



Catholic Schools Inspectorate inspection report for St Joseph's School, A Catholic Voluntary Academy

URN: 140340

Carried out on behalf of the Right Rev. Ralph Heskett, Bishop of Hallam on:

Date: 2-3 March 2023

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The school is fully compliant with the curriculum requirements laid down by the Bishops' Conference	✓
The school is fully compliant with all requirements of the diocesan bishop	✓
The school has responded to the areas for improvement from the last inspection	Fully

Summary of key findings

What the school does well

- The behaviour of pupils is exemplary in lessons and throughout the school.
- There is a wide range of opportunities given to pupils to present their learning using a variety of forms of expression and creativity.
- At St Joseph's, there is a lived, true sense of community, evident in the quality of relationships and the strong culture of welcome.
- The school website showcases and promotes the key aspects of Catholic life and mission of the school.
- Pupils work well with others, such as teachers, other pupils, and chaplains, to prepare engaging experiences of prayer and liturgy.

What the school needs to improve:

- Develop the accuracy and rigour of the school's self evaluation procedures in order to lead to further specific, well targeted, and planned improvements.
- Ensure that pupil outcomes across all year groups consistently match age-related expectations, through the development of rigorous and targeted monitoring.
- Continue to extend pupil leadership and evaluation opportunities, especially in prayer and liturgy across the school.

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:.....

2

Pupil outcomes

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

2

Provision

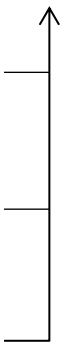
The quality of provision for the Catholic life and mission of the school

2

Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic life and mission of the school

2



Pupils value and understand the school's mission through its motto, 'Learning in the Light of Christ'. They speak confidently about the need to show kindness and compassion towards one another, and this is very apparent through their behaviour, and their interaction with others. This is reinforced through weekly Virtues to Live By liturgical prayer sessions in each class. In addition, *Commando Joe* missions each week further support and nurture the individual character of each pupil. This inspires pupils into action beyond the classroom, as demonstrated in recent activities, such as Operation Christmas Child, and the writing of pledges in response to a focus on Laudato si'. Pupils are actively engaged in responding to the demands of Catholic Social Teaching through geography and eco schools focus weeks, and initiatives such as Earth Day, and Fairtrade Fortnight. Pupils value the school's chaplaincy provision, with class chaplains being voted for at the beginning of each year. This has led to active pupil participation, through the formation of a CAFOD club, meeting each week to further promote the Catholic life and mission of the school. This pupil group has also been responsible for several fundraising initiatives, and devising competitions such as 'Nativity in a Shoe Box'. The Chaplaincy group is currently quite small in number, thereby limiting the engagement with chaplaincy activity to those who choose to participate.

Staff are exemplary role models committed to living out the school's mission. They have developed a warm, inclusive culture of welcome permeating the school that extends to all community members, especially those who are most vulnerable. Staff further nurture a tangible sense of family by making a determined effort to know all pupils and being actively involved in leading whole school initiatives such as: Catholic Social Teaching assemblies,

liturgical dance clubs, and weekly reflections, led by different members of staff each Monday morning. Subsequently, they offer supportive pastoral care, contributing to pupils' happiness and well-being. Although the use of space is not fully utilised throughout the school, the school environment reflects its mission and identity through displays which promote the school's Catholic character, including the Live Simply Award, CAFOD club display, Virtues to Live By, and Equality and Diversity whole school display. Provision for relationships, sex, and health education meets all statutory and diocesan requirements. The use of a specific class portfolio for all pupils' work in this subject shows the priority given to it. Parents unanimously agree that the school is a supportive and joyful community and supports the pupils' spiritual and moral development.

Leaders and governors have actively sought to work with the local parish. However, this has been somewhat restricted recently given there is currently no resident parish priest. That said, the school has developed a strong partnership with the director of Catholic life for the Trust, since last Autumn term. His input has further enriched opportunities for pupils' involvement in the Catholic life and mission of the school, including supporting a series of class masses, and providing input to pupils on the topic of vocation. Leaders and governors promote the bishop's vision for the diocese, and respond well to diocesan initiatives, including supporting Mary's Meals and the Good Shepherd Appeal each year. The school also has effective strategies for engaging with parents and carers, through parent workshops, governor and parent coffee mornings, and sharing of Advent and Lenten prayer bags for use at home. Although the school's self-evaluation involves monitoring, analysis and self-challenge which is clearly focused on the Catholic Life and mission of the school, further rigour and a more strategic approach will ensure well-targeted, and planned improvements, which also take account of pupils' contribution in a more systematic way.

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade:.....

2

Pupil outcomes

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education.....

2

Provision

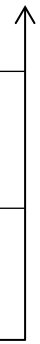
The quality of teaching, learning, and assessment in religious education.....

2

Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor, and evaluate the provision for religious education.....

2



Pupils enjoy their religious education (RE) lessons and are motivated to do their best. As staff have high expectations, the work in pupils' books is generally of a good standard and very well presented. Behaviour in lessons is exemplary, with most pupils on task and actively engaged in their learning. The school has effectively developed creativity in religious education, which is apparent in pupils' books, and has also resulted in engaging and creative lessons being planned, with pupils working both independently and collaboratively and concentrating well. In most lessons, there is a good balance between teacher and pupil discussion, which results in well-paced learning and further ensures pupils' active engagement. Where this is less evident, an over reliance on teacher input can limit pupil outcomes within lessons. Pupils engage in lessons and show a willingness to improve their knowledge. The development of that knowledge and specific religious language have been further enhanced with the implementation of RE knowledge organisers. Most pupils understand how well they are doing and what needs to be improved. However, this is not yet fully embedded or consistent across all year groups. Significant groups of pupils across the school make good progress, and most lessons are planned to meet pupils' needs, particularly those with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND), who are provided with appropriate support to succeed in lessons. Pupil outcomes and attainment in religious education are comparable to other core subjects, though there is less evidence of independent writing within some year groups.

