



**DENOMINATIONAL INSPECTION  
REPORT (Section 48)**

on

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

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

**Address:** Low Grange Avenue  
Billingham  
Stockton on Tees

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**School URN:** 111678

**Headteacher:** Mrs Jane Casey

**Chair of Governors:** Mr Michael Doherty

**Inspector:** Sr. Sheila McNamara rscj

**Date of Inspection:** 31 March and 1 April 2009

This Inspection Report is produced for the Reverend Seamus 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.

## **Characteristics of the school and views of the stakeholders.**

St Joseph's is an average sized primary school made up of mainly White British pupils. The majority of pupils are baptised Catholics and the school mainly serves the parish of St Joseph's, Billingham with some pupils coming from neighbouring parishes in the town. The school is situated in a locality with areas of some social disadvantage. The majority of parents are happy with the education their children receive and hold the school in high regard.

## **FACTUAL INFORMATION**

### **Pupil Catchment:**

Number of pupils on roll: 223

Percentage of pupils baptised RC: 66%

Percentage of pupils from other Christian denominations: 23%

Percentage of pupils from other World Faiths: 0%

Percentage of pupils with no religious affiliation: 11%

Percentage of pupils from ethnic groups: 3.6%

Percentage of pupils with special needs: 1%

### **Staffing:**

Number of full time teachers: 10

Number of part time teachers: 1

Percentage of Catholic teachers: 42%

Percentage of teachers with CCRS: 13%

### **Percentage of learning time given to RE:**

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, Billingham

Holy Rosary, Billingham

**Key for inspection grades:**Grade 1 **Outstanding** Grade 2 **Good** Grade 3 **Satisfactory** Grade 4 **Unsatisfactory****Overall Effectiveness****Grade: 3**

St Joseph's is providing a satisfactory Catholic education overall. A good feature is that the personal well-being and development of pupils is given high priority. A key strength of the school is a strong sense of belonging. The committed headteacher leads the Catholic life of the school well and has built a team spirit which permeates the school community. The quality of worship provided is satisfactory overall as pupils and staff have insufficient involvement in preparing and leading prayer and worship. The promotion of community cohesion is satisfactory as pupils have limited opportunities to engage with and experience those from other backgrounds and cultures. In Religious Education, standards are satisfactory overall but there is under-achievement in Key Stage 2 and not sufficient progress is made. A lack of assessment, monitoring, recording and moderating systems is hindering the tracking of pupils' achievement and progress. Some good teaching is evident but it is not yet raising standards to what is expected. The Religious Education curriculum offers some imaginative adaptations but it is not sufficiently challenging for Key Stage 2 pupils to meet the required standards. Teachers are being guided in subject knowledge but not in skills so the subject is satisfactorily led.

**Improvements since last inspection**

Some of the issues from the last inspection have been satisfactorily addressed i.e. the profile of the school's Catholic identity has been raised, the allocation of curriculum time to Religious Education has been adjusted and teachers' subject knowledge is being improved. However, no progress has been made in implementing assessment and monitoring procedures. Unsatisfactory progress has been made in improving teachers' skills in Religious Education, particularly skills in assessing pupils' achievement and progress, levelling and moderating pupils' work. Planning still does not sufficiently provide a level of challenge for Key Stage 2 pupils.

**School's capacity to improve further****Grade: 3**

The school's capacity to improve is satisfactory.

**In order to raise standards further the governors should seek to:**

- ensure effective assessment and recording systems are set up to monitor teaching and learning;
- ensure pupils are offered appropriate and sufficiently challenging activities to achieve the standards expected of them in Key Stage 2;
- ensure teachers become more familiar with and skilled in using the levels of attainment in order to raise their expectations;

- ensure teachers and pupils become more skilled in preparing and leading worship.

## **The Catholic Life of the School**

### **Leadership and Management**

**Grade: 2**

The leadership and management of the Catholic life of the school are good. Catholic principles drive the headteacher's vision which is shared and supported by senior leaders and the whole school community. The worth and uniqueness of each child and their family are at the heart of all that the school models. Because of the strong commitment of the headteacher modelling Catholic values, all staff are very clear about what is expected of them in promoting a Catholic ethos. They work together well as a team and are good role models for the pupils. Good opportunities throughout the daily life of the school ensure pupils' spiritual and moral development is promoted well. The school is engaged in on-going reflection and evaluation about its Catholic mission, both formally and informally. This has enabled leaders and staff to make effective improvements and decisions with regard to the Catholic Life of the school. The governors are supportive and committed to being involved in developing the ethos and mission of the school. The headteacher positively and effectively enables the pastoral, liturgical and spiritual role of the priest chaplain. Strong partnerships exist with the parish and the school is seen as sitting at the heart of the parish.

