



# St Joseph's Catholic Primary School Jarrow

URN: 148276

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of Bishop Stephen Wright, Bishop of Hexham and Newcastle

21–22 May 2025

## Summary of key findings

### Overall effectiveness

The overall quality of Catholic education provided by the school

#### 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

#### Religious education (p.5)

The quality of curriculum religious education

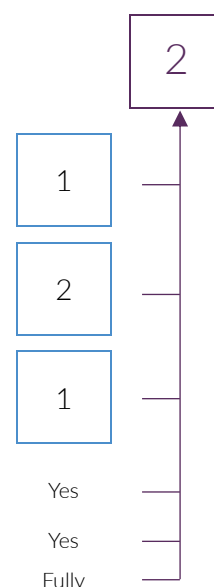
#### Collective worship (p.7)

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

The school is fully compliant with the general norms for religious education laid down by the Bishops' Conference

The school is fully compliant with any additional requirements of the diocesan bishop

The school has responded to the areas for improvement from the last inspection



## Compliance statement

- St Joseph's Catholic Primary School is fully compliant with the general norms for religious education laid down by the Bishops' Conference.
- St Joseph's Catholic Primary School is fully compliant with all the requirements of the Diocesan Bishop.
- St Joseph's Catholic Primary School has responded to and met the areas for further development which were identified during the last inspection.

## What the school does well

- Pupils at St Joseph's know they are deeply loved and highly valued, and therefore they flourish.
- Staff are highly supportive of one another and of those in their care. They are therefore exemplary role models in the care and compassion they express.
- Leaders are inspirational in the way they place Christ at the heart of school and in the way they ensure that pupils are central to all decisions.
- Pupils enjoy learning because staff plan lessons which are interesting and inspire pupils to deepen their understanding of Catholic social teaching.
- Prayer is at the heart of school life; it is inspiring, meaningful and Spirit-filled.

## What the school needs to improve

- Ensure that tasks allow pupils to deepen their thinking with independence.
- Ensure feedback is insightful so that pupils have a clear understanding of how to improve.
- Provide a wider variety of opportunities that further support the spiritual development of all pupils.

## 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

#### Pupil outcomes

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

#### Provision

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

#### Leadership

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



Pupils are rightly proud to be members of the St Joseph's Catholic Primary School community. They have a deep understanding that all aspects of school life are rooted in the teachings of Christ, and that they have a role to care for one another and for our common home. Pupils respond to this responsibility with eagerness and pride. They recognise that everyone in school is greatly loved and valued, and consequently they thrive. The behaviour of pupils is excellent because they feel safe, confident and happy. Pupils have a clear understanding of the principles of Catholic social teaching because this is well-embedded across all aspects of school life. One pupil commented that their actions, 'carry on what Jesus did and taught us.' Pupils have a heartfelt regard for those of other faiths and cultures because there is an embedded culture of respect. They recognise that they can actively support those who are more vulnerable, so they generously contribute to the local foodbank through 'Tinny Tuesdays' and they recently responded to global need through their Cafod Lenten walk. They are especially proud that the house points they earn for hard work and kindness are converted to monetary values for their chosen house group charities.

The school's mission statement, 'Act justly, love tenderly and walk humbly with our God,' and the vision statement, 'In God's love we learn and grow,' are evident across the school and are well understood because staff frequently refer to them and explain their meaning. Staff provide many opportunities, including the Laudato Si Club and Faith in Action Award, for pupils to live out and bear witness to the statements. School is Christ-centred because staff are proud to do all they can for those they serve, particularly the most vulnerable. They are exemplary role models in the way they encourage their pupils and celebrate their uniqueness. One pupil remarked, 'We think we can go far; teachers think we can go further.' This is highly valued by

parents who commented, 'The school has a fantastic, warm and welcoming feel. It is like a family; children are loved.' Staff create an environment which deeply reflects the Catholic character of the school through inspiring displays and reflective prayer spaces. They ensure that the moral development of their pupils is given the highest attention, and this is further embedded through an effective relationships and sex education programme which is fully compliant with the requirements of the Diocesan Bishop.

