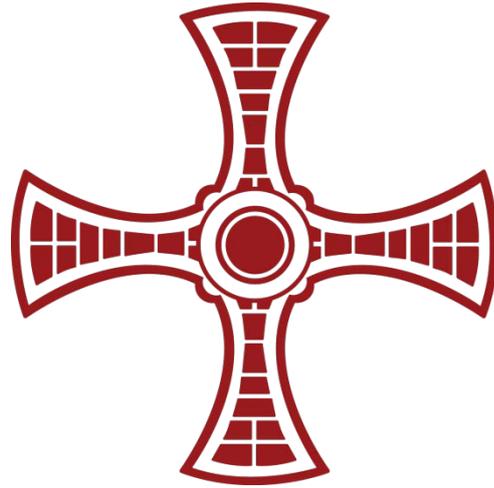


DIOCESE OF **Hexham & Newcastle**
SPIRITUALITY, FORMATION & EDUCATION SERVICE



**Section 48 Inspection Report
St Joseph's RCVA Primary School,
Stanley, County Durham**

**DENOMINATIONAL INSPECTION
REPORT (Section 48)**

on

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

School:	St Joseph's RCVA Primary School
Address:	Front Street Stanley Co Durham DH9 0NP
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School URN:	114245
Headteacher:	Mrs Jill McBride
Chair of Governors:	Fr Joseph Park
Inspector:	Mrs Lucie Stephenson
Date of Inspection:	20 & 21 February 2012

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 an average sized Catholic primary school serving the community of Stanley in Derwentside. The school is mainly made up of white British pupils and the majority of pupils are baptised Catholics. The school serves the parish of St Joseph's, Stanley, with a small number of pupils coming from four neighbouring parishes. Pupils enter school with skills generally below age related expectations. In recent years the number of pupils experiencing some social disadvantage has increased.

FACTUAL INFORMATION

Pupil Catchment:

Number of pupils on roll: 203

Percentage of pupils baptised RC: 79%

Percentage of pupils from other Christian denominations: 15%

Percentage of pupils from other World Faiths: 3%

Percentage of pupils with no religious affiliation: 3%

Percentage of pupils from ethnic groups: 4%

Percentage of pupils with special needs: 16%

Staffing

Number of full time teachers: 8

Number of part time teachers: 1

Percentage of Catholic teachers: 100%

Percentage of teachers with CCRS: 80%

Percentage of learning time given to Religious Education:

FS	10%	Yr 4	10%
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Yr 1	10%	Yr 5	10%
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Yr 2	10%	Yr 6	10%
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Yr 3	10%		
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Parishes served by the school:

St Joseph's, Stanley

St Theresa's, Annfield Plain

St Patrick's, Dipton

St Mary's, South Moor

All Saints, Lanchester

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

How effective the school is in providing Catholic education

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

MAIN FINDINGS

St Joseph's is an outstanding Catholic school. By the time pupils leave the school at the end of year six (YR6), they are attaining consistently high standards. Pupils are keen to take on responsibilities and take an active role in leading and developing the Catholic life of the school. Leaders and managers have made a significant contribution to developing a school that all stakeholders see as overwhelmingly caring. Staff, parents, pupils and governors are justifiably proud to be associated with this school. The drive for continuous improvement in all aspects of school life has been built on previous outstanding performance. The school's capacity for sustained improvement in all areas is outstanding because its thorough and accurate self-evaluation has resulted in clear, challenging targets and appropriate priorities.

Pupils are delighted to come to school. They are highly motivated and have excellent attitudes to learning. Standards attained in Religious Education are high and all groups of pupils make outstanding progress. Pupils are well supported in their learning by the effective use of additional adults. They benefit greatly from the highly impressive range of opportunities offered to contribute to the Catholic life of the school. The level of pupil participation and engagement in the prayer and liturgical life of the school is very high and many are developing independent skills in preparing prayer and worship. Their spiritual and moral development is outstanding.

The school provides an outstanding Catholic education. Teaching and learning in Religious Education is effective in engaging pupils and ensuring that they learn well. Assessment, monitoring and tracking procedures are continually under review and development and are impacting positively on attainment and progress. The Religious Education curriculum is rich and varied and is focused on raising standards, particularly for the more able pupils, to enable them to reach higher levels of attainment. The quality of collective worship is outstanding. Staff are excellent role models for the pupils and offer an impressive variety of prayer and worship opportunities. Personal development and care of pupils is outstanding.

