



St Joseph's RC Primary School

Coast Road, Blackhall, Hartlepool, TS27 4HE

School Unique Reference Number: **114280**

Inspection dates: 21 – 22 September 2017
Lead inspector: Elizabeth Seagrove

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Catholic Life:		Good	2
Collective Worship:		Good	2
Religious Education:		Good	2

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR PARENTS AND PUPILS

St Joseph's RC Primary School is a good Catholic school because:

- The Catholic Life of the school is good. Governors, senior leaders and staff have a shared vision with regard to the Catholic mission and ethos of the school. Pupils make a good contribution to the Catholic Life with their involvement in activities that promote the school's ethos.
- Collective Worship is good, it is central to the life of the school and a key part of school celebrations.
- The quality of Religious Education is good because pupils enjoy Religious Education, can explain its value and are keen to do well.

It is not yet outstanding because:

- Collective Worship should be enhanced by further developing the prayer life of the whole school community.
- In Religious Education the gap in attainment between the diocesan averages and the school's attainment needs to narrow in spite of the small cohorts.

FULL REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

- St Joseph's Roman Catholic Primary School is a smaller than average primary school.
- It is in the parish of St Joseph's, Blackhall.
- Pupils are taught in mixed-aged classes.
- All pupils are of a white British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is above the national average.
- Since the last inspection, a new deputy headteacher has been appointed.

WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL NEED TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- Improve the quality of Collective Worship by:
 - Further developing the prayer life of the whole school community including the staff
 - Developing the involvement of families in Collective Worship
 - Further developing creativity and imagination in worship in all its forms across all year groups
 - Developing the use of the new 'Prayer Place'

- Improve the quality of Religious Education by:
 - Continuing to work towards narrowing the gap in the school's attainment and the Diocesan averages even though there are small cohorts
 - Ensuring the newly implemented tracking system is effective in raising attainment and progress for all groups of learners

CATHOLIC LIFE

THE QUALITY OF THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

2

- The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school.
- The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school.
- How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school.

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

- Pupils are at the heart of shaping the school's mission and ethos. Pupils know their mission statement. The majority of pupils have been involved in shaping the new mission statement for the school. This also involved the changing of the school uniform and designing a new school badge displaying the key words from the mission statement. The pupils are rightly proud of this and identify strongly with it.
- The behaviour of the pupils is good. They are considerate and caring towards each other. The school promotes positive behaviour through its 'Gem' system and through its work as a Rights Respecting School. Pupils can articulate how they can be better people.
- Pupils appreciate that they have a voice in school. They are involved in decision making at all levels. This was evident in their significant input into deciding on the wording of the school badge: respect, friendship, excellence, care.
- Pupils are regularly involved in fund raising events which promote the school's ethos within school and the wider community.

The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school is outstanding.

- The mission statement is a living document and can be evidenced in the high expectations demonstrated by staff and governors. Morale is high.
- The learning environment clearly reflects the Catholic identity of the school. The range of displays and focal points remind pupils of the school's mission both locally through its strong links with other schools, the parish and community but also overseas.
- The school provides high levels of pastoral care to all groups of pupils through its involvement with the Rights Respecting School programme.
- Policies are regularly reviewed and updated and are being implemented. The school's own self-evaluation has identified the need to review its policy on Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) in line with new diocesan guidelines.

How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school is good.

- Leaders and managers, including governors, are clearly committed to the mission of the Church. Recent whole school review of the mission statement has ensured everyone is now immersed in the school's vision. Ongoing commitment to the development and sustenance in this ethos is evident in the collaborative working with the other Catholic schools in the East Durham area.
- Monitoring of provision for Catholic Life is evident. However, leaders have identified that this could be more formalised.
- The parish priest, who is a regular visitor to the school, works closely and effectively with the headteacher, Religious Education subject leader and chaplain to support the Catholic Life of the school and to promote strong parish links.
- The school works well with most parents. Parents talked about the nurturing/caring atmosphere of the school as 'warm and loving'. The school has identified itself that it wants to extend the involvement of parents especially by encouraging families to come to worship in the school more frequently.
- Governors are influential in determining the direction of the school and are fully involved in evaluating Catholic Life. Consequently, they discharge their duties effectively and appreciate the need to offer challenge as well as support.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

THE QUALITY OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

2

- How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship.
- The quality of provision for Collective Worship.
- How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship.

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

- The pupils' response to and participation in the school's Collective Worship is good. They have a good grasp of what worship is about. The worship opportunity observed created an atmosphere conducive to prayer that was well linked to the Come and See topic. It engaged other pupils in a meaningful and well planned act of worship.
- Pupils prepare and lead worship, under the guidance of the chaplain, with increasing confidence as they move through the school.
- Most pupils have a good understanding of religious seasons as appropriate to their age and ability. This had been a focus for the chaplain when guiding the pupils in delivering Collective Worship.
- Collective Worship impacts on the pupils' personal growth and development. The pupils were able to contribute to class worship with prayer intentions that were personal to them and in keeping with the focus of the liturgy. Pupils spoke about liturgies providing them with the opportunity to pray for their families.
- Collective Worship contributes positively to the spiritual, moral and personal development of the pupils.
- The pupils enjoy attending the Monday parish Mass and were keen to be a part of the service.

