



St Joseph's RC Primary School

Rutland Street, Millfield, Sunderland, SR4 6HY

School Unique Reference Number: **108841**

Inspection dates:	01 – 02 May 2019
Lead inspector:	Elaine White

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

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR PARENTS AND PUPILS

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

- St Joseph's is an inclusive and welcoming community with a strong family ethos. It is a place where everyone is loved and respected and the love of learning is evident in all aspects of the school.
- The Catholic Life of the school is deeply embedded, ensuring that all pupils can contribute to and benefit from the excellent provision. Governors and staff have high expectations and a shared vision regarding the Catholic mission and ethos of the school.
- The quality of Collective Worship is outstanding. It is at the heart of the school. From an early age pupils are encouraged and supported in their ability to plan and lead worship and are confident when praying with the school community.
- Religious Education is outstanding. Skilled teaching builds pupils' understanding from an early age so that they become religiously literate young people. As pupils move through school they are given the skills to enable them to consider, question, reflect on and apply Catholic teaching in their daily lives.

FULL REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

- St. Joseph's is a slightly above average sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and those who speak English as an additional language is well above average.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives pupil premium is below average.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is below average.
- Most pupils in the school are baptised Catholic.

WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL NEED TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- To further enhance Catholic Life and global citizenship through :
 - the development of the Rights Respecting (RRSA) agenda throughout the school and wider community.
- To further develop the teaching and assessment of Religious Education:
 - by continuing to refine the implementation of the standards framework
 - deepening pupils' engagement with ethical issues by embedding critical thinking using the Philosophy for Children.

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.

- At St Joseph's, pupils are at the heart of shaping the school's mission and ethos; they have a deep understanding of how to live out their mission in school and in the wider community.
- Relationships within the school are very positive and pupils value the many opportunities that they are given. They are actively involved throughout the school, willingly taking on responsibilities very conscientiously and enthusiastically. They are engaged as friendship buddies, active play leaders, school councillors and Mini Vinnies.
- Pupils are proud of their school and the part they play in their community. They are rightly proud of their religious identity and deeply respect the Catholic traditions of their school. They can express their own beliefs with confidence and they have a very good understanding of how their faith impacts on their own lives and others. Pupils say they feel valued, can clearly articulate the importance of Gospel Values and how St Joseph's is helping them to become better people. One pupil commented, 'We learn a lot about Jesus and how to be like him; caring and loving'.
- Throughout the school, pupils work extremely well together demonstrating very positive attitudes and enthusiasm towards all aspects of school life. Their behaviour is exemplary; pupils are extremely polite, respectful and considerate of others, demonstrating good emotional awareness.
- Pupils speak confidently about the importance of respecting the rights of everyone. They are alert to the needs of others and respond passionately to issues of social injustice through prayer, fundraising activities and service to others. Examples of this are supporting the work of CAFOD, St Vincent de Paul Society, Mary's Meals and Mission Together, as well as raising money for the Sisters of Mercy and the Philippines.
- Pupils throughout the school demonstrate a very good understanding and importance of key celebrations throughout the liturgical year.

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

- The Catholicity of the school is very effectively presented through high quality displays, pupils' work, religious artefacts and focal points for worship.
- From the moment you enter St Joseph's it is apparent that this is a school committed to the Catholic tradition and ethos. A strong team spirit amongst all staff and sharing knowledge and good practice is common place. All stakeholders are encouraged to be fully involved in school life and feel very well informed.
- Pastoral care provision is outstanding, reflecting concern for the welfare of all and is central to the success of the school. Clear policies and procedures are in place providing the highest levels of pastoral support to pupils, with an explicit commitment to the most vulnerable and needy.
- The behaviour of pupils in and around school is exemplary. Where conflict arises, parents are very satisfied that the school sets out to resolve issues in ways which embrace the importance of personal responsibility and the need for justice whilst also facilitating reconciliation.
- The mission statement, motto and values of the school have been successfully promoted and understood, thus enabling the whole community to live out the Gospel message in their daily lives.
- Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is taught throughout the school at age appropriate levels and it is in line with the teachings of the Catholic faith.
- People are at the heart of this nurturing community. The strong family ethos is welcoming and caring. Faith is modelled and each person is valued as a member of God's family.