Leaders and governors have a very clear vision for the school, and they inspire others to embrace their responsibility to be Christ-like. They are highly enthusiastic and prioritise the Catholic character of the school so that all relationships, procedures and actions are rooted in the gospel values of love, dignity and joy. Leaders have developed policies which reflect the mission of the school and uphold human dignity. They empower parents and offer support which is exceptional, and consequently, parents feel highly valued. Leaders ensure that there are many ways in which pupils can develop as leaders. One pupil remarked, 'I have been given a big role. This makes me so proud because I know I am trusted.' Leaders actively promote strong partnerships with the parish and therefore pupils have extensive opportunities to contribute in meaningful ways. Leaders greatly value all staff, ensuring their wellbeing is prioritised, as expressed by one teacher, 'I feel I am part of a wonderful, caring and spiritual school... leaders have helped me thrive in my own spiritual journey... [and ensure this] is really a special place to work.' Governors frequently evaluate the Catholic life of the school and are rigorous in their pursuit of excellence.

## Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

### Religious education key judgement grade

#### Pupil outcomes

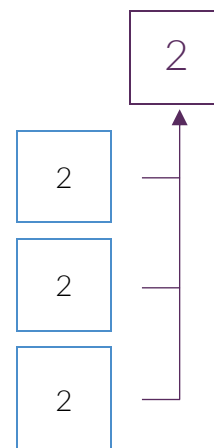
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

#### Provision

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

#### Leadership

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



Pupils enjoy religious education because lessons are interesting. They engage well and confidently contribute because of the encouragement they are given. They enjoy capturing their learning in a variety of ways, including art. Attitudes to learning in lessons are good and most pupils are eager to progress. Pupils with additional needs are supported appropriately, their learning is scaffolded, and lessons are adapted so that most pupils are able to fulfil the curriculum requirements. Many pupils can speak with assurance about what they have learned, and they can recall prior learning using subject-specific language. Consequently, almost all make good progress over time, although not all pupils are fully challenged. From the earliest age pupils develop religious literacy and are able to ask good questions. One nursery child asked, 'Did I get the Holy Spirit when I was baptised?' Pupils across the school produce work which is well presented and comparable to standards in other subjects. They recognise the demands of religious commitment, and most pupils can reflect ethically and as a consequence, they are able to discuss increasingly complex issues. They embrace the opportunity to enrich their learning and report, 'Multifaith days are fun and interesting. It is good to learn about others and what they believe.'

Teachers are highly committed to the value of religious education and promote this with enthusiasm in lessons. They have a secure understanding of the curriculum requirements and provide varied opportunities for pupils to demonstrate their understanding and skills. Praise from staff is motivational and as a result most pupils are eager to contribute to lessons. Staff are reflective of their practice and make relevant adjustments when necessary to enhance learning opportunities. For example, a recent review of topic cover sheets has impacted positively on pupils' knowledge, retention and use of key vocabulary. Staff use questioning to help pupils to deepen their understanding, and they adapt explanations to improve the learning of most

pupils. However, tasks set in lessons are sometimes heavily scaffolded and therefore do not always allow pupils to respond with individual flair. Over time, there are limited opportunities for pupils to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding by interrogating a range of sources, or by using them to support a point of view or range of views. Feedback is given to individual pupils and whole classes during lessons; however, pupils are not consistently given clear prompts to improve the religious content of their work and misconceptions are not always corrected.

Leaders ensure that religious education is given high priority, and they plan enrichment activities, including saints days, which motivate learners and deepen knowledge. Through in-house staff meetings and access to diocesan training, they ensure that staff have the appropriate skills to deliver lessons which meet the requirements of the *Religious Education Curriculum Directory*, (2012.) They have a clear vision for teaching and learning and invest in resources to ensure lessons are engaging. They use data effectively to track the progress of different groups of pupils, and they make timely interventions when they identify concerns. Parents value the termly updates that leaders provide as this helps them to support their child's learning at home. As part of the school's cycle of improvement, leaders monitor religious education lessons and gather information in a variety of ways to understand the strengths of lessons as well as improvement priorities. Their analysis of teaching and learning results in strategic plans which promote sequential progress. However, these are not always implemented fully and therefore not all pupils are fully challenged. Members of the Local Governing Committee regularly review the plans and support leaders as they strive to implement them. They frequently analyse and self-challenge the impact of plans, which leads to good outcomes.

