



## **DIOCESE OF BRENTWOOD**



### **Inspection Report**

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

**LA: Barking and Dagenham URN:101236**

**Inspection Date: 4<sup>th</sup> March 2010**

**Reporting Inspectors: Ms. 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: 3 - 11  
Gender of pupils: Mixed  
Number on roll: 314  
Appropriate Authority: The Governing Body  
Date of previous Inspection: November 2006

School Address:  
Connor Road  
Dagenham RM8 5UL  
Tel. No. 020 8270 6480  
Fax No. 020 8270 5016  
Chair of Governors: Mrs Noreen Brooks  
Headteacher: Mrs. Bernadette Horton

## **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,  
Connor Road  
Dagenham  
RM8 5UL**

**Head Teacher: Mrs. Bernadette Horton**

**Date of Inspection: 4<sup>th</sup> March 2010**

## **Description of the School:**

St Joseph's Primary School is a voluntary aided Catholic school situated in Dagenham in the Barking and Dagenham Local Authority and in the Diocese of Brentwood. The School's Mission Statement '...each one of us has been created by God and is therefore uniquely special.' permeates everything that the school does. The school was founded by the Ursuline Sisters and continues to maintain links with the Ursuline community in Brentwood. St Joseph's is a popular and oversubscribed larger than average sized one and a half form entry school which is located next to the parish church of Holy Family, Oxlow Lane. There is a part-time nursery for three and four year-olds and two full-time Reception classes for four and five year-olds which together form the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). The proportion of children from minority ethnic groups and those who

speak English as an additional language is above average, the largest group being from Black African backgrounds.

### **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.
- Participation in a Key Stage 1 Assembly.
- Meetings with the Head Teacher, the Deputy Head Teacher who is also the Religious Education (R.E.) Co-ordinator, the Parish Priest who is the R.E. Link Governor and representatives from 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 which displays many outstanding features. It has the potential to be an outstanding Catholic School. It is firmly committed to developing its Catholic identity under the inspirational leadership of its newly appointed Head Teacher who is very well supported by her Deputy who is also a very experienced R.E. Co-ordinator and her Senior Management Team, committed Governors, highly motivated and now stable Staff, who work effectively as a team, Pupils, their Parents, the Parish Priest and the Parish Community.

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. Staff meet regularly and reflect on the current topic to ensure a clear understanding of the topic. They clearly understand the **'Here I Am'** process and use it effectively to provide a good quality and stimulating R.E. curriculum. R.E. lessons are well planned and paced.

The overall quality of teaching and learning in R.E. is good or in a couple of cases they are better. In all of the lessons observed, pupils were on task, engaged, motivated, challenged and enjoying their R.E. Behaviour is excellent. Pupils were confident, enthusiastic and purposeful and worked well together.

Assessment in R.E. is in place and 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. In addition to assessment extra support is given by way of nurture and social skills groups especially in Years 5 and 6.

The leadership and management of the R.E. by the Subject Co-ordinator are outstanding. She monitors R.E. lessons and is very supportive of all staff, teachers and teacher assistants. Her line of management ensures that there are good links between R.E. and the liturgical life of the school. The Parish Priest is very supportive of all the school does.

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' feasts and the school's links with the local parish are all strengths of St Joseph's School. Sacramental preparation for Reconciliation and First Holy Communion takes place in the parish. Prayer is high on the school's agenda and each classroom has a prayer focus with appropriate artefacts and '**Here I Am**' displays. Both the Prayer focus (Reflection areas) and the '**Here I Am**' displays need to be developed further.

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 her management 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. It is an inclusive school where all the children get on well and this demonstrates a very good example of community and social cohesion which the school intends to develop further.

The School continues to develop strong links with other schools in the Deanery and the Diocese. In particular there are strong links with the local Catholic Secondary School. The emphasis on community and the links between the home, the school and the parish are an outstanding strength of the school.

Displays and artefacts in R.E., around the school, are excellent including an outstanding use of banners.

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. There is a very good weekly newsletter encouraging parental participation including a task for the children to be involved in with their parent's assistance. The governors of the school are dedicated, hardworking and supportive.

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. This is particularly evidenced by the work and role of the School Council and the generous fundraising for local, national and international charities. St Joseph's is considering participating in the Diocesan Citizenship Awards which takes place annually in the Summer term.

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is outstanding. Personal development and well being are also outstanding. Much is being done to incorporate the cultural diversity of the pupils into the life of the school. 'Black History Month' is a highlight in the school year with various activities being arranged and visitors being invited into the school to celebrate diversity.

### **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 and in this report continue to be addressed.

**Overall,** St Joseph's Primary School is a good Catholic School with many outstanding features. It has the potential to be an outstanding Catholic School. 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, their parish and their school. The School owes much of its success to the strong and committed leadership of its newly appointed Head Teacher and her very supportive Management Team and to the valued support and expertise of her staff and governors and parents.