

**DENOMINATIONAL INSPECTION
REPORT (Section 48)**

on

**THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL
AND
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

School: Saint Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Address: Mountain View
Cockermouth
Cumbria
CA13 0DG

Telephone Number: 01900 325932

Email address: office@st-josephs-cockermouth.cumbria.sch.uk

School URN: 112335

Headteacher: Miss Teresa Readman

Chair of Governors: Mr Kevin McNicholas

Section 48 Inspector: Mrs Catherine Pearson

Date of Inspection: 26th May 2010

The inspection report is produced for the Rt. Reverend Michael Campbell O.S.A., the Bishop of Lancaster (c.f. Code Canon Law, 804, 806), and for the Governing Body of the school (Education Act 2005, Section 48). The inspection reviews, evaluates and plans further improvements in the school's witness to the Catholic faith and Curriculum Religious Education. This process begins with the school's own self-evaluation.

The inspection schedule follows criteria set by the National Board of Advisers and Inspectors.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Saint Joseph's is a small Catholic Primary school, situated in the small market town of Cockermouth. Presently there are 61 pupils on roll. This number has fluctuated between 59 and 69 over the previous four years.

The school is organised into three mixed age classes; Years Reception and Year 1, Years 2, 3 and 4 and Years 5 and 6.

There is a private nursery on site, run by a Social Enterprise Company. It is anticipated that these pre school pupils will feed into the Reception Class in September 2010.

Many families were directly or indirectly affected by the recent floods and this continues to impact on the daily life of the local community.

The school offered its facilities throughout the floods, remaining open to support families and agencies.

Many fundraising initiatives were instigated which gave the pupils and staff a real sense of community cohesion especially for 'Cockermouth in need'.

FACTUAL INFORMATION

Pupil Catchment:

Number of pupils on roll:	61
Planned Admission Number of Pupils:	15
Percentage of pupils baptised Catholics	52.5
Percentage of pupils from other Christian denominations:	37.7
Percentage of pupils from other faith backgrounds:	0
Percentage of pupils with no religious affiliation:	9.8
Percentage of pupils from ethnic groups:	2
Percentage of pupils with special needs:	21

Staffing

Full-time teachers:	3
Part-time teachers:	0.4
Percentage of Catholic teachers:	25
Percentage of teachers with CCRS:	25

Percentage of learning time given to RE:

R	10.5%	Yr 4	8.3%
Yr 1	10.5%	Yr 5	8.3%
Yr 2	9.1%	Yr 6	8.3%
Yr 3	9.1%		

Parish served by the school:

Saint Joseph's, Cockermouth

Overall Effectiveness

2

Capacity for sustained improvement

2

MAIN FINDINGS

Inspection finds Saint Joseph's to be a good school with a capacity for further improvement. The inclusive nature of the school promotes a caring ethos and a happy learning environment in which the worth and self esteem of all members of the community are valued and nurtured.

The school lives out its mission and is a very welcoming community. The school's mission statement is evident and lived in the daily life of the school and staff are strongly committed to continuing improvement.

Pupils' spiritual and moral development is nurtured by planned teaching and by the way staff address daily issues. They guide and care for the pupils very well.

Pupils show respect for each other and for the adults working with them. The local community value the school greatly and pupils behave well.

Attainment and progress is good with the majority of pupils making two levels progress within each key stage. By the end of Year 6 the vast majority of pupils reach Level 4.

The school has a good capacity for sustained improvement.

Staff and governors are committed to continuous improvement for all pupils. Governors work conscientiously to support and challenge the school. Resources are utilised well. Teachers and pupils are enthused by, and enjoy, the relatively new scheme of work. Self-evaluation processes are beginning to impact on improved outcomes for all pupils. Targets for individual pupils have been set. The school now needs to consider how these should be shared with the pupils. Leaders and managers must ensure that challenging targets are set for all pupils and eliminate any low attainment within particular groups of pupils.

