



Catholic Schools Inspectorate inspection report for St Joseph's RC Academy, Todmorden

URN: 107560

Carried out on behalf of the Title. Right Rev. John Arnold, Arch/bishop of Salford on:

Date: 23rd-24th November 2022

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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

- The Catholic Life and mission of St Joseph's RC Academy is reflected in every encounter ensuring a real sense of belonging and community which is valued by all and shows the school's priority to put Christ at the heart of everything. This is an outstanding feature of the school.
- The religious education curriculum is well planned and delivered with a creative approach meeting the needs of all including the most vulnerable. Excellent leadership ensures that the outcomes for pupils and provision are rapidly improving.
- Strong leadership ensures all staff are highly aspirational for the pupils in their care.
- Parents are rightly proud of their school and value the support given to them.

What the school needs to improve:

- To improve the school environment by creating more spaces to allow a greater variety of prayer and liturgy and to ensure the involvement of pupil voice in the formation of ideas.
- To develop the role that pupils take in leading, designing and delivering prayer and worship throughout the school.
- To enhance provision in religious education and collective worship by ensuring that high quality professional development is a priority for the school.

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



All pupils spoken to tell how proud they are of this school and clearly understand the part they play in living out the school mission statement. The strong outward signs of the Catholic faith are demonstrated regularly to all stakeholders. The children say 'we try to do our best by following in the footsteps of Jesus' - a mantra taken up by all pupils. Pupils value the provision and chances given to them by the school and take up the chances to join in all activities offered such as chaplaincy, mini-Vinnies, happy heroes and play leaders. They are particularly enthusiastic about the 'faith in art' group and the visits arranged by the school such as Manchester Gallery and the Houses of Parliament. The behaviour of most pupils is exemplary - where there are challenges it is dealt with kindness and respect and in keeping with the dignity of pupils involved. The pupils take a leading role in responding to Catholic Social Teaching as evidenced in being the first school to achieve the 'Live Simply' award. The ideals learnt have been understood, adopted and lived resulting in pupils who are happy and confident in expressing their own religious beliefs.

Relationships are excellent. The strong outward sign of faith is shown through the welcome given by the family support worker to the welcome from all adults as the pupils enter the building to parents and children greeting each other is all embracing. St Joseph's offer exceptional care for the children and families in their care and community. This is also commented in communication with the local authority when meeting the needs of the most vulnerable. Pupils and their families very much appreciate the support they are given by the inspiring headteacher and family support worker and see themselves as active participants in the education of their children. This is evidenced in the parental survey responses where one parent commented 'everyone at St Joseph's is created and bought into being by God'. Parents are encouraged to share their own faith journeys with pupils. In a Year 1 religious education lesson a parent who is from the local mosque shared the similarities between Islam and Christianity in a way that was alive and accessible to all.

All leaders live the faith and mission of the school as seen in all areas of life and in every interaction witnessed. Leaders are deeply committed to their faith and to the Catholic life and mission of the

school and its community. They lead by example; the head being described as a servant leader. She has transformed the school bringing the whole community with her on this journey of change. Leaders are visible to the school community as seen in the charities supported in the local community. Pupil leadership is developing, the pupil chaplains have a clear vision of what they want to do moving forward - 'we are here to make our voices heard'. Clear policies and structures are in place which reflect their shared vision and aspirations for those in their care. The school engages well with parents who are very supportive of its mission. As one parent told us she doesn't think her family would be together without the community of St Joseph's. Another said they moved their children to be at this school such is the respect parents hold. School and parish work well together and have a deepening partnership. Governors have a very good grasp of the school's strengths and areas for development. They speak of leaders who, 'are always looking forward.' They know the school well and are effective at holding leaders to account whilst supporting its mission.

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.....

1



Pupils are developing a secure knowledge and understanding of their faith. Pupils discuss their learning and are confident in sharing what they have learnt. They are rightly proud of the work they produce in religious education and this work is of the same if not better than that seen in their English books. Work in books is always well presented and shows a creative and individual approach to learning. Pupils have shared their learning journey with governors. Pupils were observed to work independently and valued the 'menu of choice' given in some of their lessons giving them ownership of their learning. This is planned to be shared with other learners in the school. SEND pupils can access religious education fully and are ably supported by the SENDCo. Behaviour in religious education lessons is usually good with pupils engaged in learning. Pupils listen well and they respond well to activities. Through evidence in workbooks and from conversation, most pupils can demonstrate effective use of prior knowledge when making links between religious ideas and using scriptural references accurately. All pupils spoke positively about religious education lessons and the impact learning has outside of the lessons. The faith in art club makes a valuable contribution to the religious education and wider Catholic life of St Joseph's.