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

- School leaders are deeply committed to the Church's mission in education and have recently introduced the 'Rights Respecting Agenda' helping pupils to grow into caring and responsible young citizens.
- Maintaining an authentic Catholic ethos is given the highest priority. The headteacher, very ably supported by the deputy headteacher who is also the Religious Education coordinator, ensures that 'aspirations of excellence' are shared at all levels between staff and pupils.
- The headteacher is a very positive presence around the school and together with the senior leadership team, has a very clear understanding of Catholic education and the role of the Catholic school. Together they very effectively promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school. Staff and pupils work together to live the mission of the school with understanding and appreciation. Consequently, pupils can articulate well the distinctive mission of the school.
- Self-evaluation is thorough and gives an accurate picture of the strengths and areas to be further developed. School improvement planning is comprehensive, reflecting a desire and capacity for continual improvement.
- Governors are fully involved in reviewing and shaping the Catholic Life of the school. They are highly ambitious and fully recognise how this area underpins all aspects of school life. They discharge their statutory and canonical duties well, working very effectively with the

staff and headteacher and are fully committed to upholding the strong caring ethos that exists throughout.

- The Catholic Life of the school is carefully monitored on a regular basis to inform priorities and evaluate success. Governors are confident in holding the leadership team to account, whilst being actively involved in supporting its mission.
- The headteacher, deputy headteacher who is also the Religious Education coordinator, governors and parish priest are excellent role models for all staff. They are motivated and enthusiastic about the journey the school is on

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

THE QUALITY OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

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- 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.

- The quality of learning and progress in Religious Education is outstanding. From their varied starting points, most pupils make at least good progress in each key stage, with some achieving outstanding progress.
- Religious Education is at the heart of the school curriculum. Pupils acquire knowledge quickly and in depth, with older pupils linking their learning in Religious Education to other areas of learning across the curriculum.
- Pupils have a very positive attitude and speak enthusiastically about their learning in Religious Education and want to do well. They understand how their Religious Education has an impact on all aspects of school life. As a result behaviour is outstanding throughout the school.
- Pupils understand how well they are achieving in Religious Education. Teachers' marking and annotations in pupils' books show that there is good and outstanding progress across the school. The marking is detailed, focused clearly on learning intentions and challenges pupils to make improvements or to extend themselves. Where this is the case, pupils are responding appropriately, demonstrating a deepening of their learning.
- Pupils can evaluate their own work and respond to any feedback given. They say, 'I know how to improve my work because teachers help me'.
- Effective systems are in place to evaluate the progress of individual pupils. Inspection findings and evidence provided by the school show no noticeable differences between groups of learners.
- Pupils identified as having a special educational need make very good progress because their needs are accurately identified and are very well supported by skilled teaching assistants.

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

- Teachers display a great passion for the subject and a high level of confidence and expertise. Teachers' subject knowledge is very good which is communicated very effectively to pupils.
- Skilled questioning from teachers is apparent across the school allowing children to move forward effectively in their learning. In upper key stage two for example, pupils were challenged to show a deeper understanding of how Saint Stephen's feelings and beliefs affected the behaviour of the bystanders who witnessed him 'spreading the word'.
- Teachers set the highest of expectations for work in Religious Education lessons. They use prior knowledge and assessment skilfully to plan lessons on the school's standardised 'visible learning grids', which are engaging and creative.
- Assessment is regular and systematic and both internal and external moderation indicate that assessment is accurate. This process ensures that individual pupils are continually challenged. The school is in a very good position to move forward with the forthcoming Age-Related Standards (3-19) in Religious Education.
- The teaching of Religious Education across the school has a high profile, meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference and contributes very effectively to the pupils' spiritual and moral development.

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

- Leaders effectively support Religious Education in terms of resourcing, training and challenge which leads to high outcomes. They are relentless in their desire to improve both teaching and learning across the school and in inspiring both staff and pupils.
- Religious Education has a very high profile in the life of the school. Clear steps for improvement are detailed in the School Improvement Plan and this is effectively and regularly monitored by governors along with the senior leadership team.
- The school's self-evaluation is accurate, clear and informed by regular monitoring.
- Leaders and managers at all levels are committed to striving for the very best. This ensures that all pupils are known, well cared for and respected as individuals.
- The governing body fulfils its role well with regards to Religious Education. Governors are kept well informed of the priorities identified to bring about further improvement. They are regular visitors to school and committed to ensure that St Joseph's continues to grow in strength. All governors are very supportive of the school but also confident in their ability to challenge.
- The committed headteacher and Religious Education coordinator are ambitious for the school and have the professional drive and religious conviction to ensure that Religious Education continues to move forward.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

THE QUALITY OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

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- 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 outstanding.

