



St Joseph's RC Primary School

Low Grange Avenue, Billingham, Stockton, TS23 3NN

School Unique Reference Number: **111678**

Inspection dates: 24 – 25 March 2014
Lead inspector: Carolyn Duffy

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Inadequate	4
Catholic Life:		Good	2
Collective Worship:		Good	2
Religious Education:		Inadequate	4

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR PARENTS AND PUPILS

St Joseph's RC Primary School is an inadequate Catholic school because:

- The quality of Religious Education is inadequate. The targets from the last inspection have not been fully addressed, and leaders and managers do not adequately monitor provision and outcomes in Religious Education.
- There are a lack of systematic, focussed strategies to assess, moderate, record, track and monitor pupil progress.
- The headteacher and other leaders do not have robust strategies in place to monitor and evaluate the work of the school.

Although it is inadequate overall it has the following strengths:

- St Joseph's is a warm, welcoming, inclusive school where pupils are valued. The vision to develop an awareness of God's love for each person in the school community, through the way in which everyone is cared for and valued, is a high priority for the headteacher and staff.
- The Catholic Life of the school is good. The pupils have a strong sense of belonging to the school community and of the impact the school ethos has on their attitudes and behaviour. They can describe how the ethos of the school affects their behaviour towards those within the school community and beyond.
- The quality of Collective Worship is good. Collective Worship makes a strong contribution to the pupils' spiritual and moral development that is demonstrated in their daily interactions.

FULL REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

- St Joseph's is an average sized primary school serving the Billingham Parish of St Thomas of Canterbury.
- There are approximately 31% baptised Catholic pupils in the school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the Pupil Premium is above average.
- Almost all pupils come from a white British background.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported at school action is below average. An above average proportion of pupils is supported at school action plus or have a statement of special educational need.

WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL NEED TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- Improve school self-evaluation by:
 - Leaders giving priority to developing systematic monitoring and evaluation systems, involving key stakeholders, to ensure that the school has a robust knowledge of its strengths and areas for development in Catholic Life, Collective Worship and Religious Education and is able to plan for effective improvement.
- Improve rates of progress in Religious Education by:
 - Ensuring that all teachers have a secure knowledge of attainment in each level in Religious Education.
 - Improving the marking of pupils' work so that they receive clear guidance on how to improve their learning in Religious Education and are given time to act upon such guidance.
 - Ensuring there are regular and frequent opportunities for assessed work to be moderated to ensure accuracy in assessment and thereby improve teacher's skill in planning for differentiation to meet the needs of all pupils.
 - Ensure pupils' progress is tracked frequently and regularly so that progress can be effectively measured.
- Building upon the existing Collective Worship practice by:
 - supporting pupils to take on an increasing responsibility to plan, prepare and lead Collective Worship in school.

CATHOLIC LIFE

THE QUALITY OF THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

2

- The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school.
- The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school.
- How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school.

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The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school is good.

- Pupils articulate a strong sense of belonging to the school community and talk animatedly about the care and consideration shown to them by the staff and priest. They are able to describe how they show this care and consideration equally well to their friends and classmates.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school. They say they are proud of the school and like the opportunities they get at school.
- The year six pupils take on responsibility for supporting younger pupils and are always available to help. An example of this is during break times when older pupils act as carers for younger pupils who feel vulnerable or lonely. The younger pupils can easily distinguish the year six pupils because they wear a different uniform and are easily found at break or lunch times. All pupils talk positively about this provision.
- The behaviour of pupils around school and in lessons is very good. There were no instances of poor behaviour observed in lessons. On the odd occasion when pupils have been upset by the poor behaviour of another child, they are well supported by adults who act quickly to resolve the situation. For example in a year four class, a child was supported by adults after being upset over the lunchtime break.
- Pupils' response to charitable campaigns such as CAFOD, Christmas Shoeboxes and SVP appeals is very good and the pupils raise significant sums each year.

The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school is good.