The excellent leadership of the headteacher ensures that all pupils are exceptionally well cared for, known and respected as individuals and are highly motivated to make good progress. Her drive and ambition for each person to achieve all they can is tangible. She has empowered a highly talented, confident, skilled senior leadership team who work exceptionally well and effectively together to drive the school's vision forward. Leaders ensure morale and expectations are extremely high. Professional development of all staff is given the highest priority resulting in highly confident, competent staff who are committed to the best possible outcomes for pupils. Governors have a good understanding of the strengths and areas for development. They challenge the school leadership appropriately and play an active part in supporting the leadership team in planning for improvement. The head is very well supported by the newly appointed, conscientious and knowledgeable subject leader, who has an excellent overview across the school. Excellent partnerships and relationships with all stakeholders are a key strength of the school. Promotion of community cohesion by leaders and managers is outstanding and a strength of the school.

What the school needs to do to improve further

Raise Standards in Curriculum Religious Education by

- Termly tracking of pupils and groups of pupils using average point score in order to ensure progress is increasingly accelerated.

- Further develop the role of the new Religious Education co-ordinator in respect of monitoring teaching and learning across school.

PUPILS

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

1

Pupils speak with enthusiasm about their lessons, show high levels of enjoyment in learning and have very positive attitudes. From below average starting points on entry to school, pupils make outstanding progress in Religious Education throughout foundation stage (FS) and key stage one (KS1) and this rapid progress continues in key stage two (KS2). All groups of learners, including boys and girls, Catholics and those other than Catholic, those with learning difficulties and those who are gifted and talented achieve equally well and demonstrate high quality learning according to their capabilities. Pupils are becoming increasingly religiously literate and their knowledge, skills and understanding are developing well according to their age and capacity. Standards overall are high. Trends over time and current evidence show continuous improvement. By the end of KS1, given their starting points, the vast majority of pupils achieve the standards expected of them and a small minority exceeds that. By the end of KS2 almost all pupils achieve level four (L4) and a minority have achieved level five (L5). Inspection findings indicate that pupils in the current year six (YR6) are on track to exceed the targets set, as a large majority are currently working at L4 and a small minority at L5.

Pupils make an outstanding contribution to the Catholic life of the school and benefit greatly from it. They take full advantage of the many opportunities offered to them and can articulate how the school is helping them to become better people. They have a strong sense of who they are and they use their voices wisely, confidently and sensibly. They show a developed awareness of compassion, forgiveness and justice and display mature and positive attitudes to school life. Celebrating achievement at all levels is a key feature of school life and pupils show a great capacity to contribute to and receive from these celebrations.

Pupils' response to and participation in collective worship is outstanding. They take part in, lead and prepare prayer and liturgy with ease, confidence and enthusiasm. Acts of worship enable a high level of active pupil participation in a variety of ways. They know what constitutes good worship and know a variety of ways of praying. Many are acquiring a range of skills which enable them to lead a liturgy, such as the Remembrance Service, independently. In both small and large gatherings, pupils are respectful, reverent, reflective and prayerful. The introduction of liturgical dance is positively impacting on their own and others' ability to worship. Pupils greatly appreciate the opportunity to reflect in the quiet and calm of the prayer area in school.

PROVISION

1

How effective the provision is in promoting Catholic education

Teaching in Religious Education is good resulting in high quality learning. There is a range of teaching styles, good questioning and the impressive use of activities such as role-play, drama and the use of art all contributing to make the learning exciting and engage and motivate pupils. Carefully planned lessons build on prior learning and pupils' capabilities. Teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge and support staff are effectively deployed. Assessment is an integral part of the planning process with teaching directly linked to focused assessment. This has contributed significantly to the rate of progress made in recent years.

The school's systematic monitoring and evaluation procedures in Religious Education are outstanding and a key feature of the continuing rise in standards. The rigorous, robust systems give a clear, accurate, up to date picture of how pupils are achieving and the progress they are making. Leaders and teachers use this information to very good effect to further raise standards and bring about continuous improvement. Marking is both evaluative and informative and is most effective when giving pupils feedback on their next steps in learning. Tracking systems are detailed and focused on ensuring different groups of pupils achieve equally well. This information is used very effectively by teachers in setting targets for improvement. All have a confident, well informed vision of what needs to continue to be done and an ever growing understanding of how to get to where they want the pupils to be.

