

St Mary and St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

URN: 140770

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Diocesan Administrator of Plymouth

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

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

Yes

The school is fully compliant with all requirements of the diocesan bishop

Yes

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

Fully

2

What the school does well

- The leadership team have a clear focus on Catholic life and their vision is creating a positive difference to the ethos of the school.
- The whole staff team are committed to creating a welcoming supportive atmosphere which enables children to flourish.
- The use of 'Big Books' in religious education has captured the creative and reflective aspects of the pupils' work.
- The religious education coordinator provides strong support for the staff enabling them to become more confident and skilled in delivering religious education.
- Space and artefacts are used creatively to enhance and celebrate the prayer life of the school.

What the school needs to improve

- Develop the pupils' understanding of Catholic social teaching in order to reinforce connections between scripture, faith and action.
- Raise expectations in religious education by providing tasks that offer opportunities for greater depth responses.
- Develop and embed a strategy that supports pupils in preparing and leading creative acts of 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

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

2

The mission statement of the school 'Do Everything with Love' is well known and understood by all pupils. They are able to articulate what this means to them and how they would put this into practice in their daily lives. Pupils are happy and feel that they are valued by staff. One pupil commenting that the best thing about the school was 'the way the staff really listen to you'. As a consequence of the positive relationships within the school pupils behave well and show respect for each other. Older pupils enthusiastically embrace opportunities to take responsibility for aspects of school life and support younger pupils. Pupils implicitly understand Catholic social teaching and are able to talk about the importance of helping others and caring for the world. The GIFT team are known throughout the school and help organise and lead many charitable events including supporting local food banks and taking part in Cafod's Lent Walk. Pupils within the Gift team were able to speak about how they had been inspired by the previous team and wanted to follow their example in helping others.

There is a strong culture of welcome within the school and both teaching and non-teaching staff are very supportive of the mission of the school. One member of staff commenting that; 'There is a wonderful culture of care and team work in school.' A high priority is placed on the pastoral care of pupils and the development of a 'Nurture Room' which provides support for pupils with emotional difficulties is an example of this. The school's environment is a vibrant and joyful expression of the Catholic nature of the school. Many of the displays around the school have been created by a local artist who works with the pupils to ensure their work and talents are prominently displayed. The art work is also used to reinforce key concepts and cement links between different areas of school life; so, for example each class is named after a saint and the values exemplified in the life of that saint are then linked to British values. Another display

focuses on the Jubilee Year theme 'Pilgrims of Hope' making the connection between the school and the wider context of the Church. Relationship and sex education are delivered in accordance with diocesan policy.

The school has been through a period of change with significant changes within the school leadership. The current leadership team have a clear focus on strengthening all aspects of Catholic life in a way which is inclusive and respectful of the different backgrounds of parents and pupils. They have ensured appropriate resources and training are in place to support staff in their understanding of Catholic ethos. Recent work on Catholic social teaching has helped increase awareness of key principles and how these are lived out, but this is an area that needs developing further. Leaders know the school well and are able to celebrate the strengths of the school and devise strategies to address areas which require further development. The school works in partnership with the diocese, supporting diocesan events. One member of the local clergy has at least a weekly presence in the school and their support, both academic and pastoral is highly valued. The school held a 'Carols by Candlelight' service in the parish church and are making increasing use of the parish church. Members of the Interim Academy Board (IAB) are very committed to supporting the Catholic life of the school and securing its ethos. Designated members of the board are actively involved in evaluating the Catholic life of the school. The school has conducted parental and pupil voice activities but the involvement of pupils in the formal evaluation of Catholic life needs to be further developed.

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

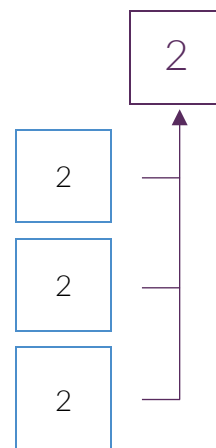
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

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 and are enthusiastic about their work in Religious Education and as a consequence behaviour within lessons is good. They appreciate the value of the subject, with one pupil explaining that 'we learn about what Jesus did in the past so we can learn about behaving well today'. They recognise the importance of learning about other faiths. The introduction of a consistent lesson structure with a focus on recapping previous work and on vocabulary has ensured pupils are becoming increasingly knowledgeable and religiously literate young people. They speak with confidence about their work and their recall of scripture is excellent. Year 2 pupils, for example, are able to describe how the Bible is made up of different parts and Year 4 pupils are able to share their understanding different types of literature within the Bible. Pupils seek to improve their work and a recent introduction of different levels of challenge questions has resulted in some pupils being able to explain the progress they are making and what they need to do to improve. This is however not yet fully embedded. Pupils take a pride in their work and value the opportunities to be creative in religious education and enjoy taking part in discussions, producing posters and creating art work. In one class pupils have produced extra work in their own time writing for example poems about the work studied. In general, their attainment is in line with other subjects.