- The school's mission statement to 'develop an awareness of God's love for each person' is central to the way in which the school operates and is evident in the way in which the headteacher sets out her vision, and in how staff, governors, parents and pupils are committed to the school and show respect for each other.
- St Joseph's is a school that is committed to Catholic tradition and ethos. Displays and sacred spaces around the school support this.
- The school is very caring and provides high levels of pastoral care to pupils and their families. The school is very supportive of those most vulnerable in the school community. For example, the school has employed a counselling service to be available to the most needy pupils and families. The school commits a significant amount of funding to this each year.
- Behaviour expectations are high and staff model Gospel values and the teachings of the church in their response to pupils. Pupils describe and value the input from staff to 'sort things out really quickly' enabling pupils to make friends and have a 'fresh start'.

How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school requires improvement.

- Although the headteacher, staff and governors talk positively and say they are strongly committed to the mission of the church, a lack of evidence of their monitoring and evaluation indicates that they do not give sufficiently high priority to promoting, monitoring and evaluating the Catholic Life of the school.
- School staff speak positively of the work of the school but are unclear about what constitutes Catholic Life. They could not talk about the school's Mission statement and have had no input into its development.
- The headteacher and governors do not involve key partners such as parents, staff or pupils in providing feedback about the work of the school or provide regular, up-to-date in-service training to staff or governors to develop understanding about the Church's mission in education.
- The headteacher acknowledges responsibility to develop and sustain the school's Catholic ethos but strategic plans for improvement are at a very early stage. For example, the leadership team do not discuss aspects of the Catholic Life of the school in their meetings.
- The headteacher talked about plans to revise school policies such as Behaviour Management and Anti- Bullying in line with the school's Mission statement. The most recent review of these policies was in 2009.
- There is no reference to the inclusion of 'contribution to' or 'development of' Catholic Life in performance management targets for staff.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

THE QUALITY OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

2

- How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship.
- The quality of provision for Collective Worship.
- How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship.

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How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship is good.

- Pupils enjoy Collective Worship. They participate, pray reverently, sing enthusiastically and reflect in silence appropriately. This practice begins with pupils in early years foundation stage who have 'Candle Time', the beginnings of pupil involvement in Collective Worship. Staff are very supportive of involving pupils in reading prayers or parts of the Gospel in key stage or class liturgies.
- A wide variety of approaches to prayer are used and pupils develop their understanding of prayer as they move through the school. For example, younger pupils use physical actions in their prayer in relation to some of the words. As pupils become older and more mature, they use an increasing range of both formal and informal prayer styles.
- All pupils are given opportunities to pray regularly and frequently and contribute to creating an atmosphere for prayer by choosing objects as part of a focal prayer area.
- Pupils have a good understanding of religious seasons and feasts and are able to say what difference being part of a prayerful community has made to them. For example, pupils described how they regularly create prayers to ask for help for others both from their own families and the wider community. They were able to talk about how this has made them reflect on how fortunate they are in their lives.

The quality of provision for Collective Worship is good.

- Staff and pupils pray regularly together and staff are positive role models. The introduction of the 'Wednesday Word' is recent and pupils enjoy using this as a basis for Collective Worship in their classes.
- As a result of regular prayer, there is a sense of community about which pupils, parents, staff and governors speak positively.
- Prayer is a central part of each school celebration and pupils and parents are very positive about prayer and worship being included in school celebratory events.
- Collective Worship is centred on clear themes and messages and there are explicit comparisons drawn to pupils' daily experiences and lives. For example in a key stage two liturgy the teacher described events when he was a boy, linked this to the Annunciation and then directed the pupils towards how they could trust in God no matter what challenges were presented to them.
- Attendance at Collective Worship by other adults is not fully developed although parents do join in at key times in the year such as Advent, Lent, and Easter.

How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship requires improvement.

- Leaders demonstrate a range of skills when they plan and lead Collective Worship and have an understanding of the Church's liturgical year. They use music, artefacts and images to enable pupils to focus.
- Leaders do not demonstrate that they have an accurate grasp of how to ensure that Collective Worship experiences are always of a high quality. For example, leaders do not see the value in observing the range of worship or in discussing worship across the school.
- Liturgical and spiritual development of staff is not given a high priority in school but staff are very willing and support and help each other to plan and lead Collective Worship. As a result of the lack of regular and frequent training for staff to improve their own understanding and ability to plan and lead Collective Worship the range of opportunities for pupils are narrow.
- Evaluation of Collective Worship is not given sufficiently high priority within the school's monitoring and evaluation processes and there is no evidence collated within the school as a record of the range of opportunities offered to pupils.
- The headteacher and governors do not regularly or systematically seek the views of key partners such as parents or pupils in providing feedback about the quality or significance of Collective Worship.
- The inclusion of 'contribution to' or 'development of' Collective Worship does not form part of performance management targets for staff.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

THE QUALITY OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

3

- How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education.
- The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education.
- How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education.