- St Joseph's is a very prayerful and spiritual school where worship is a regular and meaningful part of the day. It is a highly engaging experience and pupils maintain interest at an exceptional level from an early age.
- Pupils respond enthusiastically in a range of prayerful gatherings which is reflected in the quality of communal singing, prayerful silence and in their thoughtful, honest responses. They skilfully create an atmosphere conducive to prayer and worship which is a moving experience for all involved.
- Pupils' spiritual development is very effectively influenced by the acts of Collective Worship. They have a sense of awe and wonder and see prayer as a central part of their daily lives. Pupils were able to describe how they 'felt that Jesus is present with them at all times'. They gave examples of how they felt they could rely on His support in the playground or at home, in disputes or difficult times and expressed this so naturally.
- Almost all pupils have an excellent understanding of the church's liturgical year and expressed their enjoyment of the various seasons, feasts and celebrations.
- Pupils spoke warmly of their opportunities to link with home, including the travelling crib in Advent, the travelling cross, Lenten bags and rosary bags.
- Pupils are very confident and at ease in sharing their prayers with others.
- Pupils show a deep respect for other faiths and are very aware that religious beliefs are important; this is reflected in the way pupils prepare and participate in prayer and liturgies.
- Pupils take an increasing lead in planning, preparing and leading liturgies in class and in larger groups throughout the school. Pupils are inspired and enthusiastic in their approach. This is evident in their keen participation, particularly their gathering, joyful singing and prayerful reflection.
- All contribute very positively to the spiritual and moral development of all pupils which is outstanding.

The quality of provision for Collective Worship is outstanding.

- St Joseph's is a deeply prayerful community. Prayer and worship permeate the school day and are deeply embedded in the daily practice of the school. Collective Worship forms the heart of school celebrations with its clear purpose, message and direction.
- Acts of worship are well resourced and age appropriate, centred on themes and messages which are easily accessible to all pupils. A planned programme of liturgies, Masses and other liturgical celebrations provide many quality opportunities for participation from the wider school and parish community.
- There is a clear policy for Collective Worship and a good range of structures to ensure that it is regular and inclusive. Attendance by adults associated with the school is encouraged and the response is good. Families are increasingly involved through weekly circulation of the Wednesday Word, travelling cribs during Advent and Lenten bags.
- Collective Worship is central to the everyday life of the school and makes a significant contribution to the moral and spiritual needs of the pupils. It engages all pupils' interest and inspires them in deep thought.
- Focal points and displays in each classroom and throughout the school are thought provoking, well-resourced and provide very good support for reflection and prayer.
- There is a great sense of community at all levels which is evident in the quality of relationships that exist between staff, governors, pupils and parents. One parent commented that they appreciate the efforts by staff and pupils and feel very welcome in the family orientated environment.
- There is a calm and peaceful ethos which pervades the school, and this is reflected in the pupils' outstanding behaviour and consideration for others.
- There are strong links with the parish where many pupils serve at Mass and take an active part in Sunday Mass and other aspects of worship.

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

- The Headteacher, deputy headteacher and senior leaders throughout the school have set a very high standard for Collective Worship in school. They lead by example, ensuring that pupils and staff develop a deepening appreciation of the church's traditions, seasons, rites and symbols. These prayerful, reflective opportunities contribute to the spiritual formation of pupils and staff.
- The headteacher and Religious Education coordinator are passionate about deepening pupils' engagement with faith and ethical issues. The recent introduction of 'Philosophy for Children' (P4C), is proving to be a very successful vehicle to embed pupils' critical thinking.
- Leaders demonstrate an excellent understanding of how to plan and deliver quality experiences of Collective Worship. They regularly review the quality of Collective Worship and this informs future developments and training needs. They seek the views of staff, pupils and parents regularly and have a very good understanding of the strengths and areas for further development.

- The senior leadership team ensure that all staff throughout the school receive on-going formation. The development of spiritual and liturgical understanding is a staff training priority.
- Leaders ensure that pupils have high quality sacramental preparation, working closely with the parish priest, catechists and staff of the school.
- Interviews with governors, parish priest and headteacher, along with the scrutiny of questionnaires, reflect the importance of true partnership and a mission to ensure the very best for all pupils at St Joseph's school.
- The headteacher and Religious Education coordinator are highly visible as leaders of Collective Worship within the school and are models of outstanding practice for both staff and pupils.

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.

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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.

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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

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP:**1**

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

1

The quality of provision for Collective Worship.

1

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

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SCHOOL DETAILS

School name	St Joseph's RC Primary School
Unique reference number	108841
Local authority	Sunderland
This Inspection Report is produced for the Rt Reverend Robert Byrne the Bishop of Hexham and Newcastle 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	Mr Dave Riddell
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Date of previous school inspection	April 2014
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