good Shepherd Appeal, local food banks and other charity initiatives, including recent fundraising for their Ukrainian appeal.
- Pupils understand discipleship, and pupils in upper Key Stage 2 can talk about how this relates to their vocation. Age-appropriate work on vocations now needs to be embedded further across the school amongst all year groups.
- Pupils understand loving relationships through the relationships, sex and health education (RSHE) programme within the context of an age-appropriate Christian understanding.
- The school celebrates close links with the parish of St Joseph the Worker through both sacramental preparation and weekly Masses. Pupils spoke enthusiastically about the parish, including opportunities for liturgy after Mass on Saturday and altar serving.

## **CL2 The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school**

- The headteacher, Religious Education lead and staff are committed to the Catholic Life of the school. They plan and participate in school activities that reflect its Catholic Life and mission.
- The school's mission and mission statement express the school's mission. However, this needs to be shared more explicitly with staff and pupils so that everyone has a clearer understanding of it.
- There is a clear sense of community, evident in the relationships between staff and pupils. The school is a supportive community, and parents are positive about how the school supports the Catholic Life of their children.
- Staff promote high standards of behaviour and are good role models of mutual respect and forgiveness for all.
- The school environment reflects its mission and identity through signs of its Catholic character. Religious Education displays, both in classrooms and communal areas, are thoughtful and evidence of the children's responses. The school recognises the importance of ethical issues like sustainability and ensures that display resources reflect this.
- Much work has been done recently around planning a curriculum that reflects a commitment to Catholic social teaching, caring for our common home, and respecting every human's dignity. Principles around Catholic social teaching are shared consistently.
- The Catholic school pupil profile (CSPP) virtues are shared regularly to support the moral and spiritual development of pupils, staff and the wider school community.
- The chaplaincy provision through faith stewards is beginning to support and promote the Catholic Life of the school.
- The school has high regard for the pastoral needs of pupils and staff. Policies and structures are in place which provides good pastoral care to pupils, and there is a commitment to the most vulnerable and needy. Programmes and initiatives such as 'Place 2 Be', mental health champions and the work of the emotional learning support assistant (ELSA) all support the emotional well-being of pupils.
- Pastoral programmes and RSHE are well planned, consistently delivered and reflect Catholic teachings and principles.

**CL3 How well leaders and governors promote, monitor, and evaluate the provision of the Catholic Life of the school**

- St Joseph's is a welcoming and inclusive school where leaders and governors demonstrate a public commitment to the educational mission of the Church. They are well regarded as models of Catholic leadership by pupils, parents, and staff.
- The spiritual leadership of the headteacher, who nurtures the children, is recognised by staff and the school community. Parents praise her as someone who 'is very approachable and whom you can talk to about anything.' The wider team is described as being 'kind and helpful', and parents explain how this positively affects their children. There is a clear sense that parents appreciate all that the school does for their children.
- The headteacher and the Religious Education subject leader are committed to the Catholic Life of the school and understand the school and its needs.
- Leaders and governors have a strategic vision for how they want the school to improve in providing high quality, distinctively Catholic education. Governors are ready to challenge as well as support to secure school improvement.
- Although self-evaluation is accurate, there is a lack of consistency regarding improvements within key action planning documentation. All documentation must be aligned to ensure a clear focus for future enhancements.
- There are planned improvements to enhance the Catholic Life of the school further. However, there is a lack of consistency and rigour in monitoring Catholic Life, limiting the impact of the improvements made.
- There is some evidence that the school provides varied opportunities to promote Catholic Life; however, the opportunities for pupils to do so need to be evidenced more consistently and in greater detail. The policy relating to Catholic Life journals and their use requires a more precise and consistent approach.
- Continuing professional development (CPD), focusing on Catholic Life and the spiritual development of the school staff, is offered through the Birmingham Diocesan Education Service, the Pope Francis Catholic Multi-Academy, and, more recently, the Catholic Primary Partnership.
- The school ensures that it shares its faith with the school community and beyond through its website and 'faith matters' page.
- The school responds well to diocesan policies and initiatives and promotes the bishop's vision for the diocese throughout the school. For example, the school has recently signed up for CAFOD's 'Live Simply' award.
- The school recognises the benefits that the Pope Francis Catholic Multi-Academy offers and makes the most of the growing opportunities presented, including working, and collaborating with others. Most children from St Joseph's transfer to Blessed George Napier Catholic School and talk with genuine enthusiasm about doing so.

