

**DENOMINATIONAL INSPECTION
REPORT (Section 48)**

on

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

School: St. Joseph's Catholic High School,
Business & Enterprise College

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School URN: 112401

Headteacher: Thomas Ryan

Chair of Governors: Peter Hayes

Inspector: Anthony J Finnerty and Paul Wawszczyk

Date of Inspection: 10th and 11th October 2012

This Inspection Report is produced for the Rt. Reverend Michael Campbell O.S.A., the Bishop of Lancaster, 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

St Joseph's is a smaller than the average Catholic high school in Workington. It has the status of a Business and Enterprise College. The school serves a wide area, parts of which experience significant social and economic deprivation. Most pupils are from White British heritage but a few come from a range of families more recently arrived in England from other parts of Europe. The proportion of students eligible for free school meals is average and the proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average.

FACTUAL INFORMATION

Pupil Catchment:

Number of pupils on roll:	640
Planned Admission Number of pupils:	135
Percentage of pupils baptised RC:	40.9%
Percentage of pupils from other Christian denominations:	50.3%
Percentage of pupils from other World Faiths:	0.3%
Percentage of pupils with no religious affiliation:	8.4%
Percentage of pupils with special needs:	2.5%

Staffing

Full time teachers:	35
Part time teachers:	8
Percentage of Catholic teachers:	40%

RE Department Staffing:

Number of full time RE teachers:	4
Number of part time RE teachers:	0
Percentage of Catholic teachers:	100%
Percentage of teachers with CCRS:	25%

Percentage of learning time given to RE:

Yr 7	10%	Yr 10	10%
Yr 8	10%	Yr 11	10%
Yr 9	7%		

Parishes served by the school:

Our Lady Star of the Sea and St. Michael, Workington
St. Gregory, Workington
St. Mary, Harrington
Our Lady and St. Patrick, Maryport
St. Joseph, Cockermouth

Overall Effectiveness

2

Capacity for sustained improvement

2

MAIN FINDINGS

St. Joseph's School provides a good Catholic education for its students and has many outstanding features. Strong pastoral care and guidance underpin the life of this community. A shared vision rooted in the school's distinctive nature results in a community which has a strong sense of its own identity, and students who are moral and ethically aware young people.

The school's capacity for sustained improvement is good. Governors, leaders and staff share a desire to improve and develop their school to become consistently outstanding. The commitment and dedication of the teaching staff and the quality of resources combine with determined leadership to provide a sound basis for sustained improvement.

The school serves students well and cares for them as individuals. They are happy in their school where they know they are wanted; they feel safe, respected and supported. They know the leaders and teachers want them to become good people above all else. Different learning needs are recognised and standards in Religious Education are consistently high.

What the school needs to do to improve further

In order to raise standards further the governors should seek to:

- Encourage a core group of students to further enrich and develop the worship of the school in tutorials and in assemblies.
- Provide a retreat experience for teachers to develop their formation as members of a Catholic school.
- Continue to spread the sharing of good practice in teaching and learning so that the quality across the whole school is consistently high and the students are stretched and challenged as well as supported in every subject.
- Ensure that the requirement regarding allocation of curriculum time for Religious Education is fully met at each key stage

PUPILS

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

2

Outcomes for pupils are good. Students are keen to do well in RE at St Joseph's and there is a growing culture of aspiration. Students apply themselves diligently in lessons and relate positively with staff and with each other. The behaviour of students is excellent; they work at a good pace, acquire knowledge, and develop interest and understanding. Their learning is good by all available measures.

In RE at Key stage 4 students show knowledge and understanding and an ability to reflect on meaning. Achievement at this stage is average. At present, a small percentage of pupils gain the highest level. The on-going development of levelling in the department should improve student learning and progress at this key stage. For students with particular learning needs and/or disabilities, including SEN and FSM pupils, learning and progress are average and attainment is generally good.

Attainment at Key Stage 4 is outstanding in RE at St Joseph's. For the last two years the A* - C pass rate and the percentage gaining A*/A have been in line with, or above, national averages and are among the highest in the school. The RE relative performance indicator stands out in comparison with other disciplines.

The contribution of students to the Catholic life of St Joseph's is good and they benefit considerably in return. They show respect for, and often take part in, Catholic practices and worship throughout the liturgical year. Some pupils welcome the opportunities for quiet reflection offered by staff. Pupils are considerate to others and caring to those in need. They take part in activities to help people beyond the school by supporting a range of charities including the Romanian Shoe Box appeal, CAFOD, the Race For Life, Fairtrade, and such annual events as the Christmas party for senior citizens. Many students express their own views and beliefs with confidence and there are signs that they have a good understanding of what is right and wrong.

Pupils behave respectfully during times of prayer and in religious services; they are quiet and attentive. Some pupils help to prepare and lead reflections and readings. All tutor groups throughout the school follow daily prayer and pupils often read the prayer for the day. Pupils are aware of the liturgical year through the programme of assemblies and liturgical events. A number of committed staff and students celebrate weekly Masses and voluntary whole school Masses in the local church are exceptionally well attended. Overall, participation in Collective Worship is good.

