



SECTION 48 INSPECTION REPORT

Canonical Inspection under Canon 806 on behalf of the
Archbishop of Southwark and Inspection of
Denominational Education under Section 48
of the Education Act 2005

URN 100638

**St Joseph's College
Beulah Hill
Upper Norwood
SE19 3HL**

Inspection date: 19th and 20th April 2016

Chair of Governors:
Headteacher:
Inspectors:

Mr Pat Sweeney
Mr David Garrido
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SECTION 48

Introduction

Description of the school

St Joseph's College is a voluntary academy in the Trusteeship of the De La Salle Order and is located in the Croydon Deanery of the Archdiocese of Southwark. The school is funded by the Education Funding Agency. The principal parishes that it serves are St Chad's in South Norwood, Virgo Fidelis in Upper Norwood and St Mary's in West Croydon.

The proportion of pupils who are baptised Catholics is approximately 33% which shows a decline since the previous inspection which took place in February 2012.

The proportion of curriculum time currently allocated to Religious Education is 8%, which is an increase since the previous inspection but less than the 10% required.

The school takes boys aged 11-18 years of age and admits girls to the mixed sixth form. The number of pupils on roll at the time of the inspection was 1161 including 296 in the sixth form.

The prior attainment of the pupils on entry to the school is broadly in line with the national average but above the local average.

The percentage of pupils where English is an Additional Language is well above the national average but the percentage of pupils with statements or Educational Health and Care Plans is below the national average.

The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals is 8.30% slightly above the national average but below the local average.

Since the last Section 48 Inspection in February 2012, a new and experienced Headteacher has been appointed to the school since January 2016. At the time of the inspection, the school was commencing the process of appointing a new Head of Religious Education following the resignation of the previous post holder.

Date of previous inspection:

22nd & 23rd February 2012

Overall Grade:

3

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1 Outstanding
Grade 2 Good

Grade 3 Requires improvement
Grade 4 Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school in providing Catholic Education

GRADE
3

St Joseph's College currently requires improvement but increasingly has the capacity to be a highly effective Catholic school. The school has many good features but in the past has experienced weak leadership and governance resulting in the failure to fully develop the potential of both pupils and staff. A new Headteacher was appointed in January 2016 and he has quickly instigated a programme of improvement. As a Catholic school in the Trusteeship of the De La Salle Order, it has a clear mission to provide quality Christian education to both the local Catholic community as well as the wider community.

The school's strong Catholic ethos is reflected in the very positive relationships within a highly inclusive community where everyone is respected whatever their belief. Teachers and support staff work hard to ensure the pupils feel safe and secure and both pupils and their parents value this strength of the school.

Due to issues of leadership and governance since the last inspection in February 2012, little progress has been made in implementing the recommendations of the 2012 inspection report. However, since the appointment of new Headteacher clear action plans have been agreed with the governing body to fully address these issues and the school now has the capacity to improve.

What steps need to be taken to improve further?

Governors, Headteacher and staff should:

- Improve the outcomes of pupils in GCSE Religious Studies to match those achieved in GCSE English and GCSE mathematics, which are significantly higher.
- Review the schemes of work at Key Stage 3, Key Stage 4 and Post 16 to ensure these support teachers in delivering effective lessons, which have pace and challenge the pupils to support to achieve better outcomes.
- Ensure the Religious Education Department is fully resourced and that resources are deployed effectively to enhance the quality of teaching and learning.
- Ensure the curriculum time for Religious Education is kept under review to meet the requirements of the Bishops' Conference and the Diocese, i.e. 10% of curriculum time is given to the teaching of Religious Education.
- Improve the quality and provision of general Religious Education for Post 16 pupils, so that it is 5% of Curriculum time and offered in Year 12 and Year 13.
- Ensure governors are fully involved in the planning and evaluation of the Catholic life of the school as well as the provision for Religious Education.

- Allow pupils to be more involved in the planning, delivery and evaluation of Collective Worship.