Teachers' subject knowledge is constantly developing and the introduction of the new *Religious Education Directory* has been met with enthusiasm. Staff have embraced opportunities for training and as a result express more confidence in delivering the subject. One member of staff commenting that; 'The school has come so far on its RE journey, academically since the introduction of RED along with RED training, plus displays around the school as a constant reminder about Catholicism.' Within the lessons there is an emphasis on ensuring subject specific words are clearly understood and that pupils can recall previous work. Questioning is

also used to enhance learning and these strategies ensure that pupils make progress. At times however teachers fail to make connections between different strands of the syllabus and the work can lack challenge which means opportunities to allow pupils to explore the subject in greater depth can be lost. Other adults within the classroom are used effectively to support pupils.

The coordinator has a clear vision for the development of religious education and their expertise and support is highly valued by teachers as is the support of the visiting priest who both supports teachers in their knowledge and takes part in lessons when appropriate. One member of staff commenting that; 'Father is a fantastic addition to the school on Tuesdays, especially for those members of staff who are not religious.' Staff also expressed the view that they felt able to seek advice from the coordinator and school leadership at any time and this was always given in a supportive fashion. Leaders' self-evaluation of the subject is informed through a variety of monitoring activities including book trawls, lesson observations and pupil conferencing and this enables effective strategies to be put in place to further enhance pupil progress however not all of these strategies are as yet fully embedded. The school curriculum for religious education is a faithful expression of the *Religious Education Directory* and all Bishops' Conference requirements are met. Leaders and members of the IAB are passionate about further developing the subject and believe that it is a core element of the curriculum. Staff participate in training organised by the diocese.

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

3

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

2

Pupils respond well to the opportunities presented to them for prayer and worship. They are respectful, when offered the opportunity sing joyfully and are able to reflect silently. Within each class pupils take it in turns to be prayer leaders which means they read the prayers provided within a structured framework. The Gift team lead prayer on occasions and have organised a rosary club during lunchtimes in May. At present the opportunities for pupils to plan, lead and organise prayer are limited. Pupils are not yet confident in making connections between prayer, the wider life of the school and faith in action. They understand the pattern of the liturgical year and know that there are specific liturgies that take place at specific times however not all pupils are able to articulate the meaning of these events. As yet pupils are not fully involved in the evaluation of prayer and worship.

Prayer is central to the life of the school and the Monday morning celebration of the Word ensures that all pupils hear the Gospel of the previous Sunday and are encouraged to reflect on this during the week. During the day there are specific planned times for prayer and even the youngest pupils are able to join in with the main school prayers. The school makes good use of the space available, focal areas in classrooms are seasonally appropriate and help embed the pattern of the liturgical year. Pupils use the recently developed prayer corner and during lunchtime pupils make good use of the outdoor prayer area to reflect quietly but also at times to sing hymns. Attractive and purposeful displays also offer an opportunity for pupils to write their own prayers. Although there is no school chapel the hall is used as a place of worship and displays within the hall help pupils focus on the meaning of the liturgy. The school has recently introduced prayer bags that pupils can take home to share with families. These include a variety of activities and an opportunity for parents to share their thoughts. Parents and parishioners are invited into the school to celebrate Mass and the school is seeking ways to enhance their

participation. Parents have been involved in recent services like Mothers' Day and the celebration of Harvest and the introduction of tea and coffee afterwards is helping to strengthen community ties. Senior leaders and other relevant staff are models of good practice and help support those who may be less confident. Staff use their gifts and talents to enhance the understanding of the liturgical year, the forest school, for example during Holy week built a tomb to represent the tomb of Jesus.

The school uses the CAST policy on prayer and worship and this is fit for purpose. The school calendar is planned on a termly basis to ensure opportunities are offered to celebrate Mass and the appropriate liturgical events. Major liturgies can be creative and inspiring, for example during a Holy Week service the priest washed the hands of each child as a sign that they are there to serve others. Prayer in the classroom is more focused on a set pattern and use of a specific set of resources. Whilst this serves its purpose in increasing staff confidence it does limit the ability to be creative. Leaders including members of the IAB recognise and value the importance of prayer and liturgy and provide opportunities for staff training. Although evaluation of prayer and worship does take place this is not yet as rigorous as it could be.

Information about the school

Full name of school	St Mary and St Joseph's Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	140770
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	8383401
Full postal address of the school	St Mary and St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Folly Lane, Wool, Wareham, BH20 6DS
School phone number	01929462565
Headteacher	Sarah Terrey
Interim Headteacher	Marcella Romano
Chair of Local Governing Body	Karen Cook
School Website	http://www.smsjwool.dorset.sch.uk/
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	Plymouth Cast
Phase	Primary
Type of school	Academy
Admissions policy	N/A
Age-range of pupils	4-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	Jan 2017
Previous denominational inspection grade	1

The inspection team

Ann Fowler

Lead

Paul Cotter

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
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