



DIOCESE OF **Arundel and Brighton**

DENOMINATIONAL (S48) INSPECTION REPORT

School: St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

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School Unique Reference Number: 126059

<b>Headteacher:</b>	Mrs Catherine Walker
<b>Chair of Governors:</b>	Mr Ron Ekins
<b>Lead Inspector:</b>	Mr Stephen Beck
<b>Associate Inspector:</b>	Mrs Sarah Conrad
<b>Inspection date:</b>	15 July 2019

	Previous Inspection: 1
<b>Overall Effectiveness</b>	This Inspection:1
<b>Catholic Life:</b>	1
<b>Collective Worship:</b>	1
<b>Religious Education:</b>	1

## SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR PARENTS AND PUPILS

St Joseph's is an Outstanding Catholic school because:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The senior leadership team and staff ensure that the school's commitment to its Catholic ethos is evident in all areas of the school's work. The school's commitment and contribution to the Common Good and Catholic Social Teaching are outstanding. Pupils are offered a rich and dynamic experience of Catholic life, which is evident at all levels across the school.</li> <li>• The outstanding links between the school, parishes and parents lead to a strong partnership that benefits the whole community. Parents are overwhelmingly positive and appreciative of the impact the school, and particularly the Headteacher, has on their children's faith journey. School leaders and governors are fully committed to the Catholic mission of the Church.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The senior leadership, governors and staff fully share a deep commitment to the Church's educational mission and strive to carry this out as well as possible within St Joseph's. High priority is given to worship and to the pupils' spiritual and moral development.</li> <li>• This is evidenced in the way the pupils respond to the school's Catholic identity and how they understand their roles within it. Outstanding leadership at all levels enables the whole school community to experience the richness of opportunities of a Catholic way of life. The very knowledgeable governors are outstanding in their support and challenge of the teaching of religious education.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The quality of religious education is outstanding because staff know their pupils well and consistently teach lessons which enthuse and engage pupils ensuring progress and achievement is at the highest level. Leaders and managers ensure that monitoring and evaluation is accurate, timely and embedded in the work of the school.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The quality of collective worship is outstanding because it is central to the life of the school. Staff and pupils plan and lead high quality Acts of Worship and pupils act with the deepest reverence and respect. Parish links are very strong and there are a variety of opportunities for worship including Mass, liturgies and collective worship to which parents are made very welcome.</li> </ul>

# FULL REPORT

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is slightly larger than the average sized primary school and is situated in the Lewes Deanery of the Diocese of Arundel and Brighton. It is maintained by the local authority of West Sussex. The school has good links with its parish of St Paul's, Haywards Heath.

There are currently 415 pupils on roll and the percentage of Catholic pupils is 79%. The school serves a very diverse and wide catchment area and has a high proportion of minority ethnic groups, cultures and faiths. The proportion of pupils who come from minority ethnic backgrounds is above average and the proportion speaking English as an additional language is well above average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the Pupil Premium at 3.9% is below average. The number of pupils with special educational needs at 14%, is below average. The average weekly proportion of curriculum time given to religious education is 10% in both key stages.

## WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL NEED TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

St Joseph's was graded as outstanding at the time of its last inspection. It is commendable that it has not rested on its laurels and has maintained a culture of always seeking to improve making it a constantly evolving school that serves its community exceptionally well. As a result, the school has no significant areas for improvement, but should continue to action the areas for development identified in its own exemplary self-evaluation giving a priority to;

- Securing teachers' use of the new assessment framework to ensure continuity of progression for all groups of pupils.
- Reviewing the teaching of other faiths to increase the breadth of provision in order to deepen pupils' understanding and consider enhancing this provision with real life experiences e.g. visits to other places of worship; using representatives of other faiths in school.