The school provides an outstanding curriculum, which is rich in creativity. Exciting, relevant and appropriate resources ensure a high level of motivation and engagement of pupils. Excellent use of ICT, art and drama lead to memorable learning experiences. The school is actively and continuously planning for new ways to further enrich the curriculum resulting in a high level of enjoyment and interest for pupils. Links with other schools and organisations and involvement of the local parish also impact positively. The many opportunities the curriculum offers impacts very significantly on pupils' spiritual and moral development. The curriculum meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference very effectively.

The quality of collective worship provided by the school is outstanding. Prayer is central to the life of the school and is given the highest priority. Acts of worship are well planned, vibrant and reflective with active participation by pupils. The range, variety and quality of prayer styles offered to pupils is excellent. The school and parish together provide good liturgical formation. Teachers show a high level of skill, imagination and creativity in leading worship and are very good role models for pupils who are becoming increasingly skilled at preparing and leading worship independently. Some whole school acts of worship have had significant impact on parents, parishioners and the wider community. The spiritual needs of all pupils are very well met by the school's high quality provision.

LEADERS AND MANAGERS

1

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

Leaders and managers are outstanding at the promotion of Catholic values and principles. The Catholic mission of the school is given the highest priority and underpins all aspects of school life. Pupils' spiritual and moral development is central to the school's vision. The dedication, drive and energy of the headteacher and senior leaders are an inspiration to the whole school community. Accurate and regular self-evaluation at all levels within the school is a reflection of comprehensive, rigorous monitoring, analysis and self-challenge. High quality staff training and induction have developed awareness, understanding and commitment to the school's strong Catholic ethos. As a result pupils have a secure understanding of the school's mission and are actively involved in determining and supporting it.

The leadership and management of Religious Education is outstanding. Leaders have a clear sense of direction and purpose in curriculum Religious Education which is recognised as the core subject of the curriculum. Senior leaders and the newly appointed Religious Education co-ordinator, ably supported by her experienced and skilled headteacher and senior leaders, is continuing to uphold high standards and lead the subject well. Professional development for all staff is a high priority. Leaders and managers are aware of strengths and areas for development and the school improvement plan clearly informs the way forward. The efficient and effective co-ordinator has worked collaboratively with the headteacher to ensure that accurate and consistent monitoring, assessment and tracking systems are in place and these are having significant impact on pupils' learning, progress and standards.

The governing body knows the school well and are valued members of the school and parish community. They discharge their statutory and canonical duties well and are very supportive of the leadership team and all the staff. They are knowledgeable and well informed about the school, particularly in relation to matters relating to Religious Education and the Catholic life of the school and know what needs to be done in order for the school to develop further. They challenge the school leadership appropriately and play an active part in supporting the leadership team in planning for improvement.

Leaders and managers develop highly effective partnerships with other providers and organisations. The school is involved in a wide range of partnerships, which impact significantly on pupils' achievement and well-being and on the Catholic life of the school. Well established links with other Catholic primary schools, the diocese, the parish and other local organisations provide a wide range of opportunities for pupils to enjoy, achieve and further develop as well as promoting the personal and professional development of staff.

Leaders and managers' promotion of community cohesion is outstanding. The school is a highly inclusive community with a clear, shared vision and a strong sense of belonging. Leaders respect difference, value diversity and ensure equal opportunities for all. Many opportunities exist for pupils to engage and collaborate with each other. Pupils are offered a wide range of opportunities to collaborate and engage with those from different backgrounds locally, nationally and globally. As a result pupils recognise, respect and celebrate differences and have a strong sense of the common good. They demonstrate an excellent awareness and understanding of their global responsibilities.

SUMMARY OF INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Key for inspection grades:

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

Overall effectiveness	1
The school's capacity for sustained improvement	1
How good outcomes are for pupils, taking particular account of variations between different groups	1
• how well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education	1
❖ the quality of pupils' learning and their progress	1
❖ the quality of learning for pupils with particular learning needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
❖ pupils' standards of attainment in Religious Education	1
• the extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life of the school	1
• how well pupils respond to and participate in the school's collective worship	1
How effective the provision is in promoting Catholic education	1
• the quality of teaching and purposeful learning in Religious Education	2
• the effectiveness of assessment and academic guidance in Religious Education	1
• the extent to which Religious Education curriculum meets pupils' needs	1
• the quality of collective worship provided by the school	1
How effective leaders and managers are in developing the Catholic life of the School	1
• 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	1
• how well leaders and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education and plan for improvement to outcomes for pupils	1
• 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	1
• how effectively leaders and managers promote community cohesion.	1