

Diocese of Hallam



SECTION 48 INSPECTION REPORT
THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL AND RELIGIOUS
EDUCATION

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School
Rawmarsh, Rotherham

School URN	106944
Name of Chair of Governors	Fr Kieran O'Connell
Name of Headteacher	Mrs C Battersby and Mrs L Pink
Date of inspection	15th October, 2012
Section 48 Inspector	Mrs Delia Kay

“ An enthusiasm for the things of God”

Introduction

The Inspection of St Joseph's Catholic Primary School has been carried out under the requirements of the Education Act 2005, and in accordance with the Diocese of Hallam Framework and Schedule for Section 48 Inspections as approved by the Bishop of Hallam.

The process of inspection in the Diocese of Hallam has been developed as an activity of the Church to support schools in further deepening the quality of Catholic education provided.

Description of the School

St Joseph's School opened in 1936. It stands in the same grounds as St Joseph's Church and Presbytery and is a smaller than average primary school, set in an area of considerable social disadvantage. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is above average, but the proportion of pupils supported at School Action Plus, or who have a statement of special educational need is broadly in line with the national average.

Since the last inspection there have been significant improvements to the building, with the completion of a Foundation Stage Classroom and refurbishments throughout the school. More recently there have also been improvements to the playground and outdoor areas.

The children attending the school live in the immediate area and so are in the parish of St Joseph's but few have an experience of Church before they start school. The school is currently led by two Headteachers who share the Headship. This co-headship arrangement has been in place for a year and it is anticipated that it will continue for this academic year.

Information about the school

Type of School	Voluntary Aided Primary
Age profile of students	4-11
Number on roll	194
Number of students on Special Needs and Disabilities Register	48
Number of students with a Statement of Special Educational Needs	0
Number of Catholics on roll	55
Number of Other Christian Denominations	76
Number of other Faiths	3
School Address	Green Lane, Rawmarsh, Rotherham, S62 6JY
Telephone Number	01709710270
Fax Number	01709719272
Email	sjpr@rotherham.gov.uk

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL

How effective the school is in providing Catholic education	2
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The effectiveness of the school in providing a Catholic education is good. Teaching is good and the introduction of the new Religious Education programme 'Come and See' is already impacting on learning. Pupils develop a good understanding of the Catholic faith through the total experience offered to them – good teaching, good relationships, quality collective worship, excellent pastoral care, respect and acceptance of all.

Quality leadership is at the heart of the school. The Co-Headteachers work hard to maintain and strengthen the faith life of the school and Christian values underpin everything the school strives to do for its pupils. Leaders have accurately identified the strengths and areas for development and there is a clear vision in place for the school. The Parish Priest, who is also the Chair of Governors, is a regular visitor to school. His liturgical experience is used to provide excellent training for staff.

There is a warm and welcoming atmosphere in the school and its distinctive Catholic nature is immediately apparent in the displays and art work around the school.

The behaviour of the pupils during the time of the inspection was outstanding. They confidently contribute to the preparation of readings and prayers at the school's weekly Mass. The pupils are well taught and are given the opportunity to participate in liturgies which allows them to develop both spiritually and morally.

Relationships within the school are good. Parents and carers speak highly of the welcome they experience in school, as well as the excellent pastoral care the pupils receive.

The school's capacity for sustained improvement	2
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The school's capacity for sustained improvement is good. The Headteachers offer strong leadership and support. The co-headship is working well and the future leaders are currently being trained so that they can take on new roles of responsibility, when one of the Heads retires. The Religious Education Co-ordinator supports colleagues and monitors teaching effectively. The implementation of the new marking policy will further improve standards in the school, along with the embedding of 'Come and See'. This new syllabus will enliven and enrich the quality of teaching and learning.

New governors are joining the Governing Body and there is a governor responsible for Religious Education who is pro-active in working with the Religious Education Co-ordinator to monitor standards in school. The Vice Chair of Governors has recently arranged some excellent governor training, which was well attended by other local Catholic schools and fully intends to repeat this in the future.

As the capacity to support IT has recently improved, the development of an interactive and informative school website, that enhances communication with parents, carers and the wider community, will be possible.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Embed the 'Come and See' programme so that all staff are confident in their planning and teaching.
- Develop assessment procedures using guidance from the Diocese to ensure that assessment informs future planning and has a positive impact on learning.
- Ensure that differentiation challenges the higher achievers.
- Use ICT in RE lessons to enhance teaching and learning.
- Develop a school website.

PUPILS

How good outcomes are for pupils taking particular account of variations between different groups	2
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The outcomes for pupils are good. Pupils of all abilities make good progress overall but not at a consistent rate across all the year groups. They show an active interest in lessons and have an appetite to know more. The older pupils in particular volunteer very thoughtful responses when questioned. All pupils were fully engaged in their learning in the lessons observed. The standard of written work is good but could be further improved in some classes by careful differentiation.

Pupils with special educational needs learn as well as their peers and are well supported by talented Teaching Assistants.