What the school needs to do to improve further

- Further develop pupil and staff spirituality, by building a close working relationship with the new parish priest.
- Involve all pupils, including Early Years Foundation Stage in the self-review process by setting appropriate learning targets relevant to their individual learning needs.
- Establish procedures for gathering baseline data to assess pupil progress accurately through each key stage.
- Disseminate good practice in focused marking for personalised pupil progress among all staff for pupils of all abilities to ensure that they make greater progress.
- Develop a portfolio of moderated work and annual work scrutiny to ensure that all staff are clear about levels of attainment for all pupils.
- Consider ways to study the lives of people in other countries in order to gain a greater understanding of other cultures.
- The headteacher and governors monitor the time allocated to curriculum RE to ensure that the requirements of the Bishops' Conference are met in full.

PUPILS

How good outcomes are for pupils, taking particular account of variations between different groups

2

Pupils clearly enjoy their RE lessons which are differentiated in order to challenge, inspire interest and to take account of all learners. During the inspection lessons were observed in all three classes and a variety of teaching styles were observed.

Pupils in Class 1 were learning that the Church is called 'the family of God' and that we all belong to His family.

Pupils in Class 2 were learning that Jesus rose from the dead and so too will we. Groups of pupils performed role-play to show how the disciples of Jesus felt after his death and Resurrection, whilst another group of pupils offered their evaluations through peer assessment.

Pupils in Class 3 were investigating other cultures on the Internet: Judaism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam and Sikhism. Pupils were asked to

record at least three important facts whilst working in pairs, which they subsequently fed back to the rest of the class. The computer programme being used enabled the pupils to experience first hand the spectacle and environments in which differing cultures worship.

In all classes pupils were engaged and learning collaboratively. Almost all pupils are motivated and enthused by their teachers, thus achieving the intended learning outcomes. Data showing predictions for attainment is available for all pupils but there is no evidence of any work analysis/scrutiny for different groups of pupils since the last inspection.

Pupils are enjoying 'The Way, the Truth and the Life' scheme of work which has been in place for almost two years. The younger pupils particularly like the illustrations, which accompany much of the text, whilst older pupils find many of the stories interesting.

Learning and progress are good and attainment is at least average with the majority of pupils achieving Level 4 by the end of Year 6.

Resources for Collective Worship are made available to enable pupils to lead Worship effectively, and pupils enjoy this aspect of their RE.

LEADERS AND MANAGERS

How effective leaders and managers are in developing the Catholic life of the School 2

Leadership and management are good and the school improvement plan has recently been reworked to reflect the current needs of the school.

The headteacher and the parish priest have worked collaboratively to ensure that resources for RE will support good quality collective worship and that adults and pupils will become more confident in leading and supporting good quality worship.

Staff and governors demonstrate a commitment to the mission of the Church by providing a rich, broad and balanced curriculum with spiritual development a current priority.

The school improvement plan sets clear priorities and targets which accord with the Church's mission in education. However, the time allocated to RE is slightly below the recommendations of the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales.

The headteacher, parish priest and governors have worked collaboratively on the School Improvement Plan and have identified some appropriate

priorities for the next academic year, which will clearly move the school forward.

The School Improvement Plan has the mission of the school at the heart of its vision with the promotion of the Catholic ethos identified as a strategic area for development. The Chair of Governors and Vice Chair demonstrate a very good knowledge of current issues in Catholic Education and fully support the vision of the headteacher who is RE subject leader. Governors work together effectively and are a self-motivating group working tirelessly to support the work of the school. An honest and professional dialogue is maintained throughout both formal and informal meetings. As the Chair said, 'Our school is perceived as a progressive school, willing to change and adapt.'

Governors and staff worked together in drawing up the diocese inspired 'Fit for Mission' action plan, which has now been incorporated into the current School Improvement Plan. Leaders and managers conduct a range of monitoring activities relating to provision and outcomes and their analysis provides a basis for accurate diagnosis of the school's strengths and weaknesses.

Standards reached in RE are assessed by the RE subject leader and the majority of pupils make two levels progress throughout each key stage with most pupils reaching Level 4 by the end of Year 6.

