

**DENOMINATIONAL INSPECTION
REPORT (Section 48)**

on

**THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE
SCHOOL AND RELIGIOUS
EDUCATION**

School: St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

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School URN: 108617

Headteacher: Mrs Carol Jewitt

Chair of Governors: Miss Margaret Nagle

Inspector: Mrs Lucie Stephenson

Date of Inspection: 12 & 13 April 2011

This Inspection Report is produced for the Rt. Reverend Séamus Cunningham, the Bishop of Hexham and Newcastle Diocese, (c.f. Code Canon Law, 804, 806), and for the Governing Body of the school (Education Act 2005, Section 48). The inspection reviews, evaluates and plans further improvements in the school's witness to the Catholic faith and Curriculum Religious Education. This process begins with the school's own self-evaluation.

The inspection schedule follows criteria set by the National Board of Advisers and Inspectors.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Joseph's is a larger than average Catholic primary school located on the western edge of North Shields. It serves the parishes of St Joseph's, St Edward's and St Mary's and is situated in an area of high deprivation. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is well above average and the number of pupils with Special Education Needs is slightly above average. There are few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, although there has been some increase in recent years.

FACTUAL INFORMATION

Pupil Catchment:

Number of pupils on roll: 335

Percentage of pupils baptised RC: 31%

Percentage of pupils from other Christian denominations: 34%

Percentage of pupils from other World Faiths: 2%

Percentage of pupils with no religious affiliation: 33%

Percentage of pupils from ethnic groups: 4%

Percentage of pupils with special needs: 47%

Staffing

Number of full time teachers: 15

Number of part time teachers: 0.2

Percentage of Catholic teachers: 67%

Percentage of teachers with CCRS: 40%

Percentage of learning time given to Religious Education:

FS 10% Yr 4 10%

Yr 1 10% Yr 5 10%

Yr 2 10% Yr 6 10%

Yr 3 10%

Parishes served by the school:

St Joseph's, North Shields

St Edward's, Whitley Bay

St Mary's, Cullercoats

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

How effective the school is in providing Catholic education

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

MAIN FINDINGS

St Joseph's is a good Catholic school. The headteacher provides good leadership and a clear vision for the school. She is supported well by senior staff and the governing body who have a strong commitment to the Catholic life and ethos of the school. They work together as a team to ensure that the school's aims and values continue to promote high quality care and education. Good relationships are a key strength of the school and foster the development of a community in which inclusion is given a high priority. The school's capacity for sustained improvement is good because there is an accurate self-evaluation leading to clear challenging targets and appropriate priorities. All areas for improvement from the last inspection have been addressed. Pupils are very well cared for and from a very early age learn about the importance of treating each other with respect and have a good understanding of right and wrong. The school is held in high regard by pupils and parents and holds an important place in the parishes.

Pupils enjoy Religious Education and make good progress from very low starting points. Standards at present are broadly average but accurate indicators and predictions show capacity to improve. Pupils benefit greatly from the range of opportunities offered to contribute to the Catholic life of the school. Pupils' participation in prayer and liturgical life of the school is good and they are developing independent skills in preparing and leading prayer and collective worship. Their spiritual and moral development is good.

The school provides a good Catholic education. The quality of teaching is consistently good across the school and this leads to purposeful learning. Although assessments are accurate, teachers are not fully confident when moderating pupils' work. The use of targets and some clear marking and feedback is beginning to make pupils aware of how to improve their work. The Religious Education curriculum provided is varied and is focused on maintaining and raising standards for all pupils. However, more able pupils are not achieving their potential because tasks do not enable them to reach higher levels of attainment. The quality of collective worship is good and pupils respond with respect and reverence. They are now becoming more confident in preparing and leading worship. Staff are excellent role models for pupils and offer a variety of opportunities for prayer and worship.

Leadership and management is good. Formal and informal monitoring of the Catholic life of the school has ensured previous areas for development have been addressed. The leaders are committed to raising standards and continuing development of the Catholic life of the school. The Religious Education co-ordinator has ensured that there are well-embedded assessment and monitoring systems in place which give a clear picture of how well pupils are achieving and progressing. Improvements are clearly outlined in the school improvement plan. Governors have a good understanding of what is required in leading the school, they are well informed of strengths and weaknesses and they fulfil their responsibilities well. Leaders and managers form good partnerships which benefit pupils' well-being and their promotion of community cohesion is good. Excellent links exist with parents, parish and the wider community.

