



Catholic Schools Inspectorate inspection report for St Joseph Catholic Secondary School

URN: 126473

Carried out on behalf of the Right Rev. Declan Lang, Bishop of Clifton on:

Date: 15 -16 June 2023

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|---|-------------------------------------|
| 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 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| The school is fully compliant with all requirements of the diocesan bishop | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| The school has responded to the areas for improvement from the last inspection | Fully |

Summary of key findings

What the school does well

- Leadership and governance are a great strength of the school.
- This is a joyful community where pupils feel happy and safe. There is an excellent commitment to pastoral care and staff are very positive about their own happiness.
- Pupils are involved in evaluation of all aspects of the school.
- The school successfully develops in the pupils a range of Catholic values based on respect.
- There are sound links to the feeder primary school.

What the school needs to improve:

- Consider ways of raising the profile of Catholic Social Teaching in all areas of the curriculum and develop explicit planning to embed all aspects.
- Develop strategies to ensure a range of creative tasks in teaching and learning in religious education in key stage 3.
- Ensure regular training for staff in leading prayer and liturgy, alongside a developmental approach to ensuring that all pupils also have the skills to lead prayer.

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



This is a school in which there is a sound sense of community within the love of God. Pupils and staff articulate the values based on respect for everyone as created in the image and likeness of God. There is an overriding joy amongst pupils in being part of a safe, caring and happy environment, to which they contribute with confidence. Teachers show high levels of commitment to the aims of the school and share in the pupil's happiness. Pupils model their outreach into the community on the teachings of Jesus Christ. They are inspired by their house saints, although there is less knowledge about their patron, St Joseph. They are very determined to help others and successful acts of charity fund-raising, for example the 'Big Sleep' in the local Anglican cathedral, contributions to the local food bank, and support for CAFOD demonstrate their willingness to become involved. The school chaplaincy group is developing as a recognised opportunity for additional engagement in the Catholic life of the school. Behaviour in lessons and at other times is very good due to positive and caring strategies. Pupils find relationships and sex education useful, particularly advice about how to stay safe. They are keenly aware of ecological issues and the need to contribute to the common good, for example in requesting changes to the uniform in order to keep warm, reducing the use of energy.

The mission statement 'To achieve excellence for the sake of the Gospel' provides motivation for all to strive to do their very best. Following the pupils' request, this is to be revisited in order to express more fully the school's character as a very welcoming community, keen to give time and effort to integrating newcomers. The school is highly regarded by parents, particularly for its work with those in any kind of special need. The environment gives a clear indication of its Catholic character, for example the 'values corridor' with its theme of growth as part of the tree of values. Visual

expression is also given in a logo of sixteen values stemming from the key value of respect. Catholic Social Teaching features in much of the discourse but it is not yet fully embedded. However, there is extensive use of Sacred Scripture supporting teaching about Catholic values. Provision for pastoral care is excellent. As pupils and staff resume the normality of school after the pandemic, well-being is central to the school's agenda. Full provision for clergy chaplaincy has not been possible in recent years but has been strengthened recently and plans are in hand to recruit a part-time lay chaplain.

Leaders and governors are clear about the priority of Catholic life and mission and to serving the diocesan vision and policies, despite their concern about the small percentage of baptised Catholic pupils. They are encouraged by the growing intake numbers overall. The Catholic identity of this school is clear locally and there is growing strength in work with the parish, as well as charitable agencies in the city. Catholic life and mission are however limited in their explicit expression across the curriculum and in awareness of the full implications of Catholic Social Teaching. Religious education is linked closely with the Catholic life and mission of the school, and teachers are in the forefront of initiatives. Leaders strive to work with parents who in surveys respond very positively about their children's experiences since joining the school. Pupils are successfully empowered through the very successful pupil parliament. Leaders give very good attention to careers advice, although pupils do not yet have a clear concept of the Catholic vision of vocation in all its aspects. Governors include highly supportive and knowledgeable members of the local Catholic community.

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 perform well in religious education lessons and are engaged in the work. They respond well to questions and are mostly able to extend their answers. Pupils preparing for GCSE express more enjoyment in their work than those in the first two years, because there is more creativity and challenge. Most pupils, including the disadvantaged and those with special needs, make good progress from relatively limited knowledge on entry to the school. The teaching enables them to develop secure thinking skills and a very good knowledge of vocabulary. Outcomes at GCSE in 2022 dipped from the previous years and were below both national and diocesan levels, but the school has evaluated the outcomes in a forensic manner, which led to planning for the current year 11 with more support and compulsory revision sessions. Pupils begin the GCSE course half-way through year 9 and they respond well to the demands of the work. They especially enjoy learning about Judaism, which is well presented with good resources. Pupils speak very positively about their study of other world religions, viewing it as an opportunity to develop respect as part of the whole-school emphasis. Many pupils who are not from a religious background speak of the religious education lessons as helping them to think about moral and spiritual issues, which supports their personal development as future citizens.