## Collective worship

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

### Collective worship key judgement grade

#### 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

1

Pupils are joyous in their response to prayer experiences; they sing with enthusiasm and demonstrate a deep sense of reverence and respect. They actively contribute to celebrations and undertake ministries with confidence and pride. Religious Education Ambassadors are excellent role models in the way they promote the prayer life of the school and support whole-school celebrations. Pupils are inspired to reflect in silence and explore the meaning of scripture. One pupil commented, 'I feel closer to God in celebrations of the word. We listen to what Jesus did and then we can follow and keep it going on and on.' Pupils have a clear understanding of the liturgical year and how this is reflected in varied prayer and liturgy. They can reflect deeply on the impact prayer opportunities have on them and can articulate how prayer and liturgy inspires them to act. They can link what they learn in lessons to their prayer experiences and can work collaboratively to plan, lead and evaluate celebrations of the word which are meaningful. They are inspired to pray spontaneously, particularly for those in need, and they are confident when praying traditional Catholic prayers.

All staff ensure that prayer is central to the life of St Joseph's and traditional prayer experiences are frequently offered to all members of the community. Thoughtful prayer and liturgy is planned to enhance all school gatherings. There is an embedded pattern of prayer which enhances the school day and is appreciated by pupils who said, 'When our teachers help us to pray, we feel calm and happy and close to God.' Staff ensure that scripture is central to all prayer and liturgy and reflects the liturgical season. They include reflective music, joyous hymns and imaginative reflections which enhance prayer and liturgy. They are exemplary role models in the way they engage in celebrations, and they confidently embrace opportunities to lead prayer experiences for colleagues as well as pupils. Because staff are skilled in enabling pupils to plan and lead celebrations of the word, pupils are confident and competent, as is appropriate for

their age. There is a thriving partnership with the parish because they are proactive in sustaining this, and there are frequent opportunities for pupils to join the parish for Mass. However, there is limited opportunities to promote the spiritual development of all pupils through opportunities to promote prayer.

Leaders have developed a rigorous calendar to ensure prayer opportunities and liturgies are frequently celebrated and are at the heart of school life. They have a deep understanding of the Church's liturgical books, which they use to inform the planning of prayer and liturgy. Because they have a clear understanding of the age and capacity of pupils, leaders ensure that all celebrations are accessible and inspiring. They are excellent role models in leading prayer, and they ensure staff have the appropriate formation training to also lead with confidence. Working in collaboration with the Bishop Chadwick Catholic Education Trust lead lay chaplain, they have developed a clear strategy which outlines explicit expectations and aspirations for the prayer life of pupils. As a result, pupils participate well and plan and lead celebrations with increasing independence over time. Leaders enthusiastically encourage families to join the school community in prayer and liturgy and parents greatly value these opportunities. Leaders, including governors, rigorously monitor the provision for prayer and liturgy and evaluate as part of the school's embedded self-evaluation cycle. This leads to systematic developments and improvements. Leaders ensure that prayer and liturgy is well resourced and consequently all stakeholders find prayer and liturgy to be deeply meaningful and uplifting.



## Information about the school

Full name of school	St Joseph's Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	148276
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	3933314
Full postal address of the school	St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, St Joseph's Way, Hedworth, Jarrow, NE32 4PJ
School phone number	01915364311
Headteacher	Paul Craig
Chair of governors	Ailine Gibson
School Website	<a href="http://www.stjosephsjarrow.co.uk">http://www.stjosephsjarrow.co.uk</a>
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	Bishop Chadwick Catholic Education Trust
Phase	Primary
Type of school	Academy
Admissions policy	Non-selective
Age-range of pupils	3-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	February 2018
Previous denominational inspection grade	1

## The inspection team

Barbara Reilly-O'Donnell  
Kirsty Evans

Lead  
Team

## 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