**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

<b>The quality of Religious Education</b>	<b>Good</b>
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education	Good
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education	Good
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor, and evaluate the provision for Religious Education	Requires Improvement

**RE1 How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education**

- Pupils enter the Nursery and the Reception classes with low knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith. However, evidence shows that they make good progress as they move through the school and the number of children working at the expected level increases.
- Pupils make good progress from previous starting points. Leaders monitor the progress and attainment of cohorts and understand trends over time.
- Attainment and progress in Religious Education data are more consistent when compared to the data arising from other core subjects over a period of time.
- Leaders have a good understanding of which groups of pupils are making progress and how this compares to the progress of other pupils, for example, pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and pupils eligible for pupil premium.
- Although leaders' analysis of subject data is accurate, it is not always shared with classroom teachers. This now needs to be shared more consistently with staff so that there is a clearer understanding of the attainment and progress of significant groups, which they can then target in class to secure more accelerated improvement for them.
- Most pupils, relative to their age, are religiously literate and engaged; they use their knowledge, understanding, and skills to reflect spiritually and think ethically and theologically.
- Pupils concentrate well, are engaged in lessons, and are committed to improving their knowledge, understanding and skills. They are confident in sharing their ideas and thoughts.
- Pupils enjoy challenging activities and respond well to opportunities that extend their learning when presented. However, challenge needs to be developed through tasks and feedback in some year groups.
- Behaviour in lessons is very good.
- Pupils in Reception and Key Stage 1 are given many opportunities for well-planned, creative, and inspiring activities. This leads to a high level of enthusiasm and engagement in lessons.
- The quality of pupils' current written work shows good coverage and is mainly of a good standard. Feedback, however, needs to be more consistent and detailed to have a more significant impact on the children's learning.

**RE2 The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education**

- Relationships between staff and pupils observed during lessons are positive and demonstrate mutual respect.

- Teaching is good. Teachers plan lessons linked to pupils' current assessment. Learning is built upon from previous years, and this was particularly evident when observing lessons on the liturgical season of Pentecost.
- Challenge for more able pupils, to further extend their knowledge, skills, and understanding, needs to be embedded.
- Some teachers are more confident in their subject expertise and have a good understanding of how pupils learn. Where this is the case, more pupils make good progress in individual lessons and over time.
- The school should continue to use this knowledge of where teaching is a strength to support those members of staff whose subject knowledge is not as strong or who are new to Catholic education and require additional support.
- Teachers communicate high expectations about Religious Education to their pupils, who respond positively. Communication skills are good, and the development of religious vocabulary is promoted in all classes.
- Teachers employ a range of appropriate strategies, including individual and collaborative work. Consequently, most pupils are attentive and concentrate well in lessons.
- Teachers are skilled at filtering pupils' responses to maintain the lesson's purpose. They manage time well to secure good learning in lessons and across sequences of lessons.
- Teachers make effective use of questioning during lessons, including open-ended questions, to explain and discuss themes, thus improving learning for most pupils. 'Big questions' and 'Think Pink' questions are used consistently in Religious Education books to deepen children's understanding and connect the knowledge they have learned.
- Resources are used effectively, particularly in Reception and Key Stage 1. Other adults in class are used very effectively to keep individuals and groups focused on the task and optimise learning.
- Recently, there has been a focus on developing children's extended writing in Religious Education, which positively impacts their written work. However, feedback to pupils following written responses is often limited. A more consistent approach to informing pupils about their work and what they need to do to improve is required.
- Teachers involve pupils in a limited way in evaluating how well they are achieving. Consequently, accelerated progress is sometimes inhibited.
- Achievement and effort are reinforced through positive praise and achievements, such as the 'Good Samaritan' award, leading to good motivation levels from most pupils.

