



DIOCESE OF BRENTWOOD



Inspection Report

Name of School: St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School

LEA: Essex URN: 115152

Inspection Date: 14th March 2008

Reporting Inspectors: Miss Colette Dawson and Mr. Anthony Castle

This Inspection was carried out under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of School: Primary
School Category: Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils: 4 - 11
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 212
Appropriate Authority: The Governing Body
Date of previous Inspection: June 2002

School Address:
Vaagen Road,
Canvey Island, Essex, SS8 9DP
Tel. No. 01268 683903
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Chair of Governors: Mrs. Pam McCarthy
Headteacher: Mr. Paul Collingwood

Introduction:

The Inspection was carried out under Section 48 of the Education (Schools) Act 2005 by inspectors appointed by the Diocesan Bishop at the request of the Governing Body of the School.

The Inspectors acknowledge and are appreciative of the full support, co-operation and courtesy they enjoyed from Governors, Headteacher, Staff and Pupils of the School both before and during the Inspection. The Inspectors wish to express their gratitude to all concerned.

The focus of the Section 48 Inspection was:

- Classroom Religious Education
- The Catholic nature of the School through;
 1. Worship
 2. Links with the Catholic and wider community
- Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development

The Section 48 Report

**St Joseph's Catholic Primary School,
Vaagen Road
Canvey Island
Essex
SS8 9DP**

Head Teacher: Mr. Paul Collingwood

Date of Inspection: 14th March 2008

Description of the School:

St Joseph's Primary School is a voluntary aided Catholic school situated on Canvey Island in the Essex Local Education Authority and in the Diocese of Brentwood. St Joseph's is a popular one form entry school which is located at a short distance from the parish church of Our Lady of Canvey and the English Martyrs. The majority of the children are baptised Catholics.

Record of Evidence Base:

Two Inspectors were in the School for the equivalent of two inspection days.

- The study of pre-inspection documentation including the Self-Evaluation Form/ Denominational Provision (SEF/DP).
- The observation of lessons.
- Scrutiny of pupils' work.
- Attendance at a School Mass celebrating the feast of St. Joseph.
- Meetings with Head Teacher who is also the R.E. Co-ordinator, the Parish Priest and the School Council.
- Observations of R.E. Displays in the Class rooms and around the school.

What the School does well:

St Joseph's is a good Catholic School with outstanding features. It is firmly committed to developing its Catholic identity under the inspirational leadership of its Head Teacher who is very well supported by his Leadership team, committed Governors, highly motivated and stable Staff, who work effectively as a team.

Religious Education (R.E.) is an area of high focus in the school. The **'Here I Am'** programme, recommended by the Bishop of the Diocese, is fully implemented in Years Reception through to Year Five. The staff meet regularly and reflect on the current topic to ensure a clear understanding of the 'Relate' part of the process. They clearly understand the **'Here I Am'** process and use it effectively to provide a high quality and stimulating R.E. curriculum. There is a pilot scheme in place for Year Six which is monitored regularly. The scheme is coherent and developmental; the methods observed using Information, Communication, Technology (ICT) appeared to be engaging.

The overall quality of teaching and learning in R.E. ranges from good to outstanding. Lessons are well planned and learning objectives are stated, explained and revisited. In all of the lessons observed, pupils were on task, engaged, highly motivated, challenged and enjoying their R.E. 'R.E. is fun!' according to a Year Two child. Behaviour is excellent. Pupils were confident, enthusiastic and purposeful and worked well together.

Assessment in R.E. is consistent in all year groups. There is a clear assessment focus for each of the **'Here I Am'** topics which gives excellent evidence of **'Relate'** knowledge and understanding and positive feedback is given to pupils. Year Six pupils have an assessment at the end of each topic.

The leadership and management of the R.E. by the R.E. Co-ordinator, who is also the Head teacher, are outstanding. He monitors R.E. lessons and is very supportive of all staff, teachers and learning assistants. His line of management ensures that there are good links between R.E., the liturgical life of the school and Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education. St Joseph's is using 'A Journey In Love', the Diocesan programme of study for Sex and Relationship Education (SRE)

The School meets both the national and diocesan requirements for the allocation of curriculum time for taught R.E.

Collective Worship, liturgical celebrations, the celebration of major Saints' feast days are all strengths of St Joseph's School. During the Inspection day the inspectors attended a School Mass, celebrating the feast of St. Joseph. Many parents and grandparents were in attendance. The children's behaviour, attention and participation at Mass were excellent. Prayer is high on the school's agenda and each classroom has a prayer focus with appropriate artefacts and '**Here I Am**' displays.

St Joseph's School promotes an outstanding and tangible Catholic ethos which underpins everything the school does. This is subscribed to by all the stakeholders – governors, the Head Teacher and his leadership team, staff, pupils and their parents, 'The school has a distinctly Catholic ethos' (Parent's Questionnaire).

The School provides outstanding opportunities for the pupils to develop a strong sense of community through activities which engender feelings of loyalty and belonging. It is an inclusive school which demonstrates an outstanding exemplar of community and social cohesion.

The School continues to develop strong links with other schools in the Deanery and the Diocese. The emphasis on community and the links between the home and the school are an outstanding feature of the school.

Displays and artefacts in R.E., in the classrooms and around the school, are very good.

St Joseph's School values links with parents with every effort being made to improve and maintain communication with parents as their children progress through the school. Parental support is an outstanding feature of St. Joseph's School. The responses to the parent's questionnaire revealed that the school is held in high regard by the vast majority of parents and the pupils were unanimously keen to attend school. The governors of the school are dedicated, hardworking and supportive. The Parish Priest is the link governor for R.E. He goes into the school when invited.

Pupils are given every opportunity to become responsible citizens. This responsible citizenship is evident in their concern for each other and for those who are in need. The school supports CAFOD and is twinned with an impoverished school in Malawi, Africa. This is particularly evidenced by the work and role of the School Council and the generous fundraising for local, national and international charities. The School Council is small but very articulate. It is very active and proud of its achievements. The Council is led by a very able pupil chairperson.

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is outstanding. The OfSTED report (13th June 2007) stated, 'Pupils' personal development is outstanding. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent, reflecting the Catholic ethos of the school. Pupils are polite and friendly and their behaviour is excellent.' The Section 48 inspectors fully endorse these judgements.

What needs to be improved:

There are three specific areas requiring improvement:

- The Self Evaluation Form (SEF) needs to be completed more fully. The school should sell itself in the 'SEF'.
- The display feature in the entrance area needs to be updated and made more of.
- The Mission Statement was in evidence but it is too long and repetitive. We recommend that it is revisited.

Overall, St Joseph's Primary School is a good Catholic School with outstanding features. It prepares its pupils so that they transfer to their Secondary Schools as happy, well-adjusted young people who are a credit to themselves, their parents and their school. The School owes much of its success to the strong and committed leadership of its Head teacher and his Leadership Team and to the valued support and expertise of his staff, governors and parents.