
The Diocese of Hallam Section 48 Report

The Catholic Life of the School and Religious Education

St Joseph's Primary, a Catholic Voluntary Academy

Diocese of Hallam



SECTION 48 INSPECTION REPORT

THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

St Joseph's Primary, A Catholic Voluntary Academy Dinnington

School URN	140590
Name of Chair of Governors	Ms Claire McKinney
Name of Head teacher	Executive Head: Amanda Wassell Deputy Head: Julie Fraser
Date of inspection	Wednesday 17 th May 2017
Section 48 Inspector	Peter Davison

“ An enthusiasm for the things of God”

Introduction

The Inspection of St Joseph's, a Catholic Voluntary Academy 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 Catholic Primary School is a smaller than average-sized primary school within the Diocese of Hallam. There are currently six classes, Foundation Stage 2 through to Year 6, and a separate nursery for Foundation Stage 1 pupils. The Key Stage 2 classes are mixed-age. The school currently has an Executive Headteacher, and a substantive Headteacher has been appointed to start in September 2017.

St Joseph's is a Catholic Voluntary Academy situated in Dinnington, with the parish church close-by. St Joseph's converted to Academy status on 1st July 2014 and is part of the Holy Spirit Umbrella Trust with St Bernard's High School, St Bede's (Kimberworth), St Mary's (Maltby), St Gerard's (Thryberg) and St Mary's (Herringthorpe).

The majority of pupils are white British. The percentage of pupils who identified as SEN(D) and the number of disadvantaged pupils supported by the Pupil Premium grant are all above the national figure.

Type of School	Primary
Age profile of students	3-11
Number on roll	196
Number of students on Special Needs and Disabilities Register	40
Number of students with a Statement of Special Educational Needs	6
Number of Catholics on roll	51 (26%)
Number of Other Christian Denominations	97 (49%)
Number of other Faiths	2 (1%)
No religious affiliation	46 (23%)
School Address	St Joseph's Catholic Voluntary Academy Lidgett Lane Dinnington S25 7QD
Telephone Number	01909 5500123
Email	Dinnington-st.joseph's.primary@rotherham.gov.uk
School Website	http://www.stjosephs-dinnington.co.uk

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LEADERS AND MANAGERS

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OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

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The overall effectiveness judgement is based on all the evidence available.

- Outcomes for pupils,
- The provision for Catholic Education
- Leaders and Managers

OUTCOMES FOR PUPILS

How good outcomes are for pupils, taking into account variations between groups.

The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life of the school.	2
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education.	2
How well pupils respond to and participate in the schools' Collective Worship	1

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

- St Joseph's offers a warm and welcoming environment where all members are valued and respected. Pupils are proud of their school and take an active part in all aspects of school life. Parents report "There is a great sense of community - everyone does their part to make the school the best it can be."
- The Catholic Life of the school is evidently at the heart of the school's ethos and mission; as a result, pupils' spiritual and moral development is good. Pupils are encouraged to take an active role in evaluating the Catholic Life of the school consequently the school is an inclusive community with a clear, shared vision and a strong sense of belonging.
- Standards of behaviour are good; pupils are polite and alert to the needs of others. They report "Everyone is kind to each other and any problems get sorted quickly."
- Pupils lead and organise fundraising events for local, national and international charitable causes such as CAFOD, Mission Together, The Good Shepherd, Lighthouse Charity, St Wilfrid's Centre and Bluebell Wood, a popular weekly fund-raising event being 'Bun Friday.' Through such enterprises, children demonstrate a heartfelt eagerness to find out about and help those in need.
- Through such strategies as Circle Time and Statements of Belief children are encouraged to express their views, listen to the views of others and understand the need to forgive and be forgiven.
- Adults provide good role models for the children and contribute significantly to the spiritual and moral development of the pupils. The Nurture Group, run by a member of the support staff, provides valuable pastoral support for pupils experiencing personal difficulties.

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

- Through lesson observations and scrutiny of pupil workbooks, standards of learners' work in Religious Education are good and pupils are achieving in line with or above national expectations.
- Pupils say they enjoy Religious Education as teachers make lessons interesting through drama, video clips and probing questioning which helps them to think more deeply. The work in their books is attractive and well-presented.
- Pupils demonstrate a secure level of religious literacy and knowledge of scripture. They articulate bible stories extremely well and explain what meaning they have for us today.
- Pupils are able to respond to teacher's marking comments and can evaluate and improve their own work through an effective marking policy. Their knowledge, understanding and skills are developing, helping them to become more independent in their learning.
- The 'Come and See' programme is used very effectively along with other resources and support materials. Pupils acquire a good knowledge and understanding from first entry to the school and use this as a firm foundation to further their progress.

