

**DENOMINATIONAL INSPECTION  
REPORT (Section 48)**

on

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

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**School:** St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

**Address:** Rigby Street  
Preston  
Lancs  
PR1 5XL

**Telephone Number:** 01772 796112

**Email address:** school@st-josephs-preston.lancs.sch.uk

**School URN:** 119430

**Headteacher:** Mr Gerry O'Brien

**Chair of Governors:** Mr Mark Allen

**Section 48 Inspector:** Mrs Frances Wygladala

**Date of Inspection:** June 4<sup>th</sup> 2013

The inspection report is produced for the Rt. Reverend Michael Campbell O.S.A., the Bishop of Lancaster (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 Catholic voluntary aided primary school in the Diocese of Lancaster. The school serves the parish of Christ the King in Preston, which is a merger of St Joseph's, St Teresa's and St Augustine's parishes. It is a larger than average sized primary school. The school is situated in a residential area of deprivation. The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage and 46% of pupils are entitled to free school meals; this figure is significantly above the national average. There are currently 274 learners on role of whom approximately 48% are baptised Catholics. The school has recently experienced a period of unsettled staffing with high staff absence. The majority of pupils transfer at the end of year six to Corpus Christi, Christ the King, St Cecilia's and Our Lady's Catholic High Schools.

## FACTUAL INFORMATION

### Pupil Catchment:

Number of pupils on roll:	274
Planned Admission Number of Pupils:	45
Percentage of pupils baptised Catholics:	48%
Percentage of pupils from other Christian denominations:	16%
Percentage of pupils from other faith backgrounds:	12%
Percentage of pupils with no religious affiliation:	20%
Percentage of pupils from ethnic groups:	35%
Percentage of pupils with special needs:	20%

### Staffing

Full-time teachers:	14
Part-time teachers:	4
Number of Catholic teachers:	15
Number of teachers with CCRS:	6

### Percentage of learning time given to RE:

R	10%	Yr 4	10%
Yr 1	10%	Yr 5	10%
Yr 2	10%	Yr 6	10%
Yr 3	10%		

### Parish served by the school:

1. Christ the King, Preston (formerly the parishes of St Joseph's, St Teresa's and St Augustine's)

## Overall Effectiveness

2

## Capacity for sustained improvement

2

## MAIN FINDINGS

St Joseph's is a welcoming Catholic school, where everyone is respected and loved. Their motto is, '*You are precious in my eyes*' and this underpins the whole curriculum. It is a good self-evaluating school that has a realistic view of where it is at now and has ambitious plans for the future. There is a clear vision for this Catholic school, at the heart of the community that is shared and understood by all stakeholders.

Pupils are happy to come to school which results in them having a positive attitude to learning. Outcomes for pupils are good; most pupils make good progress from well below average starting points. Pupils benefit from the range of opportunities offered to contribute to the Catholic life of the school. The school provides a good Catholic education and the promotion of pupils' spiritual and moral development is central to the school's mission.

Teaching and learning in RE are good which enables the vast majority of pupils, who have been in the school since reception class, to make good progress. The RE curriculum provided is varied and is focused on meeting the needs of all pupils and on raising standards. An accurate baseline assessment on entry to the school allows pupils' progress to be accurately judged and celebrated; however, analysis of this data would help further target groups of learners. Staff provide good role models for pupils and offer a variety of prayer and worship opportunities.

The level of pupil participation in prayer and in the liturgical life of the school is good; pupils respond with respect and reverence in Collective Worship which has been a recent focus for improvement. In the Year of Faith there have been many opportunities for staff and governors to work together during staff training days and in joint meetings. These have been appreciated by all and enabled individuals to reflect on their own faith journeys.

Most aspects of leadership and management of the school are good and parents are supportive of the school and the new leadership team and the relationship with the parish is now very strong. Communication is effective through the weekly class newsletters, ensuring parents and parishioners are kept up to date with news and planned Masses and assemblies. Parents appreciate the recently introduced sacramental programme that works collaboratively with the parish and the schools.

## **The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

The school's capacity for sustained improvement is good. Most priorities for improvement since the last inspection have been addressed and the others are on-going.

Induction opportunities for governors have been undertaken to enable them to carry out their canonical and statutory duties and to support and challenge school improvement.

The school needs to continue to develop more consistent assessment procedures to make pupils aware of their next steps for improvement, in particular higher attaining pupils, in order to raise the standards of attainment throughout the school. Progress has been improved, from very low starting points and attainment in RE is now in line with English at the end of KS2. However, the school now needs to evidence higher levels of attainment in RE with on-going assessments.

All staff have total commitment to the ethos and mission of Catholic education. The RE curriculum provided is varied and is focused on meeting the needs of all pupils and raising standards, especially in Foundation and Key Stage 1. More focus needs to be on planning for opportunities for KS2 pupils to achieve levels in line with standards reached in other core curriculum subjects. The quality of Collective Worship is good and pupils respond with respect and reverence. An emphasis on improving parish links has brought about effective partnership work and is appreciated in both the parish and the school. The staff are good role models for pupils and offer a variety of prayer and worship opportunities.

