



Catholic Schools Inspectorate inspection report for St Joseph's Catholic Primary School Nympsfield

URN: **115707**

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

Date: 7-8 June 2023

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The school is fully compliant with the curriculum requirements laid down by the Bishops' Conference	x
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 head teacher, staff and governors have a clear, focused Christ-centred vision and are committed to promoting the school's mission. The school is, therefore, a happy and joyful community, evident in the excellent relationships at all levels.
- Catholic Social Teaching is at the heart of the Catholic life of the school. It is evidenced in the displays around the school and through the life of the school. As a consequence, pupils are able to make connections between faith and life.
- Pupils feel valued in the school and are taught to respect others. Consequently, their behaviour is outstanding.
- All staff are passionate about supporting the Catholic life of the school and making it a lived reality. They are aspirational in their desire to see pupils develop their talents to the full.

This Catholic Schools Inspectorate inspection was carried out under canons 804 & 806 of the code of canon law. For maintained schools and academies in England it fulfils the statutory requirements of s.48 of the Education Act 2005. For maintained schools and academies in Wales it fulfils the statutory requirements of s.50 of the Education Act 2005.

- Governors are fully involved in the life of the school and have a clear direction for the future development of the school.

What the school needs to improve:

- Continue to provide professional development opportunities for staff to increase their knowledge and understanding within religious education in order to support effective learning.
- Review planning in religious education to ensure 10% curriculum time and provide creative opportunities for pupils to demonstrate their knowledge.
- Continue with the strategies to ensure all pupils become even more skilled in planning, leading, and evaluating prayer and worship.

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:.....

1

Pupil outcomes

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

1

Provision

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

1

Leadership

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

1

Pupils embrace the distinctive Catholic identity and actively participate in the many opportunities offered to put Catholic Social teaching into practice. Eco Committee team members for example are enthusiastic about their and able to talk about the principles of stewardship linking this to the vision of Pope Francis. As a result of the emphasis on Catholic Social Teaching (CST) pupils are becoming socially aware young people and learning to make their own decisions. One parent commented, 'We treasure the faith journey and joy we witness in our child which this school has enabled'. Pupils feel valued as individuals and that the staff are concerned for their welfare. Consequently, they are happy, confident young people whose behaviour is exemplary. Winning awards and seeing their work displayed makes pupils feel special. They welcome the opportunities to take responsibility. All pupils spoke of the need to be inclusive, to welcome others and of the desire to learn more about other cultures and faiths. The 'Awe and Wonder' weeks which focus on other faiths and cultures were welcomed by pupils who spoke about the opportunities this gave and the importance of respecting difference. There is a large chaplaincy team whose work is well known and valued by the school community.

The school's mission statement, emphasising the virtues of 'Faith, Hope, and Love', and their REACH programme are prominently displayed and well known and understood by the whole community. Together they have a significant effect on policies and practices within the school. The Catholic identity is embraced and supported by all staff, one member of staff saying, 'I believe it is the faith-based values and Catholic life and mission, which led by our senior leadership team is at the core of all we do, '. The quality of relationships within the school is a

lived expression of these values. Staff are excellent role models for pupils, demonstrating by their commitment and support for each other the school's values in action. They understand and live out in their interactions compassion and support for the vulnerable. The school is concerned about all aspects of pupil wellbeing, mental health weeks, healthy living weeks all contribute to pupils' welfare. The school environment reflects the Catholic nature of the school. Vibrant displays and prayer areas enhance pupils' appreciation of the Catholic nature of the school. The planned 'Awe and Wonder' weeks together with visiting speakers help pupils understand and respect difference and the school has prioritised the need to enhance the opportunities to allow the pupils to experience more cultural diversity. The provision for relationships and sex education is carefully planned and has been reviewed and amended in the light of pupil responses. The scheme is in line with statutory and diocesan requirements.

Leaders and governors clearly articulate the mission of the school and are committed to developing, supporting and nurturing the Catholic nature of the school. The development of the Catholic life of the school is seen as a core responsibility and their commitment to this is inspiring. The bishop's vision for the diocese is actively embraced and the school is committed to its partnership work with other schools. Policies and structures are in place to support staff welfare including the provision of advice and support through the Local Authority, and the appointment of a well-being governor. Professional development focusing on the Catholic life and mission of the school is seen as a priority and as a consequence staff are increasingly confident and able to express what this looks like in practice. An induction programme is in place to support new staff and this help and support is greatly valued. Pupil, parent, and staff voice contribute to the evaluation of the school. This together with governor visits and observations enables governors to have an accurate view of the Catholic life of the school. Leaders ensure that CST is identified and integrated into curriculum plans for subjects other than religious education.

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 religious education, and their behaviour is always exemplary. They are confident in expressing their views and speaking about their learning in religious education. Their knowledge is secure in some areas, particularly those areas which relate faith to life. The connections constantly made with CST support this. Their knowledge books help them by specifying key words for each topic and as a result they are able to use and recall subject specific vocabulary. Pupils produce well-presented work, and their writing skills are above average. Adapted activities and tasks help pupils make progress. They are supported to ask good questions and because staff begin lessons with a revision of prior learning, they are able to recall more information. Pupils are curious and seek to develop and improve their knowledge. They work collaboratively and in pairs and are developing the skills necessary to work independently. For example, in a lesson on Moses, pupils were asked before they started the task what information they might need, where they would find this and what resources they might use. Whilst pupils are developing skills on how to develop and improve their own work, they are still dependent on teacher comments, and they struggle at times to articulate how they might make progress. Pupils have a knowledge of other faiths developed through the 'Awe and Wonder' weeks and embrace the opportunities provided.

