



St Joseph's RC Primary School

Victoria Lane, Coundon, Bishop Auckland, DL14 8NN

School Unique Reference Number: 8403469

Inspection dates: 28 – 29 April 2016
Lead inspector: Miss Mary Tate

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 RC Primary School is a good Catholic school because:

- It is a very welcoming family community, helping pupils to develop their faith.
- The Catholic Life of St Joseph's is outstanding. Governors, senior leaders and staff have high expectations and a shared vision with regard to the Catholic mission and ethos of the school. Pupils make an outstanding contribution to the Catholic Life of the school taking a lead role.
- The quality of Collective Worship is good because it is central to the life of the school and all pupils from a very young age are reverent and respectful during worship.
- The quality of Religious Education is good because pupils enjoy Religious Education, can explain its value and are keen to do well, leading to good progress.

It is not yet outstanding because:

- Pupils across the school are not yet skilled in planning and leading Collective Worship independently in a variety of forms.
- In Religious Education, there are inconsistencies in the quality of assessment, marking and feedback provided by teachers.

FULL REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

- St Joseph's is a smaller than average-sized primary school serving the parishes of St Joseph's, Coundon and St Thomas, Shildon. Most pupils are white British.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is above average. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well above average.
- The school moved into a new, purpose built building in February 2016.

WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL NEED TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- Improve the quality of Collective Worship by:
 - Providing more varied opportunities for pupils to improve their skills in planning, preparing and leading Collective Worship.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning by:
 - Ensuring that all teachers have a secure knowledge of attainment at each level in Religious Education
 - Ensuring the best practice in marking is used consistently throughout the school so that quality feedback has a greater impact on pupil's progress.

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.

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1

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

- The mission statement; 'Serving as witnesses to our faith through Jesus Christ', is central to the life of the school and is understood and fully embraced by all pupils in their daily school life. It is displayed prominently throughout the school.
- St Joseph's is an inclusive school. There is a very strong emphasis on welcoming and supporting families. The school learning mentor works with vulnerable families and pastoral support is a strength of the school.
- Pupils have a deep sense of belonging to their 'school family' and they all strive to do their best to promote the strong ethos within their school family and in the wider community. The school has an active Mini Vinnies group, which pupils are proud to belong to.
- Pupils enthusiastically take a leading role in fund raising activities including; CAFOD, Macmillan Cancer Relief and the People's Kitchen.
- Pupils have a good understanding of the liturgical calendar and the key events and celebrations of the church's year.
- There are strong links with the parish and pupils take part in weekday masses and key events. One pupil volunteered to have their feet washed on Holy Thursday and pupils attended the parish lunch for the elderly, presenting 'bouquets of love' from the school.
- Behaviour in lessons and around the school is exemplary because pupils develop the skills of negotiation, tolerance and forgiveness.
- Pupils contribute to the monitoring and evaluation process through the school council. They are listened to and their suggestions acted on.

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

- The learning environment is a reflection of the school's Catholic character, evidenced through displays, artefacts and the creation of sacred spaces throughout the school.
- The provision for the Catholic Life of the school is a high priority which is reflected in the mission statement and in the way the mission of the school is 'lived out' by all in this family community. There is a tangible sense of family and community in all aspects of school life which is evident in the quality of relationships that exist between all stakeholders.

- The school is a prayerful community which provides a stimulating environment to reflect the school's mission and its Catholic character.
- Pastoral care for pupils is outstanding as a result of the commitment of all stakeholders, and through having clear policies and structures in place. Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) and Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) refer to Catholic teachings and principles. These programmes cater for the needs of all pupils with staff playing an active part in their delivery to ensure the best possible outcomes for pupils.
- The school has undertaken the journey to become a 'Rights Respecting School,' priding itself on a system of fair and restorative justice.

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

- The headteacher has a clear understanding of Catholic Education and the role of the Catholic school in the mission of the Church. She acts as a positive role model and effectively monitors and promotes the Catholic Life of the school, with the support of the Religious Education leader and governors. As a result, they know the strengths and weaknesses of the school very well.
- School self-evaluation shows there is rigorous monitoring and a desire for self-challenge to ensure that the school is outstanding. The very effective work of the link governor for Religious Education embraces Catholic Life and there is a clear vision for improvements to reach this goal.
- The school is extremely successful in working with parents and carers and they are extremely supportive of the school. The school gets very positive feedback via parental questionnaires and is swift to act on suggestions made.
- The governing body share in the high expectations of the school and lead by example, playing an active role in the Catholic Life of the school.
- The Catholic Life of the school is included in the performance management process of staff, when specific targets are set.