## CATHOLIC LIFE

### THE QUALITY OF THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

- The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school.
- The quality of provision of 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 Outstanding.**

- A warm welcome awaits any visitor who enters St Joseph's. The Catholic ethos is strongly evident in the 'learning family' of the school, where expectations are high. All identify with the school's mission statement, which is a clear and inspiring expression of the educational mission of the Church saying. *'Learning through the love of Jesus Christ and empowered by his example we celebrate our uniqueness and our distinctive gifts'* and the school pledge *'Aim high, live and learn with Jesus, everyone welcome'*. This sees everyone's unique talents and skills believed in and shared and collaboration is highly prized.
- Pupils make an outstanding contribution to the Catholic life of the school and benefit greatly from it. They take full advantage of the many and varied opportunities offered to them and can articulate how the school is helping them to become better people.
- Pupils respect the Catholic tradition of the school and its links with the parish community and are active participants in parish celebrations and activities. Pupils are proud of their religious backgrounds and beliefs and have a strong sense of personal worth. They treat others with a high level of respect and build relationships with people from all walks of life.
- They take their responsibilities seriously, seeing their roles as Religious Education Council, School Council and Anti-Bullying Alliance representatives for example, as important because *'they are about looking after people as Jesus asked us to do'*. Likewise, with their support of Charities including, CAFOD and a local food bank, The Rocking Horse Charity and Hands for Hope.
- Pupils express their own views and feelings with confidence and demonstrate a deep understanding of how important it is to forgive and be forgiven. They are also quick to congratulate others, take responsibility for their actions and show a keen interest in spiritual, moral and ethical issues.
- Exemplary behaviour and manners are underpinned by outstanding moral, social and cultural development. Pupils thrive in a family atmosphere in which everyone plays an active role in the Catholic life of the school. As a pupil commented, *"I love this school because it is like one big family"* and this sentiment was echoed by parents.

## **The quality of provision of the Catholic Life of the school is Outstanding.**

- All staff are fully committed to the Catholic life of the school across the curriculum. All enthusiastically participate in school activities which reflect the Catholic life and mission of the school, such as, the way they live out the Mission Statement, staff prayer, the leading of collective worship and Continuous Professional Development on Catholic life. All staff promote high standards of behaviour and are exemplary role models for pupils.
- There is a strong sense of community evident in the quality of relationships at all levels. The school is a supportive and joyful community and the centrality of prayer to the whole community is recognised.
- The entire curriculum reflects a commitment to Catholic Social Teaching, to care for our common home and to the dignity of every human person. Particular attention is given to caring for those in need.
- Pastoral programmes, Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) are in line with diocesan guidelines. They are well planned, well taught and reflect Catholic teachings and principles. Clear policies and structures are in place, which provide the highest level of pastoral care. Pupils are extremely well supported by the Learning Mentor, who is highly skilled in working with vulnerable pupils in specialist ways.
- There is a mantra running throughout the school that is summed up in a statement displayed saying, *'Mistakes are proof you are trying'*. This gives pupils confidence that it is all right to be wrong, as long as you learn from your mistakes. This secures considerable self confidence in pupils as reflected in the way they read aloud, engage with adults and conduct themselves. Parents said this aspect of the school prepares their children well for moving on to secondary school.
- St Joseph's is a 'Thrive' school and strives to support all pupils through understanding their emotions and helping them to manage situations they find difficult. Information that is deemed suitable to share about children who may need additional support is reported at weekly staff briefings, which are circulated to all staff. Staff work cohesively to support pupils and are mindful of the experiences of all children in the school, not just those in their class.
- It is evident that as a Catholic school the leadership team are committed to being highly attentive to the pastoral needs of staff and all the Senior Leadership Team go above and beyond their duty of care, meaning that staff feel well supported and valued.
- The highest standards of moral and ethical behaviour are promoted through the clear and consistent communication of the school's expectations (St Joseph's Pledge and St Joseph's 10). Behaviour policies are rooted in Gospel values and the teaching of the Catholic Church in a way that pupils are able to understand. This means that school policies highlight the importance of personal responsibility, but also help pupils to understand healing and reconciliation.
- The parish priest is a regular visitor to the school. His input and support are greatly valued. The school also benefits from time given by the parish deacons to support lessons as appropriate, which is likewise valued.

