



St Joseph's Catholic Academy

Mill Lane, Hebburn, Tyne and Wear, NE31 2ET

School Unique Reference Number: **139878**

Inspection dates:	21 – 22 May 2014
Lead inspector:	Tony McCourt
Team inspector:	Rachael Blackburn

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Catholic Life:		Outstanding	1
Collective Worship:		Good	2
Religious Education:		Outstanding	1

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR PARENTS AND PUPILS

St Joseph's Catholic Academy is an outstanding Catholic school because:

- The quality of the Catholic Life of the school is outstanding because the pupil is at the centre of the school's mission. "The love of Christ spurs us on." is enunciated and lived out by the headteacher and staff which inspires everyone to pursue excellence in learning, relationships and worship.
- The quality of worship is good because a variety of meaningful acts of worship are planned to create a prayerful and respectful response from pupils. Prayer is central and staff and pupils engage well, resulting in a significant impact on the school's sense of community.
- The quality of Religious Education is outstanding because pupils are motivated to develop spiritually and put faith in action in their daily lives. The recently appointed subject leader and her team are committed, passionate and enthusiastic about their responsibilities to the young people in their care. Teaching is good to outstanding, leading to outstanding outcomes.

FULL REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

- St Joseph's Catholic Academy is an above average sized mixed 11-18 school whose pupils come from a wide range of social and economic backgrounds.
- The majority of pupils come from a white British background.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for Pupil Premium is above the national average.
- The number of pupils with disabilities and with special educational needs is below average.

WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL NEED TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

Improve the Catholic Life of the school by:

- Appointing a chaplain with the skills and potential to meet the needs of the school.
- Providing a space for informal prayer within the main buildings and accessible to pupils and adults of all faiths.

Improve Collective Worship by:

- Increasing the involvement of pupils in leading the prayer life of the school.

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 outstanding.

- The life of the community of St Joseph's Catholic Academy is inspired by Christ's love for all people. In their work and relationships, pupils and staff enthusiastically embrace the school motto: "The love of Christ spurs us on."
- A calm, happy and welcoming atmosphere pervades the school. Pupils engage in work and relaxation exhibiting courtesy, consideration and diligence.
- Pupils' behaviour is impeccable and applauded by visitors and those in the community around the school.
- The headteacher's expressed aim that all pupils should be at the heart of everything is demonstrated by their central role in promoting the school's ethos within the school and the wider community.
- Pupils participate willingly in activities which enable them to contribute to the development of the Catholic Life of the school. The construction of the Legacy Garden will create a focus for remembrance and reflection on former members of the school community.
- Pupils embrace the opportunities provided by the school for personal support and development; they are happy, confident and secure in their own stage of spiritual and emotional growth.
- The pupils have a strong sense of personal worth and demonstrate tolerance and respect for others. They are truly proud to be members of St Joseph's Catholic Academy.

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

- The educational vision of the school is encapsulated in the school's mission statement. The school's purpose is to be "inspired by Christ's love for all people."
- The school leadership seeks to provide the "highest standard of Christian education with particular emphasis on the faith and teaching of the Roman Catholic Church." The planned appointment of a chaplain is identified as an essential addition to the provision of the Catholic Life of the school.
- There is a tangible sense of community at all levels, evident in the quality of relationships that exist between almost all colleagues, support staff and pupils.

- The school is a supportive and joyful community.
- The learning environment reflects the school's mission and identity through concrete and effective signs of the school's Catholic character. Each room or public area has a crucifix or appropriate iconography.
- Clear policies and structures are in place which provide the highest levels of pastoral care to almost all pupils.
- Thoughtfully designed and carefully planned programmes for Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) are consistently well taught and celebrate Catholic teaching and principles.
- The school's expectations of moral and ethical behaviour are clearly promulgated and behaviour policies are rooted in Gospel Values and the teachings of the Catholic Church.

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

- The school leadership is deeply committed to providing high quality learning, pursuing excellence for all in their care and encouraging growth and development in a way which leads pupils to see how Catholic faith makes sense in their lives.
- The provision for the Catholic Life of the school is given the highest possible priority by leaders. The concerted efforts of school leadership has maintained effective and meaningful spiritual and liturgical support during the absence of a chaplain.
- The headteacher is leading well targeted planned improvements, clearly and explicitly focused on the Catholic Life of the school.
- Parents and carers have a thorough understanding of the school's mission and are highly supportive of it.
- Governors play an influential role in the school's planning for improvement. They are especially supportive of the headteacher in emphasising the Catholic Life of the school as a central priority in the school's development. They are passionate about the school's mission and are actively involved in strengthening the Catholic Life of the school.

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.

