



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

URN: 138949

Carried out on behalf of the Right Rev. Marcus Stock, Bishop of Leeds on:

Date: 9 & 14 March 2023

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.....	1
Religious education (p.4) The quality of curriculum religious education.....	2
Collective worship (p.5) 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:

- Leaders are deeply committed to the Catholic life of the whole school community, putting this at the centre of all their decisions and working hard to improve it.
- Teaching, worship provision, and outcomes for pupils, are of a standard that is never less than good.
- Pupils are very well behaved in lessons and during worship. They are equally well behaved in the corridors, on the playground, and at other times when they are not directly supervised.

- Staff give the highest levels of pastoral care and support to pupils and their families, especially in times of crisis.
- The school enjoys a flourishing partnership with the local parish community and the wider Trust and Diocesan community.

What the school needs to improve:

- Leaders should ensure that the marking and feedback policy is applied consistently across the whole school, so that pupils, appropriate to their age, know how well they are doing, and what they need to do to improve.
- Leaders should ensure that in lessons there is more use of open-ended questioning and less structured tasks are given to pupils as they get older.
- Leaders should ensure that the child-led worship policy is applied consistently across the school and make more creative use of media, music, singing and other art forms, where appropriate, to enhance prayer and liturgy.

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## 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 .....

2

### 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 understand the distinctive Catholic identity of the school. They are proud to be part of the school's community and participate fully in the opportunities given to them to celebrate and share their faith. As a result, they grow into confident, happy individuals who know God loves them. They demonstrate deep respect for their faith and know that it is central to everything that goes on in the school. They know about other faiths and show respect for people with these beliefs. Pupils value the opportunities they are given to take lead roles within the school's chaplaincy team, Mini-Vinnies, Prayer Pals and School Council. Their behaviour is almost always exemplary. They look after each other, with older pupils becoming 'Faith Friends' to younger ones. They know they have a duty to care for those less fortunate than themselves. One older boy told the inspectors that he 'didn't like seeing people living on the streets' and had given some pocket money to someone to help them. With his classmates and staff, he organised a Hunger Walk for charity. Pupils understand the need to care for our world and do jobs like litter picking and recycling. They are writing to the local council to ask for wild flowers to be planted in the nearby park to encourage butterflies.

There is a tangible sense of Christ in this school community, illustrated perfectly by the quality of relationships between staff and pupils. The welcoming and supportive atmosphere has come into its own on several unfortunate occasions in the school's not too distant history and parents were keen to mention this to inspectors. The school's recently reviewed mission statement is based on Christian virtues, and was undertaken with the involvement of the whole community. Staff embrace it with great enthusiasm and consistency. Pupils know what is expected of them, because of this virtues-based mission, which is clearly visible in classrooms, on reward boards and on corridor displays throughout the building. Pupils know they are cared for by the adults around them and know who to go to, if they are upset. This is especially the case for pupils with special educational

needs (SEN) and those whose circumstances have made them vulnerable. The work of the highly experienced learning mentor, Catholic care worker, and other nurture staff in this area, is exemplary. An older pupil told the inspectors that when they spent time with these adults 'at the end, you always feel better'. The school's chaplaincy team, made up of older pupils and supported by staff, provides a range of well-planned and effective opportunities for spiritual and moral development. The relationships, sex and health education (RSHE) curriculum complies with all statutory and diocesan requirements.

The school is led by a very experienced executive head teacher and the head of school. With the support of the parish priest, the Local Academy Council (LAC) and other leaders from the Bishop Konstant Catholic Academy Trust (BKCAT) they ensure that the Church's mission in education is central. There is proactive engagement with parents, and the life of the parish, and this is a growing strength thanks to the drive of all involved. Parents speak highly of the school and are overwhelmingly supportive. The school works enthusiastically with the diocese and other Trust schools in areas such as staff training, sharing of expertise, and participation in joint activities. Staff members are extremely supportive of the school and the leadership team ensure they are considered and cared for in any decisions taken. As role models, staff members show a deep commitment to the Catholic faith themselves.

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## 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 make good progress in religious education as they move through the school. This includes pupils with additional needs and those whose circumstances have made them vulnerable. They become religiously literate and, relative to their age, and can articulate how their learning impacts on their everyday lives. One older pupil told the inspector that ‘we do good things because that’s what Jesus wants us to do’ and another child in a younger class, when listening to the parable of the ungrateful servant, told her teacher that ‘the man forgot to be kind’. Pupils almost always enjoy their lessons, behave well, concentrate and are confident in their lessons. As they grow older they demonstrate greater potential for independent learning, creativity and individuality. Books are well presented and pupils value them. Where lessons are more successful, teachers do not talk for too long, employ good use of pace, avoid repeating teaching points unnecessarily, ask open-ended questions and tasks with less structured support. By the time pupils are ready to leave the school they have some awareness of their progress and are involved in understanding the steps they need to take to improve. They reach standards which are comparable with those achieved in other core subjects. They can use scripture and access the Bible, appropriate to their age, with confidence.