The quality of provision for Collective Worship is good.

- There is a clear policy for Collective Worship and the school ensures that it is regular and inclusive. Themes are based on the liturgical calendar but also link to Come and See, Statements to Live By and the relevant article from Rights Respecting Schools programme. Families are encouraged to be involved in pupils' liturgical development through such things as travelling cribs but this is an area for further development.
- Acts of worship are well resourced and planned using diocesan guidelines. There is some good practice in developing pupils' skills in planning and preparing worship but this is stronger in some classes than others.
- The new 'Prayer Place' in the playground is already having a positive impact on spontaneous prayer opportunities and it is further developing the role of the Mini Vinnies who are overseeing the establishing of this space.

- Parents and parishioners are invited to attend liturgies, although the school wishes to provide further opportunities to promote parental involvement in school worship.

How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship is good.

- The headteacher and Religious Education coordinator know how to plan and deliver good experiences of Collective Worship. They have an understanding of the church's liturgical year, its seasons and symbols and ensure that displays, artefacts and focus areas around the school reflect this. Most pupils respond well, join in with singing and act reverently during worship.
- Through the school's monitoring and evaluation systems leaders have a good understanding of the strengths and areas for development of Collective Worship.
- Leaders seek the views of parents and carers, pupils and governors to continuously strive to improve and enrich acts of worship. Parents and governors respond positively with regard to the quality and impact of Collective Worship.
- Leaders also ensure that the pupils have a good sacramental preparation through the involvement of the chaplain and effective links with other neighbouring parishes.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

THE QUALITY OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

2

- How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education.
- The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education.
- How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education.

2

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

- Pupils enjoy Religious Education and can explain its value. They are keen to do well. They work well in lessons, applying themselves to tasks. They show interest and enthusiasm and the behaviour for learning is good. Pupils have an understanding of how well they have done and how to improve.
- Across the school pupils are developing and applying a range of skills well, including independence, and the ability to interpret sources and to engage with religious ideas. Pupils are able to identify links with previous learning, reflect on the meaning and consider the impact on their own lives.
- Pupils identified as having special educational need are well supported by teaching assistants and programmes are in place to ensure engagement within lessons.
- The school recognises the need to closely monitor pupils' progress in order to ensure pupils are meeting age related expectations.

The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education is good.

- The majority of teachers are confident in their subject knowledge. They have a clear understanding of the value and importance of Religious Education and communicate this effectively to their pupils.
- The school has a good range of resources and strategies to promote learning. Tasks planned are varied and engaging.
- Where the more effective teaching was observed, there was clear differentiation for groups of learners which allowed participation within the lessons.
- Support staff are used effectively to enhance the engagement of pupils.
- Marking and feedback are carried out regularly and pupils are usually given time to improve. Pupils are using 'I can' statements to develop their ability to evaluate their own progress. In one pupil questionnaire, the very large majority strongly agree they get feedback which lets them know how to improve.
- A new individualised approach to tracking attainment and progress is being implemented. This will have due regard to the small cohorts that exist. The intention of it is to ensure pupils achieve their potential.

How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education is good.

- Leadership is well informed by a strong vision and current developments in Religious Education are focused on improving the quality of teaching and learning.
- A new approach to target setting and tracking has been introduced this year, focusing on the attainment and progress of individual pupils. This will be closely monitored in order to raise attainment across the school.
- Leaders ensure that their vision for Religious Education is shared through staff meetings and attendance at diocesan training events. All staff are encouraged to participate in training including the Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies.
- Leaders have conducted a range of monitoring activities relating to provision and outcomes in Religious Education. They are aware of the strengths and areas for development in the teaching and assessment of Religious Education. These form part of the school development plan.
- There is a shared common purpose amongst all staff resulting in Religious Education having a prominent profile within the school.
- The school has good links with a variety of agencies, the wider community and local schools and parishes to provide an enriched curriculum and activities promoting learning and engagement.
- The Religious Education curriculum meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference.

SUMMARY OF INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

HOW EFFECTIVE THE SCHOOL IS IN PROVIDING CATHOLIC EDUCATION:**2****CATHOLIC LIFE:****2**

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

2

The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school.

1

How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school.

2

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP:**2**

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

2

The quality of provision for Collective Worship.

2

How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship.

2

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION:**2**

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education.

2

The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education.

2

How well leaders and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education.

2

SCHOOL DETAILS

School name	St Joseph's RC Primary School
Unique reference number	114280
Local authority	Durham
This Inspection Report is produced for the Rt. Reverend Séamus Cunningham the Bishop of Hexham and Newcastle Diocese under canon 806 of Canon Law. For voluntary aided schools it also fulfils the responsibility the Governing Body has to inspect the school under s48 of the Education Act 2005.	
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