A new system for tracking progress has been introduced to provide data on pupil progress and achievement. Statistical evidence is becoming more robust and further improvements for cohort tracking are being considered. Staff now need to use baselines to enable them to make a more accurate measurement of pupils' progress through each key stage.

Planning for RE involves key partners, including parents, and is founded on sound evidence and data, tackling key areas of weaknesses systematically and building on areas of strength. Consequently pupils are able to articulate the school's distinctive mission with understanding and appreciation. Staff and pupils have a high regard for the Catholic life of the school.

Staff and governors often come together with the pupils to share liturgy in the church. The parishioners who recognise the school as a vital part of the community also welcome this.

A whole school act of Collective Worship was led by the headteacher during the course of inspection and pupils responded readily to open questioning and to individual reflection and thought. All pupils are able to sit quietly and to reflect for a sustained period and respect the intention of the worship.

There is a real sense of community cohesion within the school and all stakeholders valued the efforts made by the school to assist the community during the recent floods. The school remained open to facilitate various agencies and help local families in need. The school was also involved in fundraising ventures for 'Cockermouth in Need.' Friendships and partnerships have been formed with other schools in the UK, with one particular school fundraising for Saint Joseph's.

The recent provision of pre school childcare within the school is fulfilling a need within the community and the Catholic ethos of the school permeates this provision through the prayer life of the school.

PROVISION

How effective the provision is for Catholic Education

2

Teachers maintain a clear focus on learning outcomes and the provision for Catholic Education within the school is good. The school makes effective provision for the promotion of Catholic Education.

Teaching assistants reinforce and support learning very effectively by working with specific groups or individuals. Staff make efficient use of resources and the support given to pupils in classes two and three particularly is of the highest order.

Pupils are encouraged to participate and to work collaboratively with their peers. Most pupils are confident and flourish in their understanding of the faith. However, there is some inconsistency in the quality of marking and written feedback that pupils receive in their workbooks. Staff discussions about consistent and focused marking which moves pupils forward with their learning should take place as soon as possible to ensure pupils achieve personal challenging targets. During the inspection older pupils said that they were not clear about how well they were achieving in RE, other than through their annual reports and parents' evenings. They said they would like to know which level they are working at and what they could do to improve.

Pupils enjoy and take a good deal of pride in their school. They enjoy their RE in school, particularly when participating in liturgies and Masses in the church. Pupils talk confidently about their religious experiences in school and out.

Pupils generally feel safe in school and find most of their lessons interesting and enjoyable. Behaviour is generally very good. Parental comments on questionnaires were mainly positive. The school provides satisfactorily for pupils with special needs and the school was described as a 'truly friendly caring' school.

SUMMARY OF INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Key for inspection grades:

Grade 1 **Outstanding** Grade 2 **Good** Grade 3 **Satisfactory** Grade 4 **Unsatisfactory**

Overall effectiveness	2
The school's capacity for sustained improvement	2
PUPILS How good outcomes are for pupils, taking particular account of variations between different groups	2
• how well do pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education?	2
❖ the quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
❖ the quality of learning for pupils with particular learning needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
❖ pupils' attainment in RE	2
• to what extent do pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life of the school?	2
• how well do pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship?	2
LEADERS AND MANAGERS How effective are leaders and managers in developing the Catholic life of the School?	2
• how well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic life of the school and plan improvement to outcomes for pupils?	2
• how well leaders and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for RE and plan for improvement to outcomes for pupils?	2
• the extent to which the governing body provides effective challenge and support for the Catholic dimension of the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory and canonical responsibilities met?	2
• how well leaders and managers develop partnerships with other providers, organisations and services in order to promote Catholic learning and well being?	2
• how effectively leaders and managers promote Community Cohesion?	2
PROVISION How effective is the provision for Catholic Education?	2
• the quality of teaching and purposeful learning in?	2
• the effectiveness of assessment and academic guidance in Religious Education?	3
• the extent to which Religious Education curriculum meets pupils' needs?	2
• the quality of Collective Worship provided by the school?	2