



St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Armstrong Road, Benwell, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE15 6JB

School Unique Reference Number: **108508**

Inspection dates:	19 – 20 March 2015
Lead inspector:	Mrs Nora Hughes

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

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR PARENTS AND PUPILS

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

- It is an inclusive school where everyone is welcomed and valued. In turn, the school is highly valued by the pupils, staff, parents and governors. The mission statement, 'Living, learning and loving together with Christ', is at the heart of all relationships in the school community.
- The quality of the Catholic Life of the school is good. Leaders act as exemplary role models, provide varied opportunities and encourage the involvement of pupils, parents and parishioners in the Catholic Life of the school.
- The quality of Collective Worship is good. The pupils' response to and participation in Collective Worship is good. From an early age pupils are encouraged and supported in their ability to plan and lead worship. Leaders and managers are excellent role models. They continually seek ways to further develop, promote, monitor and evaluate Collective Worship.
- The quality of Religious Education is good. From very low starting points pupils reach levels in line with the diocesan average by the end of key stage two, indicating that very good progress is made.

It is not yet outstanding because:

- The standard and consistency of marking and feedback varies across the school. Opportunities for pupils to accelerate progress by responding to teachers' comments are variable.
- Not all teachers plan to differentiate tasks to enable pupils to achieve their potential.
- Pupils are not given sufficient opportunities to plan and lead Collective Worship independently.

FULL REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

- St Joseph's is an average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs who are supported at school action is about 8%. This is similar to that found in most schools. The proportion supported at school action plus and with a statement of special educational needs is about 5%, which is above average.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for those in care and those known to be eligible for free school meals is about 36%. This is above that found nationally.
- A well above average proportion of pupils (56%) are from ethnic minority backgrounds and a similar proportion speaks English as an additional language.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The percentage of baptised Roman Catholics is 52%.

WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL NEED TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- Raise standards in Religious Education, ensuring that pupils are appropriately challenged, by:
 - Planning differentiated tasks that are sufficiently challenging and engaging for pupils to attain their very best.
 - Ensuring time is regularly allocated to allow pupils to respond to constructive feedback after accurate Religious Education marking.
- Improve pupils' skills in leading Collective Worship by:
 - Increasing opportunities for all pupils to lead a variety of Collective Worship across a range of audiences.
 - Improving teachers' own knowledge and understanding in assisting pupils in planning creatively and using an increasing range of resources.

CATHOLIC LIFE

THE QUALITY OF THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

1

- 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.

2

1

1

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

- Pupils have a deep sense of 'belonging' to a 'school family'. Surveys and pupils' involvement in decision making as part of school life ensure that most pupils are involved in shaping the school's mission statement. Pupils say their ideas are listened to and responded to through the work of the school council.
- Almost all pupils have a deep experience of belonging and embrace the demands that membership of the community entails.
- Pupils are regularly involved in activities which promote the school's ethos within the school such as caring for the younger members during break and lunch times as playground buddies. They willingly take on positions of responsibility within the school community.
- Pupils take home the 'Wednesday Word' weekly to explore the gospel with their families.
- In the wider community they are involved in fundraising for CAFOD and the 5p bus. Their response to these fundraising campaigns is enthusiastic.
- The behaviour of most pupils is good almost all of the time. They are considerate to others and caring to anyone in need.
- Pupils have a good understanding of the need to be reconciled when relationships run into difficulties and articulate this as a need to 'say sorry and move on'.
- Pastoral support is highly effective. Work carried out by the chaplain and support staff enables pupils to feel exceptionally well-supported.
- Pupils say, 'school helps us to be like Jesus in our daily actions'.

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

- The mission statement is embraced and lived out by all and is used as a daily prayer throughout the school.
- The learning environment reflects the school's mission statement and celebrates the school's Catholic character with beautiful displays and the playing of spiritual music. It is a prayerful community where all are welcomed.
- Clear policies and practices are in place with high expectations of behaviour promoted by all staff.
- Behaviour policies are rooted in gospel values. Pupils behave well and work and play together in an atmosphere of tolerance and respect.
- Personal and social health education (PSHE) is delivered extremely effectively through

'statements to live by'.

- The sex and relationships education programme (SRE) is taught throughout the school at age appropriate levels and it is in line with the diocesan model.
- Excellent relationships exist within the school community and all stakeholders are fully committed to ensuring the school is the best it can be.

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

- The school's leadership is deeply committed to the Church's mission in education. They have a very clear understanding of the vision of Catholic education and the role of the Catholic school in the mission of the Church. They are excellent role models.
- Leaders ensure that Catholic Life is given the highest possible priority by leaders. This ensures improvements are planned for within the school improvement plan.
- The headteacher employs a parent support advisor and a teacher for English as an additional language to support parents and pupils.
- The school chaplain is extremely effective in her role as a leader for Catholic Life and Collective Worship, seeing the school as her 'family'. She is also responsible for the induction of new staff across the Newcastle cluster of schools. The headteacher commented, 'the school without the chaplain would be unthinkable'.
- Performance management targets reflect the school's desire for continual improvement.
- The school is very effective in working with parents who say, 'the school is like our family'.
- Governors share the headteacher and staff's passion to make the Catholic Life of the school the best it can be. They describe it as a place where people are, 'vibrant and excited by their faith'.
- Governors are actively involved in the school's self-evaluation process. They participate in events and are actively involved in school life.