Staff are increasingly confident in their subject knowledge and are extremely committed to developing this even further. They value religious education and communicate this to pupils who seek to do well. They use questioning to enhance pupil learning and recap previous knowledge. Pupil effort is always celebrated increasing the motivation of pupils. Teachers provide pupils with feedback and use prompt questions to help pupils think about improving their work. The connection between the task set and the learning outcome is not always as

precise as it could be and because the use of data is still in its early stages planning is not always linked to this. The use of creative tasks to support the development of religious education is more evident in the younger age groups. Opportunities are provided for pupils to be reflective and to think about their personal responses to learning.

Leaders and governors ensure that curriculum for religious education is a faithful expression of the curriculum directory and are proactive in ensuring that the subject is seen as a priority area. They ensure that staff receive regular training in implementing the religious education curriculum. Staff say they are supported by leaders and governors and value being able to draw on their expertise to improve both their knowledge and standards with experienced staff more than willing to act as mentors for early career teachers to build their confidence. Whole-school policies, for example the schools marking policy, are applied to religious education. The subject lead is extremely well organised, committed to the development of the subject and has taken effective steps towards improving pupil outcomes. The knowledge organisers reinforce religious literacy, and the new strategies for recording pupil progress are leading towards more informed planning. 'What are we learning today' sheets have been adapted to outline the skills needed to succeed. Lesson observations and pupil voice take place on a regular basis and help to inform decision making. Parents are informed about progress in religious education.

Collective worship

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

Collective worship key judgement grade:.....

1

Pupil outcomes

How well pupils participate in and respond to the school's collective worship

1

Provision

The quality of collective worship provided by the school

1

Leadership

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

1

Pupils respond with enthusiasm to opportunities provided to participate in and lead prayer and worship. Even the youngest pupil has a knowledge of some basic prayers and their use throughout the day reinforces pupils' understanding. Pupils are able to experience traditional Catholic practices like the Rosary and Stations of the Cross and because they take ownership of these activities, they are more easily able to appreciate their meaning. There is a very large chaplaincy team within the school and members of the team lead voluntary prayer activities for younger pupils. The Wednesday whole-school assembly is always followed through in classes on a Thursday and this enables pupils to reflect more deeply on the issues raised. A focus on the lives of saints reinforces their understanding of connections between the faith of a person and how it finds expression in their life. Pupils show a good understanding of the liturgical year and the many displays around the school reinforce this understanding. Pupils are able to participate in the Eucharist by serving on the altar, reading and taking part in the offertory procession. Pupils have begun to be involved in evaluating the prayer and liturgy which they led.

The centrality of prayer and liturgy to the life of the school is clear and integral to all aspects of school life. This provision is welcomed by all staff one of whom wrote: 'it is a school where I feel respected and valued, and when the day to day is busy, it allows me to pray and reflect to help bring a sense of calm for my own personal development.' All classrooms have a prayer area which changes to reflect the liturgical season. These are interactive giving pupils the opportunities to respond in some way. The school works with the parish to support the first Holy Communion programme which is led by a governor. Class masses have been reintroduced and take place on a weekly basis in the parish church. Parents and parishioners

are invited to attend these events. One parent writing; "I feel I get the opportunity to be very involved in all aspects of worship and am always invited to participate". The school has a key to the church which enables them to use the space for reflection and teaching. They also have close links with the Marian Centre. Chaplaincy leaders are passionate and enthusiastic about supporting chaplaincy and have developed a pre chaplaincy group for very young pupils to help support their formation in becoming leaders in the future. Pupils are already involved in leading prayer and the school is developing strategies to more explicitly consider how pupils can be developed as leaders of prayer. All pupils take part in the 'Leaders in Faith' award. The school sends home prayer bags with pupils which contain artefacts and information on prayer or the appropriate liturgical season. Pupils spoke with enthusiasm about using these at home and brought in pictures to show how they set up prayer areas in their home. This reinforces their experience of prayer and helps parents participate in the prayer life of the school.

The school has a clear policy on prayer and worship developed in conjunction with the 'Little Way' partnership group. Leaders and governors have planned the school timetable and calendar to fully reflect the liturgical year, Opportunities to celebrate the Eucharist are provided for the whole school and on a class basis and retreats are planned for specific times of the year. All staff understand the importance of prayer within the school. Relevant staff are supported in developing their knowledge of how to plan and lead prayer and worship and are familiar with the Church's liturgical sources. This is also part of the induction programme. Governors actively participate in the prayer life of the school and are extremely knowledgeable. They carefully monitor this aspect of school life in order to seek improvement. Pupils' views are sought as part of monitoring of prayer and worship by governors.

Information about the school

Full name of school	St Joseph's Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	115707
Full postal address of the school	St Joseph's Catholic Primary School Font Street, Nympsfield, Stonehouse Gloucestershire GL10 3TY
School phone number	01453860311
Name of head teacher or principal	Mrs Clare Howells
Chair of governing board	Sydney Gwyer and Gabriella Tiley
School Website	http://www.st-josephs-nympsfield.com
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age-range of pupils	4-11
Trustees	Diocese of Clifton
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	23 rd /24 th November 2016
Previous denominational inspection grade	1

The inspection team

Mrs Ann Fowler	Lead inspector
Mrs Dawn Summers Breeze	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