Provision for religious education in the curriculum meets the Bishops' requirements. Links with relationships and sex education are strong, because the school wishes to ensure a Catholic perspective. However, integration into the religious education scheme of work is not fully complete. Most teachers have sound subject knowledge and are confident, especially in the requirements for the GCSE examination, and pupils know the focus of each lesson as it begins. There is a good opportunity for recall of prior knowledge related to the lesson, and teachers have skills in questioning, which enables them to check understanding. Regular formal assessments lead to

feedback to pupils, so that they know how well they are progressing, but otherwise feedback in pupils' workbooks varies from very thorough to irregular. However, pupils are given the time for reflection on how they can improve, and this helps them to take control of their own progress. Teachers are quick to reward pupils for high quality work. They relate topics to everyday life and contribute well to pupils' understanding of British values. The guidelines of 'St Joseph's Way', which are integrated into the teaching and learning in religious education, allow for consistency across the subjects and are appreciated by pupils.

Leaders ensure that the curriculum faithfully follows the stipulations of the Curriculum Directory with the support of the Clifton diocese. Long-term planning of work is secure, and lessons are well planned leading to good progress in learning. There is a determination to succeed in creating a coherent team despite the lack of a teaching hub of classrooms. There is regular monitoring of teaching and learning within the department, and also as part of the whole school programme of senior leaders. Religious education is beginning to benefit from this initiative, for example in the development of individual target setting and pupil response. Religious education is mostly given priority status within the school, though not always by pupils. Extra financial support has been given to the religious education department in order to purchase sound and motivating learning material for the younger pupils as the scheme of work is adapted to the new national Catholic guidelines. There are strong links between religious education and the Catholic life of the school due to the high profile of the subject leader and the development of the curriculum.

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

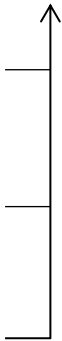
The quality of collective worship provided by the school

2

Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for collective worship

2



Pupils are very respectful during acts of worship, and they are willing to some extent to participate by reading and writing their own prayers. They know how to intercede for those in need, and how to act in response, for example by praying for asylum seekers stranded in the Mediterranean or collecting for victims of the war in the Ukraine. Pupils are aware of news events because they watch television news broadcasts designed for young people, and their attitudes to tragedy are framed by the values which are the bedrock of the community. Their prayer is coupled with action, such as the growing of sunflowers, the symbol of the Ukraine. Pupils are familiar with the basic outline of the liturgical year and can articulate how the Church marks, for example, Ash Wednesday. Teachers report a high participation in the voluntary worship that day. Pupils are increasingly engaged in the planning and evaluation of prayer and liturgy, mainly through the chaplaincy team, which includes pupils from a variety of religious backgrounds. Pupils are equipped with the school prayer book as a resource, but they are not all familiar with traditional Catholic prayers.

School assemblies are very well programmed and form part of the rhythm and routine of life at St Joseph's. Assemblies are linked to the Church's year and have a scriptural context, as well as prayer, and music. There is also singing, for example 'Mary, do you know' by the chaplaincy choir for the feast of the Immaculate Conception. The school plans for prayer as a priority in tutor group time, though that may be brief, or it may be a lengthier follow-up from an assembly. During the inspection collective worship on the theme of the Sacred Heart led to work in tutor groups on how pupils show the love of Jesus in their lives through acts of kindness. However, there is little emphasis on opportunities for reflection in a time of stillness and silence, and for forms of prayer which are not necessarily based on intercession. Spirituality is developed in creative ways, for example in portraying the Stations of the Cross in up-to-date settings, and devising posters illustrating the core

values. The school works well with the local parish and more opportunities for the celebration of Mass in school are being created, so that its importance as the central act of worship is growing.

Leaders and governors are greatly committed to the liturgical life of the school, which is shown in the high quality of planning and engagement. Policy documentation is clear and comprehensive, although teachers have had little recent training in developing their own skills in leading worship as well as those of their pupils. Leaders, teachers of religious education and of other subjects are significant role models and are keen to update their knowledge. Pupils value the policy of belonging to a form with a tutor who stays with the group, guiding and praying with them through the five years at the school. Every effort is made by leaders to mark the Holy Days of Obligation, if possible, by a Mass in school. Assemblies and tutor group prayers are frequently monitored in order to find ways to improve. Pupils are given opportunities to provide feedback, are often very constructive in their suggestions for improvement, and are encouraged to use their initiative. Leaders and governors battle with issues of insufficient space within the school building. This has led to the chapel being used mostly as a classroom, with a consequent lack of place for quiet prayer, greatly impeding the work of those responsible for prayer and liturgy.

Information about the school

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| Full name of school | St Joseph's Catholic Secondary School |
| School unique reference number (URN) | 126473 |
| Full postal address of the school | Church Road, Laverstock, Salisbury SP1 1QY |
| School phone number | 01722 335380 |
| Name of head teacher or principal | Mrs Rachel Ridley |
| Chair of governing board | Mr Paul Hooper |
| School Website | www.sjcs.org.uk |
| Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable) | n/a |
| Type of school | Secondary comprehensive |
| School category | Voluntary aided |
| Age-range of pupils | 11 - 16 |
| Trustees | Diocese of Clifton |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Date of last denominational inspection | 22-23 September 2016 |
| Previous denominational inspection grade | 1 |

The inspection team

| | |
|--------------|----------------|
| Janet Mellor | Lead inspector |
| Ann Fowler | 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 |