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

- The school's leadership is committed to the Church's mission in education. The Headteacher and senior leaders fully embrace the task, providing inspiration within their school community. They work as a religious education team comprising of the Headteacher and two religious education subject leaders who meet regularly and then feedback to all staff.
- The Headteacher has a strong vision for the school and Catholic education. She has built an exceptionally strong staff team and utilises distributive leadership to secure succession planning and the development of future Catholic school leaders. She is a skilful leader, for example by getting people to always want to give of their best.
- All leaders and managers, including the governing body, have high expectations for the promotion and continuing development of the Catholic life of the school. Senior leaders share the responsibility for the development of the Catholic ethos very effectively.
- The school's exemplary self-evaluation reflects planned monitoring, analysis and self-challenge. The very effective and evaluative work of the Link Governor for Religious Education embraces Catholic life too. Inspectors have been able to validate the school's accurate assessment of its strengths and areas for development. It was also noted that this links into the school's well-designed development plan that reflects St Joseph's strong capacity for ongoing improvement.
- There is a clear focus on the Catholic life of the school leading to well-targeted improvements, utilising the parishioners and parents to enhance the vision and ethos of the school.
- The school engages very well with parents to the great benefit of all its pupils and families. Parents have a very good understanding of the school's mission and are very supportive of it.
- There is an 'open door' policy and families are invited into the school on a regular basis and made to feel extremely welcome. They are very appreciative of this approach that sees St Joseph's encouraging parents into the school giving them a greater understanding of its mission and inspires them to be involved in it. In addition, a fortnightly newsletter ensures that parents get the opportunity to see news of all school events, which are highlighted and celebrated in a reader friendly format as well as on the school's informative website.
- Governors make a significant contribution to the Catholic life of the school and are actively involved in the evaluation of its Catholic life. They provide challenge and support where necessary and are passionate about the school's mission and the need to participate fully in 'living' it.

## COLLECTIVE WORSHIP / PRAYER AND PRAYER LIFE

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

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### **How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship and Prayer Life is Outstanding.**

- Acts of collective worship engage all pupils' interest and inspire in them deep thought and heartfelt response. There is genuine enthusiasm for collective worship reflected in the quality of singing, prayerful silence and depth of reverent participation in communal prayer.
- St Joseph's is a very prayerful and spiritual school where worship is a regular and meaningful part of the day. Pupils are inspired and enthusiastic in their responses to collective worship. This is evident in their keen participation in liturgies, particularly their gathering, joyful singing and prayerful reflection. They listen intently, show respect and offer heartfelt responses.
- Pupils take a lead in planning, preparing and leading liturgies in class and larger groups throughout the school. They are confident in using resources and are developing a wide variety of approaches to prayer which includes scripture, religious artefacts, liturgical music, dance and other forms of prayer both traditional and contemporary and liturgical styles which they choose to use appropriately.
- Pupils have an excellent understanding of the Church's liturgical year, its' seasons and feasts and the approaches required in planning effective worship opportunities. The experience of living and working in a faithful, praying community has a profound and visible effect on their spiritual and moral development irrespective of ability or faith background. This is reflected in the manner in which pupils participate in prayer and liturgy.
- Daily Christian meditation takes place in some year groups. This was recently introduced and is becoming established. The pupils respond positively and show great focus, stillness and reverence as they allow God to talk to them, using Maranatha (Come Lord).
- Around the school there are a variety of opportunities for prayer. These include prayer tables in every classroom and a prayer focus in the school garden introduced by the Religious Education Council. These areas are very special to the pupils and enable them to freely express their thoughts and feelings through prayer.
- There is a deep sense of respect for different faiths and this is reflected in the inclusive way pupils prepare their liturgies. Pupils are respectful of others who do not share their beliefs and take part in discussions about their own faith identify and that of others.