- The pupils display respect and reverence during acts of Collective Worship. There is a marked quality of prayerful silence. Traditional and less formal forms of prayer enable pupils to involve themselves in the prayer life of the school in a deep and meaningful way.
- Pupils pray regularly at the start of the day and at the start of lessons but as yet there is no provision for a prayer space within the school building for less structured prayer time.
- There is an expectation that members of the school community will lead prayer. When sixth formers celebrated the end of their school career, in St James' Church adjacent to the school, an emotional, memorable and uplifting liturgy with prayer and music was devised and organised by the students.
- The Church's liturgical year, its seasons and feasts are celebrated school wide with pupils contributing to the collective acts of worship.
- The experience of living and working in a praying community has had a profound and visible effect on the development of all pupils, irrespective of ability or faith background.

The quality of provision for Collective Worship is good.

- Collective Worship is central to the life of the school and is an inspiration to the whole community. Praying together is part of the daily experience for pupils and staff.
- Acts of worship are well resourced and planned with a clear purpose, message and direction.
- Chosen liturgical themes are consistent with the season and the Catholic character of the school. These experiences have a significant impact on the school's sense of community.
- The close proximity and availability of St James' Church provides opportunity for pupils and staff to attend Mass and to organise liturgical celebrations for classes and year groups. The church buildings are used to good effect by the school to compensate for the current absence of a chapel within the school site.
- The school benefits from the spiritual and liturgical leadership provided by two deacons within the school community. They are skilled in inspiring and helping others to deliver quality Collective Worship.

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

- The leaders and managers, including senior leaders, know how to plan and deliver quality experiences of Collective Worship. They are highly visible as leaders of Collective Worship within the school.
- A renewed emphasis on liturgical and spiritual formation by the headteacher is enhancing the quality and provision of Collective Worship. As a consequence of a thorough monitoring and evaluation of current provision, priority improvements have been identified to benefit the current provision.
- The views of members of the school community are regularly sought regarding the quality and significance of Collective Worship. Leaders and managers respond to findings thoroughly and systematically.
- Leaders and managers 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.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

THE QUALITY OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

1

- 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 outstanding.

- Pupils demonstrate a passion and commitment to Religious Education. Behaviour for learning is outstanding and the pupils are focused and very keen to learn.
- Lessons are conducted with pace and progress is sustained both in lessons and over time.
- The school motto, "The love of Christ spurs us on", is embodied in the teaching and learning within the department enabling all pupils, including the most vulnerable, to enjoy and achieve in the subject.
- Pupils acquire in-depth religious knowledge with confidence, demonstrate a wide range of skills relevant to their learning and are able to make significant progress.
- The attainment and achievement of pupils in Religious Education is outstanding.

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

- The teaching of Religious Education at St Joseph's Catholic Academy is of a very high quality with excellent resources being used to support the progression and learning of pupils.
- Assessment procedures are robust and rigorous ensuring consistency and quality.
- Teachers regularly listen attentively to pupils in order to skilfully shape incisive questions to maintain rapid progress and expand knowledge.
- Learning activities derived from accurate assessment of pupils' prior skills, knowledge and understanding are carefully planned and challenging.
- Teacher and peer assessment are central to the planning of lessons. This contributes to pupils' achievement and provides them with a high level of confidence in making further improvements.
- Praise and reward for achievement and effort are an integral part of teachers' assessment strategies.

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

- The headteacher has increased the profile and status of Religious Education in the school community with the recently appointed leader of Religious Education who brings energy

and vision to this role.

- The Religious Education curriculum is thoughtfully designed and enhanced to meet the full range of pupils' needs and to ensure sustained and substantial continuity and significant progression in learning.
- The curriculum experience of pupils is broadened by a varied range of enrichment activities including off-site visits and residentials and invitations to guest speakers, for example Fr Richard Leonard SJ.
- Leaders ensure that pupils have access to outstanding sacramental preparation in accordance with the diocesan policy.
- The school leadership ensures a high level of resourcing in terms of staffing and physical resources; capitation is in line with other core curriculum subjects within the school. Religious Education meets the needs of the requirements of the Bishops' Conference with respect to key stages three and four and the allocation of time for the sixth form will be fully compliant within two years.

SUMMARY OF INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

HOW EFFECTIVE THE SCHOOL IS IN PROVIDING CATHOLIC EDUCATION:**1****CATHOLIC LIFE:****1**

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

1

The quality of provision for 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.

1

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP:**2**

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

2

The quality of provision for Collective Worship.

2

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

1

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION:**1**

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

1

The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education.

1

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

1

SCHOOL DETAILS

School name	St Joseph's Catholic Academy
Unique reference number	139878
Local authority	South Tyneside
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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