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The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life of the school

Pupils at St Joseph's greatly benefit from the strong, caring and supportive environment provided by the school. The Lasallian ethos of Faith, Service and Community is clearly evident throughout the school. The pupils feel very safe at the school and their behaviour is a growing strength of the school. The pupils are respectful of one another and to their teachers both in the classroom and around the school. The new behaviour policy has been welcomed by the pupils who have responded positively to its introduction and they made clear to inspectors it was leading to improved attitudes towards their learning.

Pupils are given a range of opportunities to support those who are less well off. The school has, for a number of years, supported a school in Ghana and has raised over £30,000 to provide accommodation and equipment. The school has also linked with the British Home, a local residential centre for those with physical disabilities and provides to the residents both practical and financial support. Pupils also support the work of the local St. Vincent De Paul group by providing hampers to needy persons at both Christmas and during Lent.

Pupils benefit from a dedicated and high profile Chaplain who is well known to all the pupils. He is visible at break and lunchtimes around the school and pupils very much appreciate the support he provides to them as well as the range of Collective Worship he organises.

The Chaplain also organises a range of retreats each year including visits to Kintbury and is planning to broaden the range of retreats on offer next year and extend the number of pupils who participate in the retreats.

Pupils are supported by a well-resourced and proactive Learning Support Department. Pupils have access to counsellors and the school has recently appointed a Family Liaison Worker. Excellent support is also provided to the growing number of pupils with English as an Additional Language.

The level of response from parents to the survey sent as part of the inspection was good. Parents were generally very supportive of the school. Their responses highlighted the high level of care offered to the pupils by the staff, although they felt that more information could be provided to them in regards to the Religious Education Programme and Collective Worship provided by the school. Parents felt strongly that the school helps the pupils to develop a clear sense of right and wrong and responsible attitudes to society.

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education

Pupils made clear to inspectors that they enjoyed their Religious Education lessons but indicated that they did not always find the lessons challenging. They particularly enjoyed discussing their beliefs with each other and opportunities to be involved in role-play and debates.

The achievement of pupils in Religious Education is not as high as in English and Mathematics. The ability of pupils on entry to the school is around the national average and above the local average. Effective teaching in English and Mathematics allow the pupils to make better than expected progress but this is not yet the case in Religious Education.

How well pupils respond to and participate in Collective Worship

The response of pupils to Collective Worship is good. In an assembly lead by the Headteacher seen during the inspection, the pupils sang a rousing rendition of 'Shine Jesus Shine', which was sung with gusto. The theme of the assembly linked to St John's Gospel 13:33-35 "I give you a new commandment: love one another." Pupils were actively involved in readings and the Headteacher gave an inspirational talk on the theme. Pupils' behaviour in the assembly was exemplary supported by the very special atmosphere of the beautiful school chapel where all pupils attend assembly at least once a week.

Although Mass is not available on a weekly basis at the school, pupils have an opportunity to participate in Mass celebrated by local parish priests on major Feast Days such as All Saints Day and the Feast of the Immaculate Conception.

Non-Eucharistic liturgies also take place during Advent as well as The Stations of the Cross during the period of Lent. Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament is also offered every Friday morning. Benediction takes in the chapel on the first Friday of each month for both pupils and staff. Pupils also have the opportunity for Reconciliation at least twice a year.

How well leaders, governors and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic life of the school and plan and implement improvement to outcomes for pupils

Until the recent appointment of the new Headteacher, leaders and governors were not working effectively together. The current school improvement plan does not highlight specific plans or targets to develop the Catholic life of the school and this has prevented governors from evaluating the work of the school and challenging senior leaders where progress has not been made. The new Headteacher is working with a restructured and increasingly effective governing body. Committees are being allocated specific responsibilities for planning, in conjunction with the senior leadership team, new developments to improve provision of the Catholic life of the school and evaluating the impact of these changes in terms of the outcomes for the pupils.

New staff joining the school are inducted into the ethos of the school with support from the school chaplain. Each member of staff is provided with a handbook to guide them in understanding the Lassalian ethos of the school.