### **RE3 How well leaders and governors promote, monitor, and evaluate the provision for Religious Education**

- Leaders and governors ensure that Religious Education at St Joseph's is fully compliant in every key stage with the Bishops' Conference of England & Wales requirements.
- Religious Education receives the correct 10% of weekly taught curriculum time. Leaders and governors ensure that it is comparable to other core curriculum subjects in professional development, staffing and accommodation.
- Leaders and governors ensure Religious Education is planned to meet the needs of pupils. The curriculum is based on the diocesan scheme, 'Learning and Growing as the People of God', and follows its requirements in terms of planning and assessment.

- Governors take an active interest in the teaching and learning of Religious Education. They are kept informed of developments by reports from the headteacher and Religious Education lead; consequently, governors can speak about the work within the school regarding Religious Education. They offer support and challenge to school leaders to ensure school improvement in this area.
- Leaders and governors ensure that Religious Education is effectively planned to meet the needs of different groups of pupils and to secure coherence across different key stages and phases.
- Religious Education is led by a dedicated and well-respected subject leader who has good expertise in securing future improvements. She is keen to develop her role by attending cluster meetings and taking advantage of other CPD opportunities. She is already driving the implementation of diocesan requirements, such as using age-related standards, providing staff with updates and training, and supporting identified staff to help them improve their practice in the teaching of the subject.
- The curriculum leader for Religious Education has a good understanding of planned developments, as identified in the Religious Education self-evaluation, Religious Education action plan and school development plan. However, these documents need to be aligned to ensure a more explicit, targeted focus for all planned improvements.
- Leaders clearly understand performance in Religious Education and trends over time because performance data is analysed, and group outcomes are monitored. Staff would benefit from regular feedback on group data analysis so that interventions can be put in place to close gaps in learning.
- There is some monitoring and evaluation of Religious Education, but this lacks consistency and rigour to ensure sustained improvements. Monitoring, evaluation, and communicating findings with staff need to be more consistent and sufficiently in-depth to impact and improve outcomes effectively and significantly.
- Moderation of Religious Education work has taken place with a recent focus on extended writing, but this needs to happen more consistently to drive standards of improvement in recorded outcomes further.

## COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

<b>The quality of Collective Worship</b>	<b>Good</b>
How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship	Good
The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school	Good
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor, and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship	Good

### **CW1 How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship**

- Pupils' response to Collective Worship is good. They are attentive, act with respect and reverence and are keen to participate in Collective Worship.

- The experience of living and working in a faithful, praying community positively impacts pupils' spiritual and moral development, irrespective of their faith background: leaders and staff plan quality prayer, which challenges pupils to think about their own lives and choices.
- Pupils are keen to participate in the prayer life of the school. Traditional prayers are taught consistently; pupils in upper Key Stage 2 speak enthusiastically about these, including reference to the Prayer to the Guardian Angel and the Angelus.
- Pupils need to be allowed to experience a wider variety of prayer styles, including contemporary prayer, to enable them further to reflect deeply and develop their spirituality.
- Most pupils understand the Church's liturgical year, seasons, and feasts, and they use the liturgical structure of gather, listening, reflecting, and going forth in their planning of liturgy.
- Pupils are starting to lead Collective Worship with greater independence. For example, Year 5 prepared a Lenten service for the whole school. Other pupils are keen to participate in additional pupil-led opportunities, such as those offered to Faith Stewards. A more consistent approach needs to be adopted to provide opportunities for pupil-led Collective Worship.

## **CW2 The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school**

- Collective Worship is part of the life of the school, and prayer is included in school celebrations. Praying together is part of the daily experience for pupils and staff.
- Collective Worship has a purpose, message, and direction. The themes chosen for worship reflect an understanding of the liturgical seasons and the Catholic character of the school.
- Long-term planning, using diocesan resources, ensures that worship is accurate and well-matched to the liturgical calendar and local needs.
- Leaders and staff understand the Church's liturgical year, seasons and feasts and ensure that pupils have good experiences of the Church's liturgical life.
- Staff are keen to help pupils to plan and deliver Collective Worship. They understand the purpose of prayer but need further support in best facilitating these opportunities for pupils to secure quality outcomes.
- Pupils' leadership of prayer and liturgy is variable across the school. When pupils can lead worship, they enjoy doing so, though teachers often still take a more significant role in planning and delivery. More opportunities for child-led Collective Worship need to be planned.
- Whilst class worship may include scripture, religious artefacts or music, the selection and use are often limited and need to be extended. Some pupils participate voluntarily in acts of worship or prayer, including the Rosary Group. However, more opportunity to engage in spontaneous acts of worship needs to be provided.
- Because pupils understand the liturgical year and appreciate the Church's cycle of seasons and feasts, they can explain why certain artefacts and prayers are used at times.

