



# St John's Catholic Primary School

URN: 140763

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Bishop of Plymouth

26–27 February 2026

## Summary of key findings

### 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

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 general norms for religious education laid down by the Bishops' Conference

Yes

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

Yes

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

Fully

## Compliance statement

- 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

## What the school does well

- The strong servant leadership of the head, where others are always put first, ensures that there is a warm welcome for all families and especially the most vulnerable.
- Strong positive relationships between all members of the school community ensure pupils feel safe and happy.
- Behaviour is exemplary, with pupils showing respect for adults and support for each other during religious education lessons.
- The staff team are highly committed to the teaching of quality Religious Education and supporting the Catholic life of the school, and they support each other well.
- During worship there is a prayerful and respectful atmosphere created by the pupils, who listen attentively, respond appropriately and sing joyfully.

## What the school needs to improve

- Tasks need to fully reflect the learning objectives in Religious Education, to allow pupils to show the extent of their knowledge and understanding.
- Ensure that staff develop effective techniques to allow pupils to become self-evaluative so that they are aware of how well they have done and what they need to do to improve their work.
- Ensure that the whole school self-evaluation process in Catholic life and mission, Religious Education and Collective Worship is robust, with clear targets that are regularly reviewed and lead to improvements.

## 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

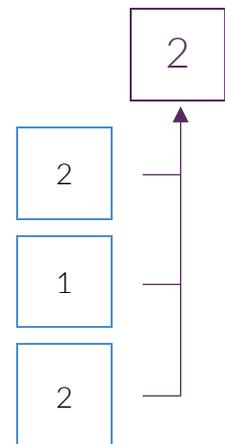
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

#### 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



The mission statement has been simplified so that pupils are able to articulate and understand that 'Jesus is in my heart, my head, and my hands'. Pupils have a good understanding of the church's mission to help others. They know from the youngest age they are made in the image of God and are special. They are happy, confident and secure due to the strong relationships between pupils and adults. They understand the need to look after, not just each other, but also their common home and they embrace the opportunities to help others, through their support for charities both locally with the rainbow run and also globally with the Big Lent Walk for Cafod, they are proud to be helping people in Bangladesh. While they implicitly live out Catholic Social Teaching, they find it harder to explicitly name the different aspects. Their behaviour is exemplary and they show respect for all, including those of other faiths, they recognise 'it is important to understand others' beliefs.' They are polite, friendly and helpful to each other and adults. The Growing Together In Faith (GIFT) team is well led and highly valued. They are proud to lead prayer and liturgy, organise fundraising activities, and help to select the next year's team. They recognise that opportunities for leadership roles have helped them to grow in confidence.

Recognising that the Mission Statement may be too wordy for some of their pupils to access, a pupil friendly version was put in place which is said daily, during prayers and shapes the life of the school. Staff are fully committed to supporting Catholic life, and make enthusiastic contributions, particularly through being outstanding role models and going above and beyond to serve the whole school community, with an explicit and concrete commitment to those most vulnerable. There is a strong culture of warm welcome and inclusivity, which starts at the school gate each morning, where all are valued in this supportive community, acknowledging Christ's presence in each other. Parents appreciate leaders being on the school gate each day,

particularly those who find it hard to come into school, this ensures that the school knows their families well and can address needs as they arise. The distinctive nature of the school is celebrated in displays on Catholic Social Teaching and the work of the GIFT team. The prayer corner, maintained by the GIFT team, gives opportunities for pupils to write and say their own prayers; it is well used and highly valued. Relationships education meets diocesan requirements and is carefully planned and adapted to ensure that pupils learn at an appropriate level.

The authentic servant leadership of the head drives the culture of the school and leaders and governors are fully committed to the mission of the school. The school engages well with the diocese, and support from the Trust and the diocese is welcomed and valued. The head ensures a flourishing partnership with the local parish, with weekly visits from the parish priest, and a strong link with the governors. The school team works hard to develop strong relationships with their parents and good clear communication has resulted in parents feeling 'valued, listened to, respected and supported.' There is an explicit commitment to the physical and mental welfare of all staff and this is a priority for leaders, resulting in staff feeling well supported by leaders and by each other, leading to a 'happy family feel', in this 'loving, compassionate and unique school.' Governors see Catholic life as a priority and are committed and enthusiastic, seeking to make improvements where appropriate through providing a good level of challenge and support. They are involved in monitoring, however formal systems for self-evaluation are not yet robust enough to show impact. Pupils are beginning to be involved in evaluations, including, through the school council, and boxes available for them to ask questions of different members of staff. Induction for new staff is effective and includes diocesan training and bespoke guidance provided by the head.

## Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

### Religious education key judgement grade

#### Pupil outcomes

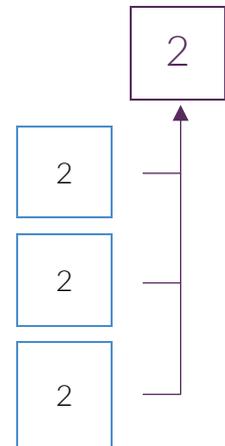
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

#### 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 RE lessons which leads to good engagement and an eagerness to share their knowledge in lessons. They are religious literate and are able to articulate their learning using subject specific vocabulary. They are able to implicitly make links with scripture and daily life. In lessons, pupils show that they are developing secure knowledge and understanding that reflects the *Religious Education Directory (RED)* through their scripture knowledge, knowledge of liturgical seasons, and their ability to make connections. Pupils are making progress, with pupils with specific needs well catered for through adapted learning tasks and support. In key stage 2 pupils sometimes lack the opportunity to show the extent of their knowledge. They have plenty of opportunities to recall and revisit previous learning throughout lessons which ensures that knowledge and understanding is being embedded. The use of 'I wonder' questions encourages pupils to be curious and express their own ideas from the earliest age and their confidence to do this is evident. They work well independently and in groups, supporting and listening to each other with respect. Where modelling is used, pupils are clear on tasks and expectations, however this is not consistent. Pupils have a limited understanding of their progress and are unable to articulate what they need to do to improve their learning.