The quality of teaching and learning in religious education, as evidenced through pupils' religious education books and the teaching observed on the day, is of a good standard. The best lessons challenged pupils with the use of good questioning. In all the lessons observed, teachers showed sound subject knowledge, which contributed to the good progress pupils made by all in the lessons. The use of high-quality resources including music, art and vocabulary are a real strength. All learning is tailored to meet the needs of their learners with pupils responding well to marking and feedback. Pupils valued the use of knowledge organisers with core vocabulary and links to scripture. The religious education curriculum design captures the children's love of practical learning as seen in the variety of tasks in religious education books. Inspiring ideas holds pupils' attention as seen in a Year 5 lesson where good links were made to recent world events. Classroom assistants provide some valuable support for pupils.

The religious education leader's passion and drive for the subject underpin his outstanding support for all staff. This enables teachers to deliver lessons with confidence and enthusiasm and ensure that standards in religious education are high. His strong knowledge and experience gives him the confidence and skill to adapt the school's approach to the subject in order to continually seek improvement. He takes the time to find the strength of each teacher and tailors support for teaching RE around their strengths. This is most evident in the use of art to support the teaching and learning throughout the school. He is ably supported by the SENDCo who offers support and advice to the curriculum taught. All leaders, including governors, recognise the importance of religious education and share the religious education subject leader's passion in seeking the highest quality of religious education for all the pupils in the school. This is supported by governors who ensure adequate funds are available. Professional development is given priority and valued by all. Leaders and governors have a good understanding of the strengths of St Joseph's and what is needed to improve. Governors are immensely proud and supportive of the school. The appointment of a new link governor is supported by the previous governor in this role. Leaders and governors ensure that the religious education curriculum meets the requirements of the Bishops Conference, with 10% of the timetable dedicated to the subject across all year groups.

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

Collective worship and prayer is central to the life of St Joseph's and valued by all. Prayer is a regular part of the daily experience of all pupils and staff. From a young age, pupils are reverent and respectful during collective worship. They usually respond well during the celebration of worship and sing with enthusiasm. Pupils tell us that they have been called to be faithful to God and have the opportunity to become 'little saints'. Pupils are beginning to take an increasing lead in preparing and leading liturgies in class, as seen in Year 6. The pupil chaplain group are excited to promote collective worship to larger groups throughout the school. Staff now need to create more opportunities for child led worship, so all pupils have an ownership in leading worship independently in order to develop the necessary skills. Pupils have a very good understanding of the church's liturgical year, seasons and feasts and describe how they are celebrated in the school. There is a sense of respect for faiths other than their own.

Praying together is clearly part of the daily experience for all pupils and staff which has a very positive impact on the school's sense of community. Acts of worship are age appropriate, centred on themes and messages which are accessible to all pupils. In the Early Years, children knew that by lighting a candle on the class altar was because Jesus was the light of the world. There is a planned programme of liturgies, Masses and other liturgical celebrations. Developing spirituality is seen as central in supporting the Catholic ethos of St Joseph's. Themes chosen for worship reflect a good understanding of the liturgical year as well as the Catholic character of the school. Pupils understand the importance of sacred scripture. Pupils say they enjoy worship and can talk about what they have learnt. This is strongly evidenced on the school website and Twitter feed. Parents, parishioners and governors are welcomed to share in the spiritual life of the school through various acts of collective worship, celebrations, assemblies and Mass.

School leaders have good knowledge of how to plan and deliver high quality liturgy and worship. Prayers are age appropriate and build on previous knowledge. The SENDCo ensures pupils with special educational needs (SEN) take full part in all prayer and liturgy activities. 'SEN should never be seen as a barrier to full participation'. Pupils are ably supported by staff to access this as seen in

a Reception class when introducing the 'Our Father'. Leaders celebrate the uniqueness of St Joseph's community with support given to the most vulnerable for all to access liturgical celebrations. They understand the Church's liturgical year and traditions and are role models to both staff and pupils. Indeed, the school calendar is organised around such significant moments. Leaders understand the strengths and areas for further development in collective worship. Priority is given to high quality professional development. The headteacher has recently attended the National School of Formation 'Christ the Teacher' course which she feels has empowered her to lead projects in her school and outside. She recently organised 'United in Prayer' for the local schools and other faith organisations to attend in the park for peace in Ukraine. As a result of this training, she inspires other staff to lead.

Information about the school

Full name of school	St Joseph's RC Voluntary Academy
School unique reference number (URN)	107560
Full postal address of the school	Wellington Road, Todmorden. OL14 5HP
School phone number	01706 812948
Name of head teacher or principal	Elizabeth Lloyd
Chair of governing board	James Livesey
School Website	https://www.st-josephs-tod-org-uk/
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	Romero
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age-range of pupils	3 - 11
Trustees	Romero Trust
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	November 2014
Previous denominational inspection grade	Good

The inspection team

Claire Harrison	Lead inspector
Clare Campbell	Team inspector
Joanne Butterworth	Team inspector
Name of inspector	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