LEADERS AND MANAGERS

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

1

Leaders and managers promote the Catholic life of the school through their words and through personal witness. Leadership in the RE department is exceptional, the head of department has worked tirelessly to establish a first rate department and he ensures the students are well served in religious education. All leaders and managers make explicit the school's mission of service. The head teacher and senior leaders promote a commitment to the faith and nurture a community where all are valued and treated with dignity and respect.

The monitoring and evaluation of Religious Education provision is systematic, rigorous, and targeted at securing improved outcomes for students. The on-going evaluation of teaching and learning is increasingly robust and the whole school is using data to ensure accurate analysis. This has led to the establishment of clear priorities for development and to the progress of students. The school has established a strong team of RE specialists who now work together to share ideas and to review progress. The school places RE rightly at the core of the curriculum.

The governing body is committed to the Catholic life of the school and dedicated to its success. Governors' knowledge of the provision and challenges at St Joseph's is developing, and some very positive initiatives have been taken in the past six months. The Chair of Governors is a regular visitor to the school. There are links between individual governors and different departments to increase the involvement of the Foundation Governors and to provide opportunities for them to act as critical friends who both challenge and support the way the school operates.

The leaders and managers actively develop the partnership activities of the school. The resulting improvements in provision make an excellent contribution to the achievement and well-being of pupils. Links with feeder primary schools are strong. As a Business and Enterprise college, the school develops contacts which make a positive impact on pupil learning, such as partnerships with universities and business. Links with local parishes are encouraged and local clergy often visit the school. Organisations such as the Ten Ten Theatre group, the Castlerigg retreat centre and Cafod help pupils to achieve and develop their understanding in areas which the school could not alone provide.

Inclusion is central to the ethos of the school. Leaders and managers work with others to promoting pupils' links with people of different backgrounds. The RE curriculum fosters study of major world religions and encourages openness towards the views of others. Students display concern, respect and hospitality to each other and to staff and visitors. As one year seven

pupil stated, "We feel we are all equal here." Their response to those who suffer or lack the basic necessities is demonstrated by their involvement in many charitable initiatives and organisations including "Give it back," a Food Bank, coffee mornings and hunger lunches. A sports development post has enabled closer contact with the wider community including the elderly, young people from the town and primary schools. Parents are regularly and routinely involved in their children's education and welfare.

PROVISION

How effective is the provision for Catholic Education?

1

The quality of teaching in RE is very high. Lessons are never less than good and some are outstanding in quality. Where teaching is best, the pace is fast and focussed, activities are varied and student engagement is high. All teachers of RE have excellent subject knowledge and all display a strong commitment to teaching Catholic beliefs and values and in developing the religious literacy of their students. The RE department makes a marked contribution to the spiritual development of some pupils and to the religious life of the whole school.

The RE department has very effective systems for assessing students' progress. The system at Key Stage 3 has been refined during the past twelve months, as the department has sought the most effective means of measuring and evaluating students' learning. All teachers have an accurate understanding of individual student's progress. Teachers plan formal and informal assessments in their medium term planning. This ensures that they have a well-rounded view of student performance and the system matches the students' needs well. Teachers use work sampling and moderation activities to ensure that they apply standards consistently across the department and this allows intelligent interventions. Tracking and monitoring of progress is robust. Appropriately focused and targeted intervention strategies spring naturally from these processes.

Teachers in the department always strive to match their teaching to students' prior learning and this contributes very effectively to promoting the school's mission and values. They ensure that they plan and deliver in a way that reflects the school's vision of *Living, Loving and Learning through Christ*. Formal lessons are supplemented and enriched by the way faith, spirituality and prayer are present in the life of the school. Consequently, although the time allocated for RE lessons does not yet fulfil the requirements of the Bishops' Conference in all key stages, academic achievement in RE is high and students' spiritual and moral development is strong.

The quality of provision for Collective Worship at St Joseph's is good. All members of staff are prepared to contribute to the school as a worshipping community. A full-time lay chaplain provides materials for prayer and great support for pupils and staff at different stages of faith. He ensures that the school clearly includes celebrations of major liturgical events in the school calendar; students value such celebrations and view them as outward signs of the distinctiveness of their school. Priests from the neighbouring parish serve the school and their involvement is increasing. Students know traditional prayers and recite these at the beginning of RE lessons. A room – called the St Joseph's Room – is a great resource, which has been set aside as a sacred space to be used for Mass, for private prayer, for meditation and special lessons of instruction.

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
How good are outcomes 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	2
❖ pupils' attainment in RE	1
• 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
How effective are leaders and managers in developing 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 and plan improvement to outcomes for pupils?	1
• how well leaders and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for RE and plan for improvement to outcomes for pupils?	1
• 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?	1
• how effectively leaders and managers promote Community Cohesion?	1
How effective is the provision for Catholic Education?	1
• the quality of teaching and purposeful learning in Religious Education?	1
• the effectiveness of assessment and academic guidance in Religious Education?	1
• the extent to which Religious Education curriculum meets pupils' needs?	2
• the quality of Collective Worship provided by the school?	2