



Josephine Mary Williams

December 16, 1925 - April 24, 2026

Josephine Mary Williams passed away peacefully in her home on Friday, April 24, 2026, at the age of 100, surrounded by her family.

Josephine was born in Warrington, England, in 1925 to George and Ethel Syers and was the eldest of three children. She graduated from college in Swansea, where she earned her Bachelor's degree in Education. She continued her education throughout her life, attending college well into her 50s and earning a Master's degree in Education, as well as a Master's degree in Administration.

Josephine taught at various schools throughout England before immigrating to Riverside in 1960 with her husband, Alan Williams, and her daughter, Marilyn. She taught at Elsinore High School before opening Riverside Nursery School, the first private nonreligious nursery school in Riverside, where she taught children ages 2–6.

After deciding she wanted to return to teaching older children, Josephine closed the nursery school and began working for Alvord Unified School District. She served for many years as both a teacher and principal at schools including La Granada, Twinhill, and most notably McAuliffe Elementary. She impacted the lives of countless students, families, and teachers.

She is survived by her daughter, Marilyn Cruz (Phillip); her grandson, Scott Cruz (Lani); nine great-grandchildren, Ruby, Rebecka, Charles, Alexis, Iesha, Alexandria, Nathaniel, Kiyara, and Ethan; and six great-great-grandchildren, Aurielle, Leo, Kai, Aqua, Isaiah, and Benjamin.

Funeral services will be held at Noon on Wednesday, May 13, 2026, at Saint Catherine's, followed by burial at 1:00 p.m. at Olivewood Cemetery. Both the funeral and burial services are open to the public.

Upcoming Events

Mass

MAY 13. 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM (Pst)

St. Catherine of Alexandria Catholic Church
3680 Arlington Ave
Riverside, CA 92506

Burial

MAY 13. 1:00 PM - 1:30 PM (Pst)

Olivewood Memorial Park
3300 Central Ave
Riverside, CA 92506

Tribute Wall

MK

“Joan was a great leader in education. She challenged teachers and students to high standards. As a staff we often would say *wwjd* “What would Joan do?” Her love for tea parties brought us all together for many occasions. Joan, I’m really going to miss you! hugs to the family.
Mary Kramer ❤️

Mary Kramer - 7 minutes ago