How well leaders, governors and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education and plan and implement for improvement to outcomes for pupils

Governors and leaders know the strengths and weaknesses of the Religious Education department and now have clear plans to address the priorities they have correctly identified as needing urgent attention.

Leadership of the Religious Education department was in a state of transition at the time of the inspection. The current subject leader had relinquished his post shortly before the inspection commenced and a new subject leader has yet to be appointed. The school's self-evaluation correctly identified that leadership of the department was a concern and preventing the department from moving forward.

The quality of teaching and how purposeful learning is in Religious Education

The school has correctly identified that the quality of teaching in Religious Education requires improvement and the inspectors agreed with this view. In the most effective lessons, pupils were eager to participate in role-play and in discussions where effective questioning encouraged the pupils to think more deeply about the topics covered. In such lessons, pupils made good progress and were fully engaged in their learning. In a very effective lesson seen during the inspection, pupils were seen discussing sexual ethics in relation to a number of challenging scenarios. The pupils discussed these issues in a mature and considered way and pupils made good progress.

In other lessons seen, the pace of the lesson was slow and the work expected from the pupils was not challenging enough with missed opportunities for deep learning to take place. In some cases, there was little or no differentiation of tasks to reflect the range of ability of the pupils and this resulted in some pupils being off task.

Exercise books showed clear evidence of marking but the quality of feedback to the pupils was variable preventing the majority of pupils from taking more responsibility for their learning. In the best work seen, it was well presented and care was taken in regards to grammar and punctuation. However, in too many exercise books seen during the inspection, this was not the case.

Although all lessons seen were planned and were part of a scheme of work, lessons need reviewing to ensure they provide both better pace and challenge to the pupils.

There was a lack of good quality resources for teachers to use in lessons linked to the schemes of work and the Religious Education department should work collaboratively to develop more effective schemes of work and learn from best practice in other local Catholic schools.

The learning environment occupied by the Religious Education department also needs to be improved. Classrooms are poorly decorated and are, in some cases too small. Each classroom had displays of posters and Catholic artefacts and some work of pupils but overall the current accommodation does not help to provide a bright and stimulating environment for the pupils.

The extent to which the Religious Education curriculum promotes pupils' learning

Courses offered by the school are in accordance with the Curriculum Directory. At Key Stage 3, *'The Way, The Truth and the Life'* Religious Education is followed and includes the study of other world faiths. At Key Stage 4, pupils follow the AQA course, which includes St Mark's Gospel and Christian Ethics. This will be replaced by the new GCSE course offered by AQA and pupils in Year 9 had commenced this course at the time of the inspection. This course also offers a module on Islam, which is likely to be adopted to reflect the multi-faith nature of the intake at the school.

At Post 16, the pupils follow the N.O.C.N General Religious Education course in Year 12 but the school does not offer the course in Year 13. The school is working in collaboration with another local Catholic school to address this shortfall for the next academic year. The school urgently needs to review provision at Post 16 and in particular for pupils in Year 13.

The most significant factor affecting pupils' learning in Religious Education has been the shortfall in curriculum time allocated to the subject. This was an issue identified in the previous two inspections. Although the subject was allocated additional time since the last inspection, it remains below the 10% requirement. Leaders and governors have agreed to a new timetable from September 2016 when 10% of curriculum time will be allocated to the subject for a 3-year GCSE course starting with Year 9. This will have a significant impact on the progress of pupils in the subject taking into account that the pupils make better progress at Key Stage 4 compared to Key Stage 3.

The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school

The school provides a wide range of opportunities for Collective Worship that is of a good quality. The chaplain takes a leading role in organising Collective Worship at the school ensuring that it is both accessible and relevant in a faith community. Pupils have a range of opportunities to participate in Collective Worship but are less involved in the planning and evaluation of Collective Worship. Allowing pupil involvement will encourage more ownership and engagement from them and further enhance their experience of Collective Worship at the school.