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How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education requires improvement.

- Almost all pupils enjoy Religious Education demonstrating interest and enthusiasm in their learning. Behaviour in lessons is good with the majority of pupils applying themselves well and displaying positive attitudes.
- From below average starting points in early years foundation stage, pupils make some progress through key stage one and key stage two across a range of skills which is evidenced in books. There is evidence of some development in knowledge and understanding and that the pupils can use prior knowledge in their new learning. Progress is however, inconsistent across age groups and classes and therefore the pace of learning requires improvement.
- Over time, the majority of pupils are developing skills appropriate to their age and ability, although the pace of this requires improvement.
- Due to the state of transition in level expectations across all diocesan schools, the current averages for attainment and progress are not reliable benchmarks. Therefore no judgement will be made in this report against diocesan averages for either attainment or progress.

The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education requires improvement.

- The teaching of Religious Education is restricted to a specific group of staff. The teaching is varied and where it is weakest a limited range of teaching strategies and resources leads to minimal learning. Where teaching is better, particularly in Years 5 and 6, more appropriate and varied strategies ensures pupils' learning is more effective.
- The quality of teaching is not inadequate but mostly not good. Where teaching is good, for example in a year six lesson, pupils were engaged in researching the feelings and motivations of characters in the Easter story. They were able to apply their knowledge and understanding through discussions and questioning and then reflected on this through hot seating and role play. Where teaching was weakest, pupils' progress in lessons was slower and assessment less frequent. Teachers individually assess pupils' work arriving at a broad understanding of the capability of the class. Planned work is differentiated mainly by outcome rather than individually targeted learning activities.
- Monitoring of pupils' work and progress in lessons was variable. The best examples were in upper key stage two where, for example, in a year five lesson; the teacher stopped the lesson to check on understanding and immediately addressed misconceptions.
- Teachers' assessments of pupils' work are not moderated and therefore assessment across the school is insufficiently accurate. Although pupils' work is marked regularly, marking is not focused upon the needs of the child, for example, all pupils received the same feedback. Written comments, advice and opportunities for pupils to improve their work were rare.

How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education is inadequate.

- The headteacher ensures that pupils receive sacramental preparation in accordance with diocesan policy.
- Teaching staff are very supportive of each other and offer help and advice to colleagues whenever they are asked.
- Evaluation and monitoring of Religious Education is not given sufficiently high priority within the school's monitoring and evaluation processes. The headteacher visits classrooms but there is no evidence of leaders discussing practice, analysing progress, scrutinising work or monitoring teaching.
- The information which leaders have about the quality of Religious Education is not well understood or acted upon. The School Improvement Plan is not based upon evidence of monitoring or evaluation. Targets and actions highlighted within the School Improvement Plan have not had any impact on outcomes.
- Leaders say they are committed to the importance of high quality Religious Education but in comparison to other core subject areas there is disparity in provision.
- Progress of different groups of learners cannot be established as this is not tracked across the school. Evidence of tracking progress was available only for year four and year five pupils
- The headteacher does not include 'contribution to' or 'improvement in quality of' the teaching of Religious Education in performance management targets for staff.
- The headteacher and governors do not regularly or systematically seek the views of key partners such as teachers or parents through any means in providing feedback about the quality of teaching and learning in Religious Education.

SUMMARY OF INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

HOW EFFECTIVE THE SCHOOL IS IN PROVIDING CATHOLIC EDUCATION:

4

CATHOLIC LIFE:

2

The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school.

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The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school.

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How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school.

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COLLECTIVE WORSHIP:

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How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship.

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The quality of provision for Collective Worship.

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How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship.

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RELIGIOUS EDUCATION:

4

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education.

3

The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education.

4

How well leaders and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education

4

SCHOOL DETAILS

School name	St Joseph's RC Primary School
Unique reference number	111678
Local authority	Stockton
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 schedule follows criteria set by the National Board of Advisers and Inspectors.	
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