Teachers have good subject knowledge and are supported well to develop their teaching by the subject leader. They are enthusiastic about how they can inspire and motivate pupils in their lessons, resulting in pupils who are developing secure knowledge and skills appropriate to their year group. Teachers recognise and value the importance of religious education as a

core subject and communicate this to pupils. Their planning ensures that pupils are given the opportunity to present their learning in a variety of ways. However, planning and related pupil activities are not always consistently aligned to age-related expectations, which results in some pupil outcomes being limited in nature. Teachers' questioning in lessons is effective in most classes, and pupils respond appropriately. The implementation of 'Going Deeper' challenges has enhanced the level of pupil responses in some instances, however this is not yet commonplace across all year groups, as questions sometimes lack necessary challenge and appropriate depth. Additional adults are generally well-deployed and provide effective support to pupils.

Leaders and governors ensure that provision complies with the Bishops' conference requirements. As part of this, the subject is resourced equitably compared to other core subjects. At least the required amount of curriculum time is allocated to religious education in every classroom. Leaders provide continuing professional development (CPD) to all staff regarding the planning and delivery of religious education, which has recently focused on supporting pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), demonstrating leaders' commitment to the most vulnerable. The subject leader is extremely hard working. She has a clear vision for the subject ensuring its high status within the school and teaching that is usually at least consistently good. Specialist resources are also well used to ensure all pupils can access and benefit from the curriculum, which is further enriched by roleplay, artwork, and offsite visits. Regular, well-planned meetings help leaders identify and address areas for development, whilst the rigour of evaluating the impact of some recent initiatives and strategies has yet to be fully embedded. In addition, the governing body is relatively newly formed, including the appointment of a new chair of governors only last September.

Collective worship

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

Collective worship key judgement grade:.....

2

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

Pupils enjoy the varied opportunities they have to participate in prayer. These include gospel and celebration assemblies; saying a decade of the rosary during CAFOD club led prayer sessions during October; and taking part in liturgical dance during Advent and Lenten liturgies. Pupils display very high levels of reverence and respect and participate wholeheartedly by answering questions, joining in with responses and singing enthusiastically. Pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of the liturgical year and make connections to the cycle of prayer and liturgy and various seasonal parish and school traditions. For example, pupils spoke enthusiastically about how they enjoyed working with a local pastor to prepare whole school liturgical prayer. Pupils also work as a class to prepare liturgical prayer during the 'respond' lesson within the *Come and See* programme. Pupils are able to recognise and speak about the ways prayer and liturgy influence the wider life of the school, through 'reflection inspired to action' examples, including the Year 6 visit to a local nursing home to play board games, and making homeless kits for distribution to a local charity. Although the school provides opportunities for some pupils to lead and evaluate prayer, this has yet to be fully embedded across all year groups.

Prayer is central to the daily life of the school, and there is an established daily pattern of prayer. Prayer and liturgy offer participants experiences of a range of ways of praying that are part of the Catholic tradition including CAFOD club led lunchtime prayer sessions for the whole school, and pupils reading bidding prayers during whole school masses and liturgies. In addition, prayers are written by pupils during RE lessons and within the respond lessons of the *Come and See* programme. Relevant staff are skilled at using scripture appropriately, and readings are chosen based on the liturgical season. Teachers also incorporate prayer and liturgy into their religious education provision through the use of Bible Detective lessons, incorporated at least once into each unit of work. Leaders are skilled at delivering good quality prayer and supporting all staff,

enabling them to become competent and accomplished. Teachers are confident and enthusiastic and work as a team to ensure worship is of a consistently good standard throughout the school. The recently implemented Let Us Pray 2gether resources have further enriched pupil-led prayer and liturgy opportunities, but these have yet to be fully integrated across the school.

Leaders and governors ensure that the school's prayer and liturgy are strategically planned through a termly and yearly calendar linked to the liturgical year. This is further enriched with resources such as Virtues to Live By, and Story sacks, which results in a programme of worship that is well-matched to pupils' ages and experiences, enabling all pupils to participate. Through the strong aspiration and vision of the religious education subject leader, a series of new initiatives have been implemented such as the CAFOD club and the Let Us Pray 2gether resources, which given their infancy, have yet to be fully embedded. Sacramental preparation is provided by the school, whilst Holy Days of Obligation are observed, and whole school Masses are celebrated. Leaders understand a variety of ways of praying that are part of the Catholic tradition. This understanding, together with their knowledge of the particular needs of the community, informs their planning of prayer and liturgy. Staff are supported in developing high-quality experiences of prayer and liturgy, which most recently has included training linked to the Ten Ten prayer and liturgy resources. Leaders and governors ensure that prayer and liturgy are well resourced, which has included recent investment in class prayer bags, and liturgical prayer box resources to support pupil-led worship.

Information about the school

Full name of school	St Joseph's School, A Catholic Voluntary Academy
School unique reference number (URN)	140340
Full postal address of the school	Bevan Ave, Rossington, Doncaster DN11 0NB
School phone number	01302 868098
Name of head teacher or principal	Natalie Kelly
Chair of governing board	Emma Moxon
School Website	https://www.st-josephs.doncaster.sch.uk/
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	St. Francis Catholic Multi Academy Trust
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy
Age-range of pupils	3-11
Trustees	Diocese of Hallam
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	3 rd February 2016
Previous denominational inspection grade	Good

The inspection team

David Quinn	Lead inspector
Ellen Archer	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