What the school needs to do to improve further

- Ensure that teachers plan appropriate differentiated tasks to enable all pupils, especially the more able, to achieve higher levels of attainment.
- Develop the confidence and competence of staff in the moderation of pupils' work and in their understanding of the levels of attainment in Religious Education.
- Embed marking and feedback strategies throughout school to ensure that they provide support for the next steps in learning.

PUPILS

How good outcomes are for pupils, taking particular account of variations between different groups

2

Pupils have a positive attitude towards Religious Education and demonstrate enjoyment in their learning. They speak enthusiastically about the subject and are positive about their learning. They are becoming increasingly religiously literate and their knowledge, skills and understanding are developing well. Standards in Religious Education are average. From significantly below age-related expectations on entry to school in Foundation Stage, the majority of pupils make good progress through Key Stage 1 and now subsequently in Key Stage 2. In Key Stage 2 inspector findings and current accurate data indicates that present pupils from Year 2 to Year 6 are now achieving standards of attainment that are satisfactory. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because their needs are accurately identified and support is adapted to meet them. However, pupils with higher abilities are not offered sufficiently challenging activities to enable them to achieve the higher level.

Pupils make a good contribution to the Catholic life of the school and benefit greatly from it. They are offered a variety of ways to share their opinions and are consulted about decision making. Behaviour is outstanding with pupils demonstrating genuine care and concern for others throughout school. Through numerous fundraising activities they also show signs of responding to the needs of people beyond the school. Pupils understand the need for forgiveness and have a strong sense of right and wrong. They are comfortable when expressing their own beliefs and show interest and respect for the beliefs of others. Pupils are familiar with key celebrations throughout the liturgical year and participate actively in the parish community.

Pupils' response to and participation in collective worship is good. They participate fully in a variety of acts of worship, they sing joyfully, reflect in silence and pray confidently. They have a good understanding of the religious seasons and feasts and are becoming skilled in the use of scripture, religious artefacts, hymns and other forms of prayer. They enjoy leading and participating in community worship. Collective worship contributes positively to the spiritual and moral development of the pupils. They show respect for everyone in their school community and understand that some people have different beliefs.

PROVISION

How effective the provision is in promoting Catholic education

2

Teaching in Religious Education is good. Staff are committed to delivering good quality teaching which is in turn ensuring that pupils are interested in their learning and are making good progress. Teachers subject knowledge and increasingly robust assessment procedures ensures that planning meets the needs of most learners well, inspiring and challenging most pupils to achieve well. However, further differentiation is needed to ensure that high achievers are given appropriate activities to enable them to make good progress. Good and imaginative use is made of teaching styles and resources including art, ICT and drama. Support staff are used effectively to enhance the learning opportunities. There is some evidence that more detailed feedback, both orally and through written comments, is beginning to support the next steps in learning.

Assessment and academic guidance is satisfactory although the school has worked hard to ensure that there are now increasingly robust assessment procedures in place. Target setting is evident and pupils are now aware of their achievements and focussed on what to do to improve. Staff work well together formally and informally to ensure that results of moderation impact positively and are used to track progress and target set. The use of 'I Can' statements now enables pupils to take part in the assessment of their own learning and progress. Quality marking is evident in some classrooms and is beginning to impact on the learning.

The Religious Education curriculum is good and enriched through a variety of imaginative and well planned strategies and resources. Long and short term planning ensures full coverage of Religious Education curriculum and is based on prior learning. It meets the needs of the pupils and fulfils the requirements of the Bishops' Conference well. Good use of ICT, art and drama motivate and enrich the learning experience and are impacting positively on standards. The curriculum offers many opportunities for spiritual and moral development. Extra curricular opportunities are varied and enjoyed by pupils.