## **CW3 How well leaders and governors promote, monitor, and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship**

- Leaders are actively involved in leading Collective Worship within the school and are models of good practice for staff and pupils. They use the

understanding of the Church's liturgical year to plan and deliver thoughtful liturgy. As a result, Collective Worship has a clear message and purpose.

- Leaders give some opportunities for pupils to lead Collective Worship. Still, these opportunities should be increased to enable more pupils to instigate, plan and deliver their acts of Collective Worship.
- The parish priest and assistant parish priest support leaders and governors well. There is questioning and challenge about how Collective Worship can be improved further. CPD, led by the assistant priest, on the Mass and the spiritual formation of staff has been well received.
- Leaders and governors review Collective Worship as part of their self-evaluation processes. Still, monitoring needs to be more consistent and rigorous and extended to include all school community members.
- Pupils have a sense of respect for those of other faiths; examples of Judaism were seen during the inspection. The school now needs to map out the next stages to develop pupils' understanding of other faiths.
- Parents and carers view St Joseph's as a school where their child's faith and spirituality are developed through prayers and the Mass. They are kept well-informed of all the Masses, which take place in school and the parish, through the website. As a result, everyone feels kept informed, and the links between school and parish are strengthened.

## SCHOOL DETAILS

Unique reference number	141155
Local authority	Oxfordshire
<i>This inspection was carried out under Canon 806 of Canon Law and under Section 48 of the Education Act (2005).</i>	
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy
Age range	3-11 Years
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on roll	206
Appropriate authority	The board of directors
Chair	Mary Cronin
Headteacher	Clare Smith
Telephone number	01295 264284
Website address	<a href="https://www.st-josephs-banbury.oxon.sch.uk">https://www.st-josephs-banbury.oxon.sch.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:office.3825@st-josephs-banbury.oxon.sch.uk">office.3825@st-josephs-banbury.oxon.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	February 2016

## INFORMATION ABOUT THIS SCHOOL

- St Joseph's Catholic Academy is an average-sized primary school situated in the parish of St Joseph the Worker, Banbury.
- The percentage of Catholic pupils is currently 40.1%.
- The percentage of disadvantaged pupils is above the national average.
- The percentage of SEND pupils is above the national average.
- The percentage of pupils from minority ethnic origins is above the national average.
- The percentage of pupils with EAL is above the national average.
- Attainment on entry is below average.

- Since the last inspection, there has been a new subject leader for Religious Education, a new Religious Education link governor and a new chair of governors.

## **INFORMATION ABOUT THIS INSPECTION**

- Two Diocesan Inspectors carried out the inspection: Melanie Elliott & Christine Walker.
- The focus of the inspection was on the impact, quality, and leadership of the school's provision of Catholic Life, Religious Education and Collective Worship.
- The inspectors observed teaching across 7 Religious Education lessons to evaluate the quality of teaching, learning, and assessment quality. Some of these lesson observations were conducted jointly with senior leaders.
- The inspectors completed work scrutiny and held discussions with pupils to evaluate their understanding of Catholic Life, the impact of Religious Education teaching on their learning over time, and their Collective Worship experience.
- Meetings were held with the chair of governors, the Catholic Life link governor, a foundation, and parent governor, the headteacher, the Religious Education subject leader, parish priest and parents.
- The inspectors attended a whole school assembly, three classroom-based acts of worship Collective Worship and undertook a learning walk to look at aspects of learning and teaching in Religious Education, the presentation of the Catholic Life of the school and pupils' behaviour.
- The inspectors reviewed a range of documents, including the school's Religious Education self-evaluation, the Religious Education action plan, the school development plan, data about pupils' attainment and progress, Analyse School Performance (ASP) data, teachers' planning, Religious Education books and journals.