### **Collective Worship**

**Grade: 3**

The quality of and provision for Collective Worship are satisfactory. A routine rhythm of prayer is established in the school in which the pupils engage and participate willingly. Both class and whole school worship offer opportunities for pupils to say formal and community prayers confidently and reverently and they respond well to writing and reading their own prayers. They respond reflectively to Scripture stories used in worship. Pupils report feeling happy, relaxed and refreshed after some of the worship opportunities offered to them. However, the variety and range of prayer opportunities are limited and most are adult led. Most staff and pupils have too little involvement in preparing and leading worship. Regular participation in parish worship has strengthened pupils' appreciation of being part of a Eucharistic worshipping community. The opportunities offered make a satisfactory contribution to pupils' spiritual and moral development.

### **School's contribution to the promotion of Community Cohesion**

**Grade: 3**

The school's promotion of community cohesion is satisfactory overall. The school is an inclusive, welcoming community with shared vision and values and a strong sense of belonging. In daily school life pupils are given sufficient opportunities to work, mix and play together. Co-operative links exist with other local Catholic and community schools enabling pupils to experience a wider sense of community. In

a mainly monocultural, white area, few opportunities are given to raise pupils' awareness of cultural and religious diversity. The school has a growing understanding of the common good and helps from those in need. Pupils understand the impact of their contributions. The school acknowledges the need to develop and enrich pupils' global awareness. The Religious Education curriculum makes a satisfactory contribution to community cohesion as does Collective Worship.

## **Curriculum Religious Education**

### **Achievements and standards in Religious Education**

**Grade: 3**

Achievements and standards are satisfactory overall. From below average starting points on entry to Foundation Stage, pupils progress well throughout Key Stage 1. Most pupils are working at Level 2 towards the end of the Key Stage and achievement is generally good. Pupils achieve equally in both attainment targets.

In Key Stage 2 the standards that pupils achieve are not high enough in either attainment target. The capability shown by pupils' towards the end of Key Stage 1 is not built on sufficiently. Most pupils are not achieving the potential they show in other areas of the curriculum. Their rate of progress slows down considerably and is unsatisfactory. Insufficient data narrows the evidence base on which to measure trends over time but there are no indicators in the work in pupils' books at present to show that any pupils will achieve expected standards by the end of the key stage. Pupils with learning and/or disabilities make satisfactory achievement.

### **Quality of Provision for Religious Education, Teaching and Learning**

**Grade: 3**

The effectiveness of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Lessons are generally lively and interesting and teachers use a good range of imaginative strategies to engage pupils. However, in Key Stage 2, activities are not always delivering learning at the appropriate level for most pupils and there is significant lack of challenge. Teaching is focused on personal development but not always on raising standards. Teachers' expectations are not high enough as they are not sufficiently familiar with what is expected of them or the standards required of the pupils. As no assessment, monitoring or moderation procedures are in place, teachers have too little knowledge of pupils' progress and achievement to enable them to move on. Satisfactory provision is made for those with additional learning needs. The informing and involvement of parents in their children's learning are satisfactory.

### **Effectiveness of Meeting Learners' needs and interests**

**Grade: 3**

The Religious Education curriculum provided is satisfactory in meeting pupils' needs and interests. Drama, ICT, and role play are used well to engage pupils. A range of good resources is being used imaginatively to make good, appropriate adaptations to the curriculum to match pupils' interests. However, activities, especially at Key Stage 2 are not always matched to pupils' ability. So, although pupils are highly involved, responsive and interested, the curriculum does not enable them to reach their potential. The curriculum meets the requirements of Bishops' Conference. Pupils enjoy their work in Religious Education and have positive attitudes. They are engaged well, collaborate well, and report that lessons are fun and interesting. The curriculum offered makes a positive contribution to pupils' spiritual and moral development.

### **Leadership and Management of Religious Education**

**Grade: 3**

The leadership and management of Religious Education are satisfactory. The subject leader ensures staff have ready access to guidance and support. Development has been focused on improving teachers' subject knowledge. The impact of this is an increase in teacher confidence. This is beginning to impact on learning. Insufficient plans are in place for other areas of development. Teachers' skills in assessment, levelling, moderation and planning are still in need of development. Suitable resources have been purchased and are in use but, as yet, are not impacting on standards. Governors are supportive but not challenging enough.

