



DIOCESE OF BRENTWOOD



Inspection Report

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

LEA: Newham URN: 102772

Inspection Dates: 3rd March 2008

Reporting Inspectors: Sr. Jude Groden RSM & Ms. Colette Dawson

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: 3 - 11
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 236
Appropriate Authority: The Governing Body
Date of previous Inspection: May 2003

School Address:
Shipman Road,
Custom House, London, E16 3DT
Tel. No. 020 7476 1658
Fax No. 020 7511 4209
Chair of Governors: Mr. Terence Flynn
Headteacher: Mr. James Allen

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. Joachim's Catholic Primary School,
Shipman Road,
Custom House,
London,
E16 3DT**

Head Teacher: Mr. James Allen

Date of Inspection: 3rd March 2008

Description of the School:

St Joachim's Primary School is a voluntary aided Catholic school situated in the London Borough of Newham and under the Trusteeship of the Diocese of Brentwood. It is an average-sized primary school located in an inner city area that has high levels of social deprivation. The school serves the Royal Docks parish which incorporates the churches of St Mark's in Becton, St Anne's in Custom House and St John's for Silvertown and North Woolwich.

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 complete lessons.
- Scrutiny of pupils' work.
- Meetings with the Head Teacher who is also the R.E. Co-ordinator, the Parish Priest, a Religious Sister who regularly comes into the school and the School Council.
- Participation in prayer at Staff Briefing, a Whole School Assembly two hymn practises.
- Observations of R.E. Displays in the Class rooms and around the school.

What the School does well:

St Joachim's is an outstanding Catholic School which displays many inspirational features. It is firmly committed to developing its Catholic identity under the inspirational and outstanding leadership of its Head teacher who is very well supported by his Deputy and Leadership team, committed Governors, highly motivated Staff, Pupils and the Parish Priest.

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. The 'Before You Begin' element of the process is securely embedded at the beginning of each topic. They clearly understand the '**Here I Am**' process and use it effectively to provide a high quality and stimulating curriculum. Information Communication Technology (ICT) is used effectively to enhance the quality of lessons.

The overall quality of teaching and learning in R. E. is 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. Behaviour is outstanding. "Behaviour is excellent" Ofsted 2007. Pupils were enthusiastic and purposeful and worked well together. Relationships and class management are recognised strengths of the school.

Assessment in R.E. is consistent in all year groups. It is systematic, rigorous and informative. There is a clear assessment focus for each of the '**Here I Am**' topics which gives excellent evidence of '**Relate**' knowledge and understanding. "Topic assessments indicate that the children's religious literacy particularly around scripture and sacraments is developing and shows progression across the years." (School SEF 2008) Positive feedback is given to the pupils and this enables them to make this progress. Assessment for Learning (AFL) is embedded in the R.E. lesson plans.

The leadership and management of R.E. by the R.E. Co-ordinator, who is also the Head teacher is outstanding. His leadership drives the assessment procedures used by all the teachers, he monitors R.E. lessons and is very supportive of all staff, teachers

and learning assistants. “75% of teachers are practicing Catholics which underpins and supports the teaching of religious education within the school” (School SEF 2008)

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 and the school’s links with the local parish, are all strengths of St Joachim’s School. There are prayer clubs, hymn practises, regular Eucharistic Celebrations, Benediction, Rosary club, opportunities for meditation and Christmas and Easter services. The liturgical seasons, especially those of Advent and Christmas and Lent and Easter, are high points in the School’s calendar There is a ‘Prayer Room which provides a place for quiet reflection.

St. Joachim’s School promotes an outstanding and tangible Catholic ethos. “The school has a strong Catholic ethos that celebrates diversity and puts others first.” Ofsted 2007 This is subscribed to by all the stakeholders – Governors, the Head teacher and his leadership team, staff, pupils and their parents. The School provides outstanding opportunities for the pupils to develop a strong sense of community through activities which engender feelings of loyalty and belonging. The School continues to develop strong links with other schools in the Deanery and beyond. The emphasis on community cohesion is an outstanding strength of the school.

Displays, artefacts in R.E., banners and the ‘Prayer Focus’, in the classrooms and around the School, are outstanding.

St. Joachim’s Primary School values links with parents with every effort being made to improve and maintain communication with parents as their children progress through the school. There are fortnightly newsletters, parental consultation meetings with a crèche facility provided and Parent Workshops are in place to enable parents to support their children in R.E. The Ofsted Report (September 2007) stated “Parents are overwhelmingly in favour of the school’s work. Speaking for many, a parent commented, ‘Teachers make the children feel special individually.’” The Section 48 inspectors fully endorse this judgement. The governors of the school are very dedicated, hardworking and supportive of everything the school does. The Leadership by the Chair of Governors and school governance in general are both outstanding and major strengths of the school. There are strong links between the school and the parish and the parish priest. The Head teacher is a member of the Parish Council and he meets with the Parish Priest each week.

Pupils are given every opportunity to become responsible citizens. St. Joachim’s School participates in the Annual Diocesan Citizenship Awards which takes place in the Spring Term each year. This is evident in their concern for each other and for those who are in need. This is particularly evidenced by the work and role of the School Council and the generous fundraising for the charities that the School supports. The older pupils take on a variety of responsible roles within the school community. The School Council is proactive and articulate. They run a ‘fruitilicious’ snack bar at playtime that stocks ‘really exotic fruit from different countries.’

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is an outstanding strength of the School. “This inspirational school is outstanding in every area of its work” Ofsted 2007.

What needs to be improved:

There are no specific areas requiring improvement other than ensuring that the areas highlighted by the Section 48 Self Evaluation Form continue to be addressed.

Overall, St. Joachim’s Primary School is an outstanding Catholic School which displays many strengths and inspirational 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 the Head teacher, his Deputy and his Leadership Team and to the valued support and expertise of his staff and governors.