



St Joseph's RC Primary School

Garburn Place, Newton Aycliffe, County Durham , DL5 7DE

School Unique Reference Number: **143515**

Inspection dates: 04 – 05 July 2018
Lead inspector: Mary Frain

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Catholic Life:		Good	2
Collective Worship:		Good	2
Religious Education:		Good	2

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR PARENTS AND PUPILS

St Joseph's RC Primary School is a good Catholic school because:

- The Catholic Life of the school is good. The mission statement is known and lived by the whole community.
- The quality of Religious Education is good. The deputy headteacher, who is also the Religious Education coordinator, is skilfully leading the subject by using robust procedures and effective staff training to ensure good teaching and good outcomes. Previous gaps in learning for key stage two pupils are diminishing rapidly.
- The quality of Collective Worship is good and is given a high priority in the life of the school. The school's chapel is a beautiful and cherished resource, and it is being utilised extremely well by the recently appointed headteacher.

It is not yet outstanding because:

- The school needs to build on recent successful events and initiatives involving parents and carers in the Catholic Life of the school, nurturing the sense of community,
- In Religious Education, more able pupils need to be challenged to achieve higher outcomes.
- Pupils need to continue to develop their confidence in using a wider range of prayer approaches and music in Collective Worship.

FULL REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

- St Joseph's is a small primary school with a nursery. It is one of two Catholic primary schools in Newton Aycliffe which is part of the Holy Family parish.
- St Joseph's serves a community with a mix of socio-economic circumstances. Almost a third of the pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average.
- The school has recently become an academy as part of the Romero Education Trust.

WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL NEED TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- To improve the Catholic Life of the school by:
 - continuing to engage with a wider group of parents and carers with opportunities for prayer and reflection.
- To improve the quality of Collective Worship by:
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to improve their skills of planning, preparing and leading Collective Worship.
- To improve the quality of Religious Education by:
 - supporting new staff in their confidence and specialist knowledge.

CATHOLIC LIFE

THE QUALITY OF 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.
- 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.

- The mission statement of the school including the key line, 'I am unique and created in God's image', is displayed throughout the school. The pupils make reference to it regularly in lessons and in describing their school, and it is clearly deeply embedded and lived out every day.
- Behaviour is good and improving. Pupils, parents and staff really welcome the stability that the recently appointed headteacher is bringing.
- The school leadership team are working hard to develop parental engagement through a variety of events including a family Mass and a Songs of Praise event which was well supported by parents and family members. This remains an area for improvement.
- The Mini Vinnies group are active and work closely with the parish St Vincent de Paul group, coordinating fundraising events and using the Street Rosary initiative during May as an opportunity for voluntary prayer.
- Parents and pupils speak highly of the Mass experience both in school at fortnightly Masses and at Sunday celebrations.

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

- The learning environment of St Joseph's reflects the school's mission as soon as you enter. All classrooms have reflection tables and high quality religious artefacts which are used daily by the pupils.
- At the heart of the school is a beautiful chapel which is part of the hall. This is a superb resource and the current leadership team are making excellent use of it with fortnightly Masses open to staff, parishioners, and parents for Collective Worship and staff prayer. Staff and pupils are encouraged to use the chapel for quiet moments of reflection during the day.
- Staff morale is high with staff working very effectively together as a team. The headteacher is highly visible to all in the school community to nurture relationships and to emphasise that pastoral care is central to her vision.

- There are clear pastoral programmes in place, particularly the use of Statements to Live By and the Rights Respecting school initiative. Relationships and sex education is planned for and delivered effectively.
- The school staff provide an admirable amount of pastoral support to pupils and parents with limited resources. All staff, including the office manager, give of their time and talents very generously. This is an area where capacity may be developed through being part of the Romero Education Trust.

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

- The headteacher and deputy headteacher give a very high priority to the Catholic Life of the school and are excellent role models. The provision for Catholic Life is part of the school's self-evaluation cycle and leaders conduct a range of monitoring activities relating to provision and outcomes for the Catholic Life of the school.
- The school works well with most parents and carers and plans to further develop engagement in prayer, for example by extending the pray and stay sessions that have taken place in the early years unit.
- Governors discharge their statutory and canonical duties well. They have been determined and influential in recent years in ensuring that the Catholic Life of the school remains a key priority.

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 act with reverence and show that they are keen to participate in whole school and class Collective Worship.
- Pupils are developing independent skills in leading worship and enjoy the opportunities that they are given to do this. There is some evidence of progression of pupil involvement at age appropriate levels but there needs to be more variety in their delivery. Pupils do not routinely monitor or evaluate their efforts.
- Pupils are engaged by the worship opportunities planned by their peers. In the year five and year six class, most pupils were visibly uplifted by the class worship.
- Pupils have a good understanding of religious seasons and festivals and participate actively in the school's sacramental preparation programme following diocesan guidelines.
- All pupils have a good knowledge of a variety of prayer styles. Pupils talked enthusiastically about the Street Rosary initiative, and there are plans next year for the school to further develop opportunities for voluntary prayer.

The quality of provision for Collective Worship is good.