The quality of Collective Worship is good. Pupils responded very positively to the Monday morning assembly introducing 'The Year of Faith'. They confidently answered questions and demonstrated a good understanding of this new initiative. There was a quiet and respectful atmosphere and the behaviour of the pupils was exemplary. Pupils are given a wide variety of opportunities to pray and lead Acts of Worship, which deepens their spiritual development. Weekly ethos statements are used as the focus for class prayers and these further deepen the pupils' spiritual and moral development. A Friday prayer group was being introduced by the Year 1 teacher and all pupils were invited to join. As a start to the 'Year of Faith' the pupils will be compiling their own school prayer book.

The pupil's contribution to the life of the school is good. They are proud of their school and through the school council pupils are able to express their views and suggest ways of improving school life. The school recently got a mention and a photograph in the local press, for their success in raising money for the Macmillan Nurses. This is only an example of the many charities the pupils support.

PROVISION:

How effective the provision is in promoting Catholic education	2
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The quality of teaching is good. At least 10% of teaching time is devoted to Religious Education. Assemblies and weekly Mass attendance provide other opportunities for pupils to deepen their understanding of the Catholic faith. Lessons are well planned, with teachers using a variety of approaches to capture the pupil's interest – pictures, powerpoint, video, drama and in one lesson observed, a baby was used to demonstrate the rites of Baptism. As assessment procedures become embedded, marking of pupil's work will show them how to improve and in turn standards will rise further. Teachers demonstrate good questioning skills and use these effectively to deepen pupil's knowledge and understanding. They have good classroom management skills and high expectations of good behaviour.

Good relationships throughout school create a warm, positive learning environment. Teaching Assistants are deployed effectively and vulnerable pupils are well supported. Teaching Assistants make a valuable contribution to pupils' successful outcomes. Through the Learning Mentor school is able to offer high quality pastoral support to pupils and their families, which is appreciated by parents and carers.

Parents are welcomed into school to attend parents' evenings, assemblies, celebrations, fund raising events, adult workshops and are keen to support their children and the work of the school. However, they are more reticent when invited to improve their own learning. The leadership is working hard to try and remove the barriers to adult learning.

The school provides 'Rainbows' sessions twice a year for pupils experiencing bereavement or loss of any kind. This is regarded as a very successful programme, with many children choosing to take part. A variety of after school clubs run, which the school council talked enthusiastically about. The breakfast club gives parents the opportunity to drop their child off early and go to work, and is well supported by parents.

The school is well resourced and provides a bright, stimulating and up-lifting environment for pupils and staff. It is maintained and cleaned to a high standard and the newly built foundation unit and created outdoor play area, adds to the excellent provision.

LEADERS AND MANAGERS

How effective leaders and managers are in developing the Catholic life of the school	2
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The Co-Headteachers together with staff and governors are good at developing the Catholic life of the school. They give high priority to promoting Catholic principles and values. Staff provide positive role models in nurturing the pupils in a knowledge of the Catholic faith, which in turn adds to the spiritual and moral development of the pupils.

Governors receive regular and accurate information from the Co-Headteachers on school issues and respond promptly with support and guidance. They have a good understanding of the challenges facing the school and are involved in setting appropriate priorities for improvement. The Chair of Governors is a frequent visitor to school and his presence is welcomed.

The Religious Education Curriculum provides opportunities to learn about other faiths and traditions and to respect difference. It promotes attitudes of respect and tolerance for all faiths and those with none of which there are a considerable number at St Joseph's School.

Good links exist between home, school, parish and the wider community. Parents speak highly of the school and praise staff for responding quickly to parental concerns. The school actively supports parish sacramental preparation.

SUMMARY OF INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Key for inspection grades:

Grade 1 Outstanding Grade 2 Good Grade 3 Satisfactory Grade 4 Inadequate

Overall effectiveness	2
The school's capacity for sustained improvement	2
How good outcomes are for pupils, taking particular account of variations between different groups	2
<input type="checkbox"/> how well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education	2
<input type="checkbox"/> the quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
<input type="checkbox"/> the quality of learning for pupils with particular learning needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<input type="checkbox"/> pupils' attainment in Religious Education	2
<input type="checkbox"/> the extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life of the school	1
<input type="checkbox"/> how well pupils respond to and participate in the school's collective worship	2
How effective the provision is in promoting Catholic Education	2
<input type="checkbox"/> the quality of teaching and purposeful learning in Religious Education	2
<input type="checkbox"/> the effectiveness of assessment and academic guidance in Religious Education	2
<input type="checkbox"/> the extent to which the Religious Education curriculum meets pupils' needs	1
<input type="checkbox"/> the quality of collective worship provided by the school	1
How effective leaders and managers are in developing the Catholic life of the school	2
<input type="checkbox"/> how well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic life of the school and plan improvement to outcomes for pupils	2
<input type="checkbox"/> how well leaders and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education and plan for improvement to outcomes for pupils	2
<input type="checkbox"/> the extent to which the governing body provides effective challenge and support for the Catholic dimension of the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory and canonical responsibilities are met	2
<input type="checkbox"/> how well leaders and managers develop partnerships with other providers, organisations and services in order to promote Catholic learning and well-being	2
<input type="checkbox"/> how effectively leaders and managers promote community cohesion.	2

Further copies of this report are obtainable from St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Rawmarsh, or from the Diocese of Hallam Schools' Department, The Hallam Pastoral Centre, St Charles Street, Sheffield S9 3WU Tel: 0114 2566440.