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

- This is a real strength of the school evidenced by how pupils show enthusiasm, reverence and active participation in Acts of Worship. In an observed assembly the children led a reflection on St John's Gospel: "Anyone who believes in me will do what I have done and more". They sang with great passion, fervour and all present were energised and enlightened by the experience.
- They enjoy praying together in class, in school liturgies and in Mass.
- They are reflective and focused during Collective Worship and from the earliest age pupils participate fully in prayer. It is very evident that prayer and age-appropriate worship are fundamental aspects of life at St Joseph's. Parents report that the liturgical events they attend in school and in church are very moving, memorable and highly valued.
- Pupils are acquiring skills in planning and leading prayer and worship. The children's Liturgy group meet every Tuesday to plan preparations for Mass, assemblies and other liturgies.
- The pupils have an excellent understanding of religious seasons and festivals and the colours of the liturgical season are used well to enhance displayed work. Good quality prayer corners reflect the liturgical year and themes being explored in the Come and See programme.

PROVISION

How effective the provision is for Catholic Education

The quality of teaching and how purposeful learning is in Religious Education.	2
The extent to which the Religious Education curriculum promotes pupils' learning.	2
The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school.	1

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

- The majority of teaching is good. Teachers have good subject knowledge; their lesson planning takes good account of pupils' previous learning and effectively tailors tasks to challenge and enthuse learners.
- In lessons observed, the most successful lessons showed a range of teaching styles, good questioning techniques, clear explanations, well-paced lessons and use of technology ensuring pupil engagement. This contributes to a very good learning environment leading to good pupil progress. Using the interactive features of IT screens would enhance the learning experience.
- Records of attainment and assessment data are beginning to provide valuable information to inform the next steps in pupils' learning.
- The collegiate approach to subject leadership is a strength. Both members of staff are passionate about their roles and are having a significant impact in developing subject development. They ensure that all staff are given support in planning, assessment and providing appropriate resources.
- Pupils are positively affirmed throughout their lessons and marking now informs them of their progress and increasingly identifies how they can improve. Effort and achievement are celebrated in assemblies, parents' evenings, celebration events and on the school website.
- In the majority of lessons observed, pupils were thoughtfully encouraged to understand ideas related to the themes 'Lent and Easter' from the Come and See programme. Careful planning, challenging questions, guided discussion and quality resources encouraged pupil's enthusiastic responses. Opportunities to write at greater length would extend and add greater challenge to their recorded work.

- An interview with a visiting deacon about his role and vocation was particularly well conducted by older pupils. Carefully crafted questions led to them eliciting an absorbing and thought-provoking response from their guest speaker.
- Teaching assistants provide excellent care and support to pupils. They are deployed effectively and show sensitivity to pupils' needs. They have a positive impact on the progress of both individual learners and groups of learners.

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

- The Come and See programme, supplemented with other resources and a cross-curricular approach, is exciting and innovative drawing on a variety of skills from other areas of the curriculum.
- Pupils clearly enjoy Religious Education lessons and they understand their value. They are able to apply what they have learned in the context of their daily lives. They can discuss what they have learned and show they are reflective, not only in lessons, but generally.
- Progress is evident within lessons and throughout the school year as reflected in pupil workbooks. Assessment informs planning and helps to monitor and track pupil progress.
- Visitors to the school, including the Parish Priest and Deacon, serve to enhance provision and learning across the school. The school supports many charities throughout the year.
- The study of other world faiths such as Judaism and Islam help children respect other religious traditions.
- The annual retreat to The Briars Youth Centre in Crich helps the Year 6 children reflect on and celebrate their beliefs and commitment to their faith.

The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school is outstanding

- Collective Worship has a high profile and is central to the life of the school. It plays a key part in meeting the spiritual needs of the pupils. Opportunities are provided to enable full, active and conscious participation of the whole school community.
- There is a clear policy and planning document for Collective Worship and the school ensures that it is both regular and inclusive. The planning of worship is thorough throughout the school year and ensures that feasts, key points in the liturgical year and gospel values are given prominence and are of a high quality.

- All pupils from Early Years to Year Six are involved in Collective Worship, in a variety of forms. These are enthusiastically attended by parents, carers and parishioners and their feedback is very positive.
- Classroom focal points are of a high standard and as a result greatly enhance liturgical classroom celebrations.
- The school benefits from increasingly good links with the parish church. The parish priest gives valued support and guidance to the school in providing excellent provision for the spiritual development of staff and pupils.