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

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2

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

- From the earliest age, pupils act reverently and show respect when participating in acts of worship. They listen well and are happy to take part in Collective Worship, liturgies, masses and assemblies.
- Pupils are able to prepare and lead worship following guidance. They know the elements to include and are able to lead worship opportunities that are inclusive, appropriate and prayerful. They still rely heavily on structures and formats provided by adults and need to develop more independence and confidence in using their own ideas.
- Almost all pupils can confidently talk about the seasons in the church year and special feast days. They know these themes can be used for Collective Worship opportunities.
- Pupils are knowledgeable about other faiths and understand that everyone's faith needs to be respected and valued during Collective Worship.
- Adults provide very good role models for the children and contribute significantly to the spiritual and moral development of the pupils.
- Pupils participate with enthusiasm in the school's sacramental preparation programme, which is led by the parish sister, following diocesan guidelines.

The quality of provision for Collective Worship is outstanding.

- Prayer is central to the life of this Catholic school and is important to everyone.
- Collective Worship experiences are carefully planned for staff, pupils and parents. Staff try to ensure that Collective Worship opportunities include a variety of prayer styles and that pupils are engaged in them.
- Pupils, parents and staff speak positively about and embrace the experiences offered.
- School staff are becoming skilled at helping the children prepare and lead Collective Worship. They have good knowledge of the church's customs, rites and heritage and use their knowledge to provide opportunities for the children to develop basic liturgies.
- The school has close links with the parish and pupils attend weekly mass and many parish events. A personalised school missal has greatly helped pupils understand the key parts and order of the mass. Parishioners enjoy and appreciate the involvement of pupils in the parish liturgies.

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

- Leaders are passionate about ensuring high quality Collective Worship. They have an expert knowledge of how to deliver quality Collective Worship, which they share effectively with staff and pupils. They are excellent role models.
- Leaders have a thorough understanding of the church year and are able to lead staff and pupils of all faiths to an understanding of church traditions and their relevance for life today.
- Monitoring systems are in place and leaders take their responsibility seriously, regularly providing feedback on developmental ideas to all staff. Evidence of monitoring and evaluation is plentiful and demonstrates how leaders ensure that pupils and families are given opportunities to take part in different forms of Collective Worship.
- Liturgical and spiritual development is seen as a priority. Professional development opportunities are offered to all staff through diocesan training, cluster meetings with local schools and in staff meetings.
- Leaders have a clear vision for how the Collective Worship will move to outstanding by developing different forms of prayer.
- Sacramental preparation follows diocesan guidelines and the school works closely with the parish to give pupils all the support they can.

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

1

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

- Almost all pupils enjoy Religious Education and can explain its value. They understand that it is a core subject and are keen to do well. They work hard during lessons and behaviour for learning is excellent.
- Pupils make good progress across a range of skills and are developing well in their knowledge and understanding. They demonstrate good prior knowledge and are able to use this well in their new learning.
- Pupils have an understanding of how well they have done and how to improve, although most are not aware of the levels of attainment achieved in pieces of work.
- Current tracking shows that the standards of attainment of the large majority of pupils in each year group are at least in line with diocesan averages, although there are inconsistencies in assessment across classes.
- As a result of effective support staff, pupils with special educational needs and disabilities are well supported and achieve well according to their age and capacity.

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

- Teachers have good subject knowledge and they use diocesan plans and guidance to good effect. Tasks are often differentiated, although some differentiation is by outcome.
- In the best lessons teachers use a range of resources, such as role play, to enthuse and motivate pupils. Questioning, to clarify and deepen understanding, promotes good learning. Creativity in Religious Education is a strength of the school.
- Marking and feedback are good and in the best examples, pupils are given developmental feedback for improvement and are given time to action these points to enhance learning. This is not yet consistent across all classes.
- Teachers demonstrate high expectations of behaviour and engagement and, as a result, pupils concentrate well.
- Effective assessment procedures are embedded into Religious Education which inform the teacher of the level at which pupils are working. These are not always accurate and staff need a more secure idea of attainment at each level. Consequently the accuracy of assessment is inconsistent.

- Additional adult support is used well, ensuring good progress for most pupils. Relationships between teachers and pupils are very good.

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

- The headteacher ensures that her vision for Religious Education is shared through staff meetings, briefings and staff attendance at diocesan training events. As a result, Religious Education has a high profile in the school and is well planned to meet the needs of all the pupils.
- Religious Education compares favourably with other core subjects in terms of staffing, resources and time and over 80% of staff have the Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies.
- Leaders use a range of monitoring activities to regularly check on the quality of teaching and, as a result, have a very accurate picture of the strengths and areas for development. Clear steps for improvement are detailed in the school development plan.
- The strong leadership and commitment of the headteacher and Religious Education coordinator have had a significant impact on raising standards. Consequently, teaching and learning is improving.
- The Religious Education curriculum is rich and varied providing a range of interesting activities and often imaginative teaching. This fosters engagement and enables all pupils to make good progress in their learning. The curriculum meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference.
- Sacramental preparation is delivered well and in accordance with diocesan policy.
- Governors are regular visitors to the school and are routinely involved in a range of monitoring and evaluation activities. They are extremely supportive but also confident in their ability to challenge. They 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.

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.

1

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.

1

SCHOOL DETAILS

School name	St Joseph's RC Primary School
Unique reference number	8403469
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 Anne Hall
Head teacher	Mrs Madeleine Brown
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