Staff have embraced wholeheartedly the introduction of the *RED* and value RE as a core subject. Their subject knowledge is increasing due to the training provided by the diocese. Expectations for oral work in lessons are higher than those for written work in books. Staff have a clear understanding of the needs of those pupils with special needs. Sensitive, timely and nurturing support by teaching assistants as well as adaptations of tasks by teachers ensure that they are learning well. However, opportunities to further extend all pupils' understanding can be missed. In lessons, teachers and teaching assistants use effective questioning to deepen learning, identifying where pupils are in their understanding and adapting to ensure knowledge is

embedded. Teachers and teaching assistants celebrate pupils' efforts in lessons, however feedback in books does not always enable pupils to correct their mistakes. They are given time in class for personal reflection and recognise that RE impacts on their daily life. Pupils are given the opportunity to show their learning in a variety of ways, including freeze frame, drama and art work, and they enjoy working in this way.

The RE curriculum is a faithful expression of the RED. Whilst it is adapted well for those with needs, tasks need to ensure that all outcomes of the directory can be fulfilled by all pupils, including those more able pupils who are ready to be challenged. RE enjoys parity with other core subjects in terms of staffing and training, and 10% of the curriculum timetable is dedicated to it, however the high standards and expectations in English books have not been transferred to RE. Training delivered by the diocese with a focus on the RED is valued and appreciated by staff and leaders. The school prioritises other training for staff as appropriate, for example, adult formation. The RE lead is passionate about teaching and learning in RE and has a clear vision of where the school needs to be in terms of this. Monitoring by leaders and governors is in place but the impact is not sufficiently developed with action plans needing to be more robust to ensure that key areas are prioritised leading to improvements. Leaders have ensured that there are a wealth of enrichment activities provided for pupils including visits to the church, Cafod workshops and opportunities offered from other local churches, which are highly valued and enjoyed by the staff and pupils.

## 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

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

2

Pupils show reverence and respect in the whole school Celebration of the Word, singing with joy and enthusiasm, reflecting in silence, and joining in with prayers and responses. In class worship, in most classes, there is a purposeful and prayerful atmosphere with pupils showing attentive listening and a respect for the sacredness of prayer. Pupils have an understanding of the liturgical year, with the changing colours of vestments and cloths on their prayer tables, and events such as harvest, Holy Week and the May procession celebrated each year. Pupils have opportunities to plan with others and prepare engaging prayer and liturgy. They work well with others and are proud to lead class worship with confidence and meaning. They have the opportunity to read at the weekly parish Mass in church and to write and lead bidding prayers. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on their experiences in prayer and liturgy.

Prayer is a routine part of daily life and central to the school. There is daily prayer and weekly opportunities for whole school, class and individual prayer. Pupils are offered opportunities for different ways of praying over the year, for example, through the May procession, the Rosary, the stations of the cross, and the Lent prayer book which has been put together and illustrated by the Y5 and Y6 pupils and used across the school. Scripture is central to all prayer and liturgy, and is appropriate for the season. Staff show their commitment to worship through their modelling of participation and some staff are good role models for pupils in leading worship, however this is not consistent across the school. The school is fortunate to have the talent of a parishioner in playing the guitar in hymn practice and supporting music for Masses which is valued by staff and pupils. Pupils also really enjoy assemblies led by visitors, particularly when they have to dress up and act out bible stories. There are prayer areas in each classroom containing seasonal and age appropriate artefacts and symbols, these are valued and well cared for. The prayer corner is maintained by the GIFT team and is well used, it includes a wealth of

prayers written by the pupils including the flower prayer. Parents are invited to events and services in school and church. The parish priest is very supportive of the school and a frequent visitor.

The school is working to adapt the Trust policy to make it relevant to their particular needs. There is an informal understanding of the expectation of planning and leading worship for each year group, however this has not been formalised, and will be included in the school's policy. The school calendar is planned in advance with the parish priest and includes feast days and frequent opportunities to celebrate the Eucharist, with each class taking it in turns to celebrate Mass with the parish each week. Professional training opportunities have been given to staff, however the impact of the training has not yet been fully evaluated. Leaders understand that there are different ways of praying. They are familiar with liturgical sources and provide good role models in leading whole school worship and modelling participation. Leaders are committed to ensure that all pupils have the opportunity to lead and, for some, to plan quality and engaging worship. Leaders ensure that quality resources are available for prayer tables and especially the prayer corner. Pupils and governors are involved in monitoring activities.

## Information about the school

Full name of school	St John's Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	140763
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	9083463
Full postal address of the school	Trevu Road, Camborne, Cornwall, TR14 7AE
School phone number	01209713944
Headteacher	Nicola Armstrong
Choose an item.	
Chair of governors	Francis Sanderson
School Website	<a href="http://www.st-johns.cornwall.sch.uk/">www.st-johns.cornwall.sch.uk/</a>
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	Plymouth Cast
Phase	Primary
Type of school	Academy
Admissions policy	Non-selective
Age-range of pupils	4-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	January 2018
Previous denominational inspection grade	2

## The inspection team

Dawn Summers-Breeze – Lead Inspector

Ann Fowler – 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