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.

2

2

1

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

- Pupils act reverently and are keen to participate in Collective Worship, regardless of their personal beliefs.
- The quality of singing is phenomenal, as the parish priest says, 'it blows you away'. The joy of the children was evident and felt by all, including parishioners who were welcome to attend.
- Pupils join in prayers readily and confidently.
- The chaplain works with pupils to prepare and lead Collective Worship at age appropriate levels with increasing confidence.
- The involvement and skill of pupils in leading worship is inconsistent however.
- Pupils are keen to take their worship to the new, inspiring prayer garden.
- Pupils demonstrate a good understanding of the religious seasons and feasts. Acts of worship celebrated during Advent and Lent were commented on as being very popular.
- The Mass for the feast of St Joseph was enjoyed by all and is a regular celebration to which parishioners are invited.
- There is a deep sense of respect for different faiths and this is reflected in the inclusive manner in which liturgy is prepared.
- The multi-cultural nature of the school has resulted in it being a place where mutual tolerance and respect are evident.

The quality of provision for Collective Worship is good.

- Pupils pray together regularly; they described it as, 'a quiet, calm time with God'.
- Staff receive a personal invitation to weekly prayer led by the Chaplain and this is always well attended.
- Collective Worship is carefully planned and resourced using 'Come and See' and the liturgical year.
- There is a Collective Worship policy which provides a clear structure for staff to ensure that there are a variety of opportunities for staff and pupils to pray together regularly.
- Parents are invited to attend end of topic acts of worship and say they enjoy being able to attend such liturgies.
- The chaplain and teachers effectively support the pupils in planning and delivering quality worship. Power points produced for use in these liturgies are truly inspiring.
- The nurture groups offered by the school enable pupils to thrive.

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

- Leaders have an expert knowledge of how to deliver quality Collective Worship which they share effectively with staff and pupils.
- They have a thorough understanding of the Church's year and are able to lead staff and pupils of all faiths to understand the Church's traditions and their relevance and importance in daily life.
- Liturgical and spiritual development is seen as a high priority. Professional development is offered for all staff through diocesan training, as well as termly staff meetings.
- The chaplain, headteacher, governors and parish priest are highly visible leaders of Collective Worship and are excellent role models.
- Leaders have developed an inspirational prayer garden which involved the entire school community and is now a place to reflect and is appreciated by all.
- Leaders of the school have sought the views of pupils and parents in an evaluation of Collective Worship. These responses are highly valued and have been used to inform the future development of Collective Worship.

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.

2

2

2

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

- Pupils say they enjoy Religious Education and that it helps them to understand how to live their lives. They are keen to do well and generally work at a good pace in lessons.
- Behaviour throughout the school is generally good enabling learning to take place.
- Outcomes for pupils are good. Pupils make good progress over time in all key stages. Pupils start from very low starting points but by the end of key stage two standards are broadly in line with the diocesan average.
- Through evidence in pupils' work, they are able to demonstrate use of prior knowledge when making links between religious ideas and scriptural references accurately.

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

- Teaching is good overall; as a result all pupils make good progress over time.
- Consistent assessment procedures are in place so that children have a good understanding of expectations.
- Pupils likened their targets in Religious Education to a game of darts, 'You get something to aim for and when you hit it you get something new so you get better'.
- The standard of marking and feedback in books is variable. Marking doesn't always relate to the religious content. Opportunities for pupils to develop their responses to feedback are infrequent.
- In some lessons, activities are insufficiently differentiated to meet the needs of learners or enable them to work independently.
- Teachers value Religious Education and communicate this well to pupils. They have good subject knowledge and use a range of resources effectively to make tasks interesting for pupils and keep them engaged.
- Teachers use the 'Come and See' programme effectively to plan well-structured lessons.
- Support staff are used effectively to reinforce learning and to engage all pupils.

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

- Leaders and managers systematically monitor provision and outcomes in Religious Education. They have an accurate view of the strengths and areas for development of teaching and learning in Religious Education. Leaders at all levels are ambitious for the

school and committed to ensuring that pupils achieve the very best they can. Religious Education has a very high profile.

- Leaders encourage staff to develop their own teaching skills through regular participation in year group specific training organised by the diocese as well as during staff meetings and training.
- The Religious Education curriculum is rich and varied providing a range of interesting activities and imaginative teaching to enable all pupils to make good progress. The Religious Education curriculum meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference.
- There are excellent links with other schools and with the parish community who support in school. The children participate in mission opportunities with local high schools.
- Sacramental preparation is delivered in line with diocesan policy. Governors, catechists and the parish priest say they are, 'encouraged by the commitment of those who choose to participate'.
- Governors both support and challenge the school and discharge their statutory and canonical duties well.

SUMMARY OF INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

HOW EFFECTIVE THE SCHOOL IS IN PROVIDING CATHOLIC EDUCATION:**2****CATHOLIC LIFE:****1**

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.

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:**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 Catholic Primary School
Unique reference number	108508
Local authority	Newcastle
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 Pat Dick
Head teacher	Miss Elaine Mathews
Date of previous school inspection	October 2009
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