The quality of collective worship is good and ensures that the spiritual needs of all pupils are well met. Acts of worship are fully inclusive. They are timetabled, planned and well resourced enabling pupils to take an active part. Parents and members of the school community are invited and encouraged to attend planned worship and do so enthusiastically. The headteacher co-ordinates collective worship, ensuring that it is given high priority in school. She provides an excellent model for pupils, who are becoming increasingly skilled at preparing and leading worship independently. Pupils are offered a wide range of prayer styles.

LEADERS AND MANAGERS

How effective leaders and managers are in developing the Catholic life of the School

2

Leaders and managers are deeply committed to promoting the Catholic life of the school, through their relationships with others and by example. The Catholic mission is at the heart of school life and pupils' spiritual and moral development is at the centre of the school's vision. The headteacher, senior staff and governors have a clear understanding of the school's role in the mission of the Church. Accurate and regular self-evaluation ensures continuous improvement in all aspects of the Catholic life of the school. High quality training, induction procedures and systems for performance management ensure an awareness, understanding and commitment to the strong Catholic ethos. As a result pupils have a good understanding of the school's mission and actively support it.

The monitoring and evaluation of the provision for Religious Education is good. Comprehensive systems are in place for the monitoring and evaluation of the provision for Religious Education. The school's self-evaluation shows a clear understanding of its strengths and areas for development. The deputy headteacher, recently appointed as Religious Education co-ordinator, is efficient, conscientious and committed to raising standards. Monitoring, assessment and tracking systems are beginning to impact positively on pupils' learning, progress and standards. However, staff are not as yet fully confident in the moderation of pupils' work. The commitment to staff development is given high priority and is enhancing the learning of pupils in school.

Governors provide effective challenge and support regarding the Catholic life of the school. New and established governors are committed to working together and have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development, putting the well-being and needs of the pupils at the centre of their work. The governors discharge their statutory and canonical duties effectively. They have a very positive relationship with staff, pupils and their families and are actively involved in the school and parish communities. Governors are aware of the school's performance in Religious Education and know what needs to be done to raise standards further.

Leaders and managers effectively develop partnerships with other providers and organisations ensuring that enrichment opportunities are provided for all pupils. The vision of the headteacher supported by senior leaders ensures that links are well established with other Catholic primary schools, the Diocese, the parish and other local organisations which provide opportunities for pupils to enjoy, achieve and develop well.

Leaders and managers' promotion of community cohesion is good. The school is an inclusive community with a clear, shared vision and strong sense of belonging. The Religious Education curriculum promotes attitudes of respect, tolerance and justice for all faiths and those with none. Acts of worship are inclusive and everyone's spiritual identity is respected. Leaders are good role models. They respect difference, value diversity and ensure equal opportunities for all. Pupils have an appropriate understanding of their rights and responsibilities in a global society – recently receiving the Impetus Award as recognition for this achievement. The Religious Education curriculum promotes attitudes of respect and tolerance for all faiths and those with none.

SUMMARY OF INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Key for inspection grades:

Grade 1 **Outstanding** Grade 2 **Good** Grade 3 **Satisfactory** Grade 4 **Unsatisfactory**

Overall effectiveness	2
The school's capacity for sustained improvement	2
How good outcomes are for pupils, taking particular account of variations between different groups	2
• how well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education	2
❖ the quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
❖ the quality of learning for pupils with particular learning needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
❖ pupils' standards of attainment in Religious Education	3
• the extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life of the school	2
• how well pupils respond to and participate in the school's collective worship	2
How effective the provision is in promoting Catholic education	2
• the quality of teaching and purposeful learning in Religious Education	2
• the effectiveness of assessment and academic guidance in Religious Education	3
• the extent to which Religious Education curriculum meets pupils' needs	2
• the quality of collective worship provided by the school	2
How effective leaders and managers are in developing the Catholic life of the School	2
• how well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic life of the school and plan improvement to outcomes for pupils	2
• how well leaders and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education and plan for improvement to outcomes for pupils	2
• the extent to which the governing body provides effective challenge and support for the Catholic dimension of the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory and canonical responsibilities met	2
• how well leaders and managers develop partnerships with other providers, organisations and services in order to promote Catholic learning and well-being	2
• how effectively leaders and managers promote community cohesion.	2