## **What the school needs to do to improve further**

- Develop as a whole school, the new assessment and tracking system to monitor the attainment and progress for every pupil throughout the year, enabling underachievement to be addressed immediately and standards in RE to rise.
- Use of Assessment for Learning strategies needs to be further developed and next steps marking used consistently in every class to impact on learning and progress.
- Analyse baseline assessment information in Foundation Stage to provide a starting point to plan for and celebrate progression in RE and target support for groups of learners.
- Ensure that pupils are given more challenging tasks and opportunities to achieve appropriate levels throughout each topic, (formative assessments), not just making an assessment at the end of the topic or term's work, (summative assessment). This will enable pupils to achieve higher levels of attainment.
- Standards in curriculum RE are monitored by governors through work sampling and this should be formalised termly with a curriculum report from the subject leader, comparing standards in RE with English. This would keep governors up to date.

- Develop partnerships with the other two local primary schools and high school served by the parish of Christ the King, possibly to share CPD opportunities for RE and Collective Worship as they all share the same school chaplain. This will build on the collaborative work started with the sacramental programmes and joint liturgies.

## **PUPILS**

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

<b>3</b>
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The school's evaluation of provision is satisfactory and evidence found during the inspection supports this judgment.

The majority of pupils enjoy Religious Education. They speak enthusiastically about their lessons and have very positive attitudes towards their learning. Assessment data, pupil tracking systems, work scrutiny and pupil interviews are all evidence of this. Standards of attainment in RE are low from very low baselines but progress has improved since last year.

From below average starting points on entry to school, standards rise to being broadly in line with national norms at Key Stage 1. In 2012, standards in RE at Key Stage 2 were low and 15% below attainment in English; however in 2013 standards have risen to be in line with English but still, no pupils assessed at level 5 in KS2. Inspection highlighted that pupils are capable of higher levels of attainment in upper Key Stage 2 and assessment opportunities are to be an immediate priority.

The standard of work in the pupils' RE books is good, but use of Assessment for Learning strategies needs to be further developed by staff and next steps marking used consistently in every class to make a positive impact on learning and progress. More detailed planning in RE should be focussed on the Attainment Target and strand for assessment and pupils need to be given opportunities to achieve levels throughout each topic, ie formative assessments not just in an assessment piece at the end of the topic.

Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress because their needs are identified and support is adapted to meet them. Pupils are becoming increasingly religiously literate and their knowledge, skills and understanding are developing well according to their age and capability. They discuss their faith confidently and are able to think spiritually.

Prayer is central to the Catholic life of the School and pupils act with reverence and are eager to participate in all of the many different types of worship offered at school. They join in community prayers appropriately and with confidence. Every class has a Mass each term which is planned with the school chaplain; they then share the theme with the whole school during Monday morning's whole school assembly. In a whole school assembly observed during inspection, a target from the theme of the Mass was shared 'to try your best and follow Jesus' and everyone joined in the prayers and sang the hymns enthusiastically with

actions. Pupils regularly prepare and lead worship with confidence and enthusiasm in a variety of gatherings. Pupils understand the importance of key celebrations in school and in the parish community throughout the liturgical year.

All pupils act in a manner consistent with their beliefs and show respect for each other. Pupils take on responsibilities and participate constructively in the Catholic life of the school beyond routine lessons and activities. This is seen through pupils' eagerness to take part in prayer activities such as the advent cantata, the Year of Faith prayer opportunities and liturgies during Lent, also in their responses to planning and leading worship during assemblies and Masses. Pupils are considerate to others and caring to anyone in apparent need. They regularly work together to lead and run their own fundraising activities, such as 'pyjama day' for CAFOD and the 'Mission Together' money boxes for India. Foundation Stage recently organised a sponsored dance for the charity 'Ripple Africa' and the whole school took part in a 'Readathon' for CAFOD and Comic Relief charities.

## **LEADERS AND MANAGERS**

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

<b>2</b>
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The school's evaluation of leaders and managers is good and evidence found during the inspection supports this judgment.

The school's leadership is deeply committed to the Church's mission in education. There is unequivocal and explicit evidence that the Catholic mission of the school is a priority and this is reflected in the school improvement plan, self-evaluation form and many other documents. The headteacher has a clear vision for RE which is shared with all members of the school community. The senior leadership team and governors work closely with him and share his commitment to the Catholic life of the school. The mission of the school is at the heart of all school life and pupils' spiritual and moral development is central to the school's vision.

Governors provide good support regarding the Catholic life of the school. They are informed on issues relating to RE and to the Catholic life of the school, but do not yet fully understand the school's performance in RE or what needs to be done to ensure improvement in standards. Governors discharge their statutory and canonical duties well and are very supportive of the new leadership team and staff. They are actively involved in the school community and have positive relationships with pupils and staff. Standards in curriculum RE are monitored by governors through work sampling and this could be developed further by a termly curriculum report from the subject leader, comparing standards in RE with English.