- Acts of Collective Worship are central to the life of the school and make a good contribution to the moral and spiritual needs of the pupils.
- Praying together is part of the daily experience for all pupils and staff. Staff regularly pray together in the beautiful chapel and find these experiences helpful to their work.
- Acts of Collective Worship are well resourced and well planned. Pupils and staff recognise the importance placed upon them and many are inspired and engaged during the experiences.
- Most pupils are very keen to take part in or plan Collective Worship. It is centred on clear themes and messages consistent with the liturgical season.
- Class teachers are skilled in helping pupils to plan and deliver quality worship. New staff are ably supported by the Religious Education coordinator or headteacher.
- Parents and parishioners are invited to fortnightly Masses held in the chapel, and at key times of the year such as St Joseph's feast day.
- Collective Worship is reflective and fully inclusive enabling all pupils to take part.

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

- The headteacher and the deputy headteacher plan and deliver quality experiences of Collective Worship. They have a thorough understanding of the Church's liturgical year, its seasons, rites and symbols. They are able to lead the school into an appreciation of these traditions in a way that engages pupils. As a result, pupil response is good, and improving.
- Liturgical and spiritual development is seen as a priority in the professional development of school leaders and quality time is devoted to it. Very good use is made of the professional development opportunities offered by the Diocese.
- Leaders offer staff regular opportunities to receive formation in the development of their spiritual and liturgical understanding. Staff response to these opportunities is good.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher regularly review Collective Worship as part of their self-evaluation processes and are keen to continue to improve the quality of the provision for Collective Worship. They seek the views of pupils, staff, parents and carers regarding the quality and significance of Collective Worship in school and respond to these findings appropriately.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

THE QUALITY OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

2

- 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 is good.

- Pupils enjoy their Religious Education lessons and are keen to do well. Most pupils concentrate very well and are very keen to contribute answers. Behaviour for learning is good.
- Most pupils are making progress in Religious Education within lessons and over time. Pupils in year five and year six have made outstanding progress from their year two results. Pupils have an understanding of how well they have done, what they need to do to improve and are able to give some examples of how they have made progress within lessons and over time. Most groups of pupils, including pupils with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities are also making progress comparable to the progress of other pupils.
- In 2017 outcomes in year six were well below diocesan averages, this was due to staffing issues. However, results for 2018 are now in line with diocesan averages. Outstanding progress has been made overall and gaps across the school are closing rapidly as pupils are acquiring knowledge quickly and become more secure in their understanding.

The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education is good.

- Teaching is good, with some examples of outstanding teaching. Pupils are given a very good start in nursery and reception. Now that staffing is stable, pupils are making rapid progress in years five and six.
- Teachers have a clear understanding of the value of Religious Education which they communicate effectively to pupils. They use a range of appropriate resources and teaching strategies to promote good learning.
- Differentiation is used effectively throughout the school to ensure that the particular needs of almost every pupil are consistently and effectively addressed.
- In some lessons, the level of challenge does not deepen or extend learning because the tasks are not sufficiently differentiated to meet the needs of the more able pupils.
- Effective and accurate assessment procedures are embedded into Religious Education. Progress is tracked termly and pupil progress meetings are held with the Religious Education coordinator to discuss any concerns where pupils are not on track to meet their targets. Data is analysed for all groups of pupils. As a result, teachers have a very good awareness of their pupils' prior learning and capabilities.

- Due to effective staff training, staffs are confident in assessing work accurately and have increasing experience of moderating work at diocesan level and with neighbouring Catholic schools. These systems have contributed to rapidly improving attainment and progress, particularly in those year groups where there was previously underperformance.
- Marking and constructive feedback are performed regularly and accurately. Pupils are given time to respond to feedback.
- Pupils are involved in evaluating how well they achieve and understand what is expected of them to achieve the next step in their learning.

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

- The Religious Education coordinator and headteacher conduct a range of systematic monitoring activities relating to provision and outcomes in Religious Education. They carry out scrutiny of work and planning and observe lessons. As a result, planning is founded on sound evidence and data. The systematic and thorough approach has led to teaching that is good across the school and outcomes that have rapidly improved at the end of key stage two to be good.
- The Religious Education coordinator and headteacher are well informed about current developments in Religious Education and this demonstrably affects work to monitor, improve and support teaching, encouraging the enthusiasm of staff and channelling their efforts and skills to good effect.
- The headteacher and Religious Education coordinator work closely together to ensure that all staff feel supported and valued. They aim to ensure that their vision for Religious Education is shared through staff meetings and staff attendance at diocesan training events. They continue to give priority support and provide training opportunities to new staff joining the school.
- The curriculum is strong and thoughtfully designed. Links with outside providers such as Barnabas in Schools and More than Dance enrich the curriculum. The chapel is utilised as a teaching resource wherever possible, especially in the teaching about baptism and in learning key vocabulary about the Mass.
- Governors are regular visitors to the school. They are kept informed of the priorities identified to bring about improvement and are committed to working with the headteacher and senior leadership team. They are supportive but also developing confidence in their role as a critical friend.

SUMMARY OF INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

HOW EFFECTIVE THE SCHOOL IS IN PROVIDING CATHOLIC EDUCATION:**2****CATHOLIC LIFE:****2**

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

2

The quality of provision for 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.

2

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP:**2**

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

2

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.

2

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION:**2**

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

2

The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education.

2

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

2

SCHOOL DETAILS

School name	St Joseph's RC Primary School
Unique reference number	143515
Local authority	Durham
This Inspection Report is produced for the Rt. Reverend Séamus Cunningham the Bishop of Hexham and Newcastle Diocese under canon 806 of Canon Law. For voluntary aided schools it also fulfils the responsibility the Governing Body has to inspect the school under s48 of the Education Act 2005.	
Chair of governors	Mrs Mary Wood
Head teacher	Mrs Fiona Brown
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