### SUMMARY INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<b>Key to judgements: Grade 1 - Outstanding Grade 2 - Good Grade 3 – Satisfactory Grade 4 – Unsatisfactory</b>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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#### **The Catholic Life of the School**

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in developing the Catholic life of the school</b>	<b>2</b>	
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality care and education;	<b>2</b>	
The quality of the leadership of the headteacher and senior staff in leading and developing the Catholic life of the school;	<b>2</b>	
How effectively leadership at all levels in the school promotes learners' spiritual and moral development;	<b>2</b>	
How effectively the Catholic life of the school is monitored and evaluated;	<b>2</b>	
How well the governing body fulfils its role in relation to the school's Catholic foundation;	<b>2</b>	
How effectively leaders promote and facilitate the work of chaplaincy;	<b>2</b>	
How effectively leadership at all levels and the school promote partnership with parish community and wider community.	<b>2</b>	
<b>The quality of Collective Worship</b>	<b>3</b>	
The frequency and quality of the provision for prayer, Collective Worship and the liturgical life of the school;	<b>3</b>	
Learners' response to the school's provision;	<b>3</b>	
How well Collective Worship contributes to the spiritual and moral development of the learners.	<b>3</b>	
<b>How effectively the school/college promotes Community Cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>	
The school as a community with common, inclusive values, where differences and similarities are recognised and valued;	<b>2</b>	
The quality of provision for engagement, dialogue and collaboration with groups and individuals <b>within/beyond</b> the school;	<b>3</b>	
The school's commitment to serving the common good;	<b>3</b>	
The contribution of curriculum Religious Education to promoting Community Cohesion;	<b>3</b>	
The contribution of the school's Collective Worship in promoting Community Cohesion.	<b>3</b>	

#### **Curriculum Religious Education**

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	<b>3</b>	
The standard of learners' work;	<b>3</b>	
Learners' success in achieving challenging targets, with trends over time and any significant variations between groups of learners;	<b>3</b>	
Learners' progress relative to their prior attainment and potential, with any significant variations between groups of learners.	<b>4</b>	
<b>The effectiveness of teaching and learning</b>	<b>3</b>	
How well teaching is used to meet learners' needs and curriculum requirements;	<b>3</b>	

The suitability and rigour of assessment in planning, monitoring and informing;	<b>4</b>	
The identification of, and provision for, additional learning needs;	<b>3</b>	
The involvement of parents/carers in their children's learning and development.	<b>3</b>	
<b>The effectiveness of the Religious Education curriculum in meeting the needs and interests of learners</b>	<b>3</b>	
How well the curriculum matches learners' aspirations and potential, building on prior attainment and experience;	<b>3</b>	
How the Religious Education curriculum meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference;	<b>3</b>	
How learners enjoy their work;	<b>2</b>	
How the curriculum in Religious Education contributes to the spiritual and moral development of the learners.	<b>3</b>	
<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners in Religious Education</b>	<b>3</b>	
How well senior and subject leaders in Religious Education lead and support their staff;	<b>3</b>	
How performance in Religious Education is monitored and improved through quality assurance and self-assessment;	<b>4</b>	
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are well taught;	<b>3</b>	
The adequacy and suitability of the learning resources and accommodation, and how effectively and efficiently these are deployed to achieve high standards;	<b>3</b>	
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve their full potential;	<b>3</b>	
How well governors discharge their responsibilities.	<b>3</b>	

### **Overall Effectiveness**

<b>The overall effectiveness of the provision of Catholic education in meeting the needs of learners</b>	<b>3</b>	
The overall effectiveness of the provision for the Catholic life of the school;	<b>3</b>	
The overall effectiveness of the provision for curriculum Religious Education;	<b>3</b>	
The effectiveness of any steps taken to ensure improvement since the last inspection;	<b>3</b>	
The capacity to make further improvements;	<b>3</b>	
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation.	<b>3</b>	

## Denominational Inspection Report (Section 48)

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Copies of the full report are available from the school.

### Summary of Findings

The Overall Effectiveness of the provision of Catholic Education is satisfactory
Leadership and management of the Catholic Life of the school are good
The provision for Collective Worship is satisfactory
The school's contribution towards Community Cohesion is satisfactory
Achievements and standards in Religious Education are satisfactory
Teaching and Learning in Religious Education are satisfactory
The Religious Education curriculum in meeting learners' needs and interests is satisfactory
Leadership and management of Religious Education are satisfactory

The school's capacity to improve further is satisfactory

#### **In order to raise standards further the governors should seek to:**

- ensure effective assessment and recording systems are set up to monitor teaching and learning;
- ensure pupils are offered appropriate and sufficiently challenging activities to achieve the standards expected of them in Key Stage 2;
- ensure teachers become more familiar with and skilled in using the levels of attainment in order to raise their expectations;
- ensure teachers and pupils become more skilled in preparing and leading worship.