LEADERS AND MANAGERS

How effective the provision is for Catholic education

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.	2
How well leaders, governors and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education and plan and implement for improvement to outcomes for pupils.	2

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 is good

- The Executive Headteacher has made a significant impact in leading and shaping the quality of school improvement. Together with the governors, staff and leadership team, all are passionately committed to providing an excellent education for every pupil in an inclusive, nurturing and happy environment shaped by Gospel values.
- School self-evaluation is very thorough, comprehensive and accurate through effective monitoring strategies. The Self Evaluation Document provides evidence of the schools rigorous monitoring, analysis and self-challenge. It is a thorough, authoritative document which guides the school very well. Leaders demonstrate a commitment to the Church's mission in education with spiritual and moral development a priority.
- The governing body plays an important role in ensuring the provision of the Catholic Life of the school permeates every aspect of school life on a daily basis. There are three meetings each year when governors and staff reflect and discuss issues concerning the Catholic Life of the school and what improvements can be made. The Executive Headteacher, governors and leadership team are excellent role models providing leadership and guidance at all levels.

- The caring relationships within school are very strong as are relationships with parents, parish and the wider community.
- Leaders ensure that parents know what is going on at school and how their children are progressing through regular communication, as well as information on the school's web site
- The School Development Plan features Religious Education and the Catholic Life of the school as a priority. Staff training is undertaken to ensure pupils are taught well and that teachers are up to date with current theological thinking and practice.
- The appointment of a parish liaison worker has improved the links between the school and the parish church. The parish is better informed about what is going on in school and children's work is often on display in church. Children made a tapestry to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the parish church and contributed exhibits for their flower festival. She has also organised visitors to school to talk about other world faiths such as Judaism and Islam.

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

- Governors and the leadership team have clearly defined monitoring structures and policies in place which enable them to self-evaluate accurately. The Self Evaluation Document provides evidence of the school's monitoring, analysis and self-challenge. It gives an accurate picture of the Catholic Life of the school, the provision for Religious Education and its analysis provides a basis to celebrate the school's strengths and also outlines areas identified for development.
- The governor with responsibility for Religious Education has a good understanding through monitoring visits to school. This helps governors make well-informed judgements.
- The Religious Education subject leader is highly focused on the school's mission and works very effectively to promote it. Through good subject knowledge and targeted support she has been effective in raising achievement and standards. She ensures that teaching staff deliver the Religious Education curriculum well. The co-ordinator for liturgy is very effective in promoting dynamic, reverent and joyful celebrations involving the children in the planning of them.
- Monitoring is timetabled and effective. Opportunities for staff evaluations, self-challenge and sharing of outstanding practice will further develop this process.
- There is a good induction, support and mentoring system in place for new members of staff. This leads to staff having greater confidence in delivering good quality lessons and a sound understanding of how to ensure pupils of all abilities make good progress.

This final section draws together all the evidence and judgements made in the preceding sections

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

How effective the school is in providing Catholic education	2
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The overall effectiveness of St Joseph's School in providing Catholic education is good

- The Executive Headteacher, subject leaders, governors and leadership team have a clear vision in developing the Catholic Life of the school. Effective leadership combined with the commitment of all members of the school community in constantly striving to improve provision is having a very positive effect on school improvement.
- St Joseph's is a happy school where children feel supported and cared for. Children feel that issues are dealt with consistently, fairly and appropriately. They appreciate the opportunities that adults give them when they need support or help with concerns.
- The provision offered by the school in developing Religious Education through a well-planned and relevant curriculum is good. Religious Education plays an important part in the moral, social, spiritual and social development of the pupils.
- Religious Education compares favourably with other core subjects in terms of resources, time given and standards reached.
- Issues raised by the Diocesan monitoring review in June 2015 have been addressed and acted upon leading to a significant impact on improved school provision.
- Teaching is generally good. Recent developments in marking strategies and assessment have led to improved teaching and learning.
- Provision for Collective Worship and prayer has been enhanced by having an enthusiastic and committed member of staff directly responsible for it. Children are being given an increasing opportunity to prepare and lead prayer and liturgy.

- Pupil behaviour is good and the friendly, welcoming atmosphere contributes to St Joseph's success. Children are keen to learn and they are secure in expressing their own views and beliefs. They are considerate to others and caring for anyone in need.

Recommendations:

- Enhance staff development by sharing and disseminating good practice already existing in school. Where possible, arrange for staff to visit other Catholic schools to observe outstanding practice.
- Strengthen good practice in assessment still further, to ensure appropriate levels of achievement and progress for pupils. Provide opportunities for greater pupil involvement in self-assessment and appropriate levels of challenge for all pupils.
- Provide opportunities for pupils to use their skills at extended writing in Religious Education lessons.
- Increase the use of interactive features of ICT to support and enhance teaching and learning.