There is a common sense of belonging amongst staff and pupils and all have a high regard for the Catholic life of the school. Staff are good role models for pupils and have very good relationships with pupils and parents as seen in the parent questionnaires. Parents appreciate the recently introduced sacramental programmes for reconciliation and first Holy Communion and enjoy working

collaboratively with catechists, clergy and staff. Pupils co-operate well with each other, their diverse backgrounds are recognised and valued in RE and leaders ensure that there are equal opportunities for all.

Strong links exist with the parish of Christ the King and this has been a focus since September with the Parish Priest visiting school often during the week and another parish clergy taking the role of school chaplain. An area for improvement would be to develop partnerships with the other two local primary schools served by the parish of Christ the King and the High School, to share staff training opportunities for RE and Collective Worship, as the school chaplain is shared by all four schools. This will build on the collaborative work started with the sacramental programmes and joint liturgies.

Parishioners look forward to the whole school Masses and to class Masses in church. The RE curriculum includes the study of Catholicism and the faiths of Judaism and Islam. Pupils have a sense of the wider world, of other peoples' beliefs, cultures and needs within their local community and further afield.

## **PROVISION**

### **How effective the provision is for Catholic Education**

<b>2</b>
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The school's evaluation of provision is good and evidence seen during the inspection supports this judgment. A range of teaching styles, clear explanations, well-paced lessons together with good use of ICT ensure that most pupils are consistently interested in their learning and make progress that is broadly in line with their capabilities.

Teachers have strong subject knowledge, which inspires and promotes confident learners. Staff make learning interesting and this impacts positively on pupil enjoyment, engagement and motivation; for example some pupils enjoy drama, so often role play is included in their RE lessons. The Foundation Stage role play area was set up as a church with the many features clearly labeled. The pupils would often go in the space, bless themselves with holy water from the font and give out hymn books and sing. During the inspection the Foundation Stage pupils were acting out the baptism of babies using dolls. Displays of pupils' work around school are of a high quality and new resources are appreciated e.g. the new crucifixes, given out to every class in assembly to help pupils 'try your best and follow Jesus'. The prayer tables in every class are a focus for worship, changing during the liturgical year, and the new focus in the entrance and parish display, all support the renewed priority on improving catholicity and mission.

Support staff are effectively deployed to meet the needs of the pupils by their subject knowledge and awareness of individual pupils' needs. The school has an accurate picture of pupils' achievement but pupils need to be provided with detailed feedback, both orally and through effective marking, to inform them of the next steps to take in their learning if they are to make the progress they are capable of at KS2.

Baseline assessments should be analysed in Foundation Stage in order to plan for progression in RE. The school should continue to develop the new assessment and tracking systems to monitor the attainment and progress of every pupil throughout the year enabling underachievement to be addressed immediately and standards to rise.

The RE curriculum is creatively adapted to meet the needs of most pupils. It is enriched through a variety of imaginative and well-planned strategies and relevant resources, which engage and motivate the pupils. The RE curriculum provides good opportunities for and impacts positively on pupils' spiritual and moral development. The curriculum meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference fully.

The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school is good; prayer is central to the life of the school and is a key part of every celebration. It is fully inclusive, reflective and well planned enabling pupils to take an active part. There is a range of formal and informal opportunities for daily prayer and pupils eagerly and confidently share prayers in class and school liturgies and school Masses, this was evident during the inspection. Attendance by parents, other family members and parishioners is facilitated and encouraged in services in church and in the school hall. Parish clergy play an important part in sharing prayers, bible stories and experiences with weekly visits to school. Pupils, parents, staff and governors relate well to the parish clergy who both work hard to strengthen the home, school and parish partnership. They both regularly visit the school and invite classes over to church to ask questions to develop their understanding of worship and the history of the church. The school chaplain works with every class each term to plan a class Mass and then share the theme with prayers and music with the whole school during assembly the following Monday. The distribution of the 'Wednesday Word' in some year groups helps with this home, school and parish partnership.



# SUMMARY OF INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

**Key for inspection grades:**

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

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The school's capacity for sustained improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>PUPILS How good outcomes are for pupils, taking particular account of variations between different groups</b>	<b>3</b>
• how well do pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education?	2
❖ the quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
❖ the quality of learning for pupils with particular learning needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
❖ pupils' attainment in RE	3
• to what extent do pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life of the school?	2
• how well do pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship?	2
<b>LEADERS AND MANAGERS How effective are leaders and managers in developing the Catholic life of the School?</b>	<b>2</b>
• 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 RE 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?	3
• how effectively leaders and managers promote Community Cohesion?	2
<b>PROVISION How effective is the provision for Catholic Education?</b>	<b>2</b>
• the quality of teaching and purposeful learning in?	2
• the effectiveness of assessment and academic guidance in Religious Education?	3
• the extent to which Religious Education curriculum meets pupils' needs?	3
• the quality of Collective Worship provided by the school?	2