Teachers are confident in their subject knowledge: they demonstrate clear enthusiasm for their teaching of religious education and understand the progress pupils are making so that they can move them on effectively. Pupils enjoy their lessons. Strategies such as ‘flashbacks’ are used in some lessons to help pupils recall key learning from previous lessons. Marking and feedback policy is not consistently applied throughout the school, consequently some pupils are not as involved as they could be in understanding their own learning progress and being able to identify their own next steps. Effective use of good resources enables pupils to make the best of their learning opportunities. The curriculum is enriched with the celebration of national events such as Black History Month, Mental Health Week, Other Faiths Week, and the Live Simply Pledge. The building is

kept clean, warm, comfortable and safe by the caretaker and her staff. Teaching assistants are deployed effectively and provide a good level of support for pupils.

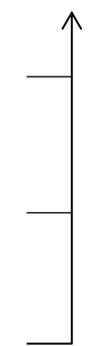
Leaders and the local academy council ensure that religious education is given equal status with other core subjects in terms of resourcing, timetabling, professional development, and monitoring. Members of the council conducted a focused monitoring visit recently, as pandemic restrictions ended. This produced some useful review points, and more of these visits are planned. Decisions made by leaders are informed by monitoring and evaluation, and result in timely and strategic action, leading to good outcomes. The subject leaders are experienced and are clear about what they want religious education to be like in the school. They regularly monitor and evaluate teaching and learning, books and standards, making changes and improvements as needed. In the most successful lessons the needs of different groups of pupils, including the most capable and those who find learning more challenging, are carefully supported. They ensure that the curriculum is planned and delivered sequentially. Teachers make lessons engaging by including role play, art, videos and simple songs. In one lesson about the Eucharist, the pupils were given pieces of bread and blackcurrant juice to help them understand the events of the Last Supper. In another class there was a 'hot seating' game and in yet another the pupils were asked to produce comic strips illustrating Jesus' entry into the temple at the beginning of Holy Week.

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## Collective worship

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

Collective worship key judgement grade:.....	2
<b>Pupil outcomes</b> How well pupils participate in and respond to the school's collective worship .....	1
<b>Provision</b> The quality of collective worship provided by the school .....	2
<b>Leadership</b> How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for collective worship .....	2



Pupils respond in deep and meaningful ways to the prayer and liturgy opportunities they are given. They are always prayerful and attentive. They sing enthusiastically, and demonstrate high levels of silent reflection in prayer sessions, Christian meditation time and other liturgical events. They are aware of different forms of prayer and worship, talking positively about these experiences. Pupils undertake liturgical ministries such as reading, preparing a focal point or lighting a candle with confidence and some pupils are involved in evaluating, at a simple level, the quality of the prayer and liturgy they have planned. Pupils work well with others, including teachers, to prepare and lead worship. However, opportunities for developing pupils' leadership skills are missed, because the school's policy on what is expected of pupils at different ages is not consistently applied, and a wider variety of art forms, music and media are not yet included. Where they are given the chance to plan, lead, and evaluate worship, appropriate to their age, the result is impressive. Pupils know that their faith leads them to pray, and that prayer should lead to action. Inspectors enjoyed listening to the chaplaincy team talking about helping in a local food bank, and showing solidarity with the people of war stricken Ukraine and the earthquake victims of Syria and Turkey.

Prayer is embedded throughout the school's routines. Pupils talk confidently about key moments in the Church's year. They understand how their faith leads them to celebrate events such as Remembrance Sunday and Harvest. Staff have a good level of expertise in helping pupils undertake lead roles. Inspectors enjoyed participating in the Lent candle-lighting time, at the end of the day and were delighted to share some singing with pupils who were rehearsing for their production of Resurrection Rock. The school makes good use of the space available to it. There are several places for children to spend time in prayer and reflection, including the outside shelter, prayer area and a play zone also known as HMS Beverley. There are prayer tables in the

corridors, and all classrooms. Pupils and staff make good use of the parish church, which is on the same site. Great efforts have recently been made to increase parental involvement in the liturgical life of the school and parish. The Family Mass each month is beginning to prove very fruitful.

The parish priest is very supportive, working closely with the school to plan the liturgical experiences for the pupils in the coming year. Pupils take turns to attend Mass weekly, as well as on holy days and other significant times such as the feast of St Joseph. Older pupils have access to the sacrament of Reconciliation. Parents and parishioners are encouraged to join the school liturgies where possible. Staff are encouraged to participate in activities within the parish, and many like to attend the monthly Family Mass. They have access to high quality professional development through BKCAT and the diocese, involving liturgical formation, creative religious education and the planning and leading of worship. Leaders ensure that resources for worship are of a high quality. Every class has a box of appropriate artefacts, drapes and statues. The quality of the prayer life in the school has been reviewed by leaders, including members of the local academy council, but pupils are not yet systematically included in the evaluation process or have a specific role in improving worship in a tangible way. The regular newsletters, twitter feed and website send a constant and clear message that prayer is at the heart of the school's daily life and that this is a community that is 'Walking with Jesus as one family'.

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## Information about the school

Full name of school	ST JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL
School unique reference number (URN)	138949
Full postal address of the school	Pontefract Road, Castleford. WF10 4JB
School phone number	01977 555780
Name of head teacher or principal	Sarah Spencer
Chair of governing board	Averil Birch
School Website	www.sjc.bkcat.co.uk
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	BISHOP KONSTANT CATHOLIC ACADEMY TRUST
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy
Age-range of pupils	4-11
Trustees	DIOCESE OF LEEDS
Gender of pupils	MIXED
Date of last denominational inspection	5 - 6 December 2016
Previous denominational inspection grade	Outstanding

## The inspection team

Mark Brennan

Lead inspector

Madeleine Bannister

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