- Parents are welcomed into the school and regularly enjoy attending liturgies and celebrations. They wholeheartedly support and appreciate the Catholic Way of Life that St Joseph's promotes.
- In a thought provoking assembly attended during the inspection, led by the Headteacher, on the topic of 'love', pupils were mature in providing definitions of the word unconditional, *showing care and being by someone's side*, with one child reflecting on wedding rings being a circle and never-ending. The use of a photograph of a parent with their child elicited pupils' thoughts of the parent and child spending time together. The theme was well linked to music, scripture and singing and was taken back to classrooms through the taking of a heart shaped message and a box in which to collect examples of pupils showing love.
- Pupils are reflective from an early age, for example an Early Years' pupil commented without prompting, *"We light a candle at the start of our lesson because Jesus is the light of the world"*.

### **The quality of provision for Collective Worship and Prayer Life is Outstanding.**

- Collective worship is central to school life. From their earliest days, pupils are taught how to create an atmosphere for prayer and praying together is a key part of the daily experience for staff and pupils.
- Staff are skilled at creating quality worship experiences for the school community and in helping pupils to plan and deliver worship, with the Headteacher and subject leaders providing guidance, support and training as appropriate.
- There is a palpable sense that St Joseph's is a Christ centred, praying community and there are many varied opportunities for its pupils to develop their spirituality. The school's provision for collective worship and prayer inspires pupils to compose and contribute their own prayers. These reflect their close relationship with God.
- High quality and thoughtful prayer areas are a focal point within every classroom, the school woods and school corridors. Class prayer areas reflect 'Come and See' topics and liturgical events and contain prayer stones, prayer cards and opportunities for pupils to record spontaneous prayer. Pupils are encouraged to pray as and when they wish in order to further develop their relationship with God.
- A prayer focus is displayed in the front entrance of the school reflecting current events or liturgical seasons. This space features a parent's prayer box; an opportunity to encourage parents to become involved in the prayer life of the school.
- Opportunities are also planned to attract attendance by families at collective worship celebrations, which the school consistently encourages and looks to develop further.

## **How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship and Prayer Life is Outstanding.**

- There are many ways in which worship is integral to school life including a programme of whole-school assemblies, Key Stage Hymn Practices, Key Stage Assemblies reflecting the liturgical calendar, and class worship. The week is rounded off with a Friday Celebration Assembly where pupils (and adults) are given the opportunity to reflect on their week and look forward to the next week, thinking about their responsibility as children of God for doing their best. These unite the school as a worshipping community and prayer is woven into the school day.
- Collective worship has a clear purpose, message and direction. A carefully planned programme for the year reflects the liturgical season, themes in religious education and school events.
- The religious education leaders place the highest priority on the development of quality experiences of collective worship. The school makes an important contribution to parish life and pupils have participated in Education Sunday. Two classes regularly attend the Friday morning parish Mass. Liturgies which are often reflected upon in Spiritual Journals, provide a lovely record of religious worship and work highlights over the year for each class.
- Senior leaders are highly visible leaders of collective worship within school. They lead high quality collective worship experiences for both staff and pupils and are models of outstanding practice. Leaders and managers regularly review the quality of collective worship and this informs the development process and possible training requirements.
- Planning the school's prayer and liturgical life is given high priority each year by school leaders as it is the heart of the school's ethos and character. The views of pupils, staff and parents are valued and acted upon to ensure high quality collective worship continues to evolve throughout the school and parish community.
- Staff and pupils pray together regularly, and prayer is an integral part of school celebrations. Parents and parishioners are often invited to join the school in worship and appreciate these opportunities.

# RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

## THE QUALITY OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

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- 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.

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### **How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education is Outstanding.**

- The quality of teaching and learning in religious education is outstanding. It is consistently effective in ensuring that pupils are interested and engaged and make rapid progress. Teachers display very good subject knowledge, work hard and deploy a wide range of teaching styles and technologies to inspire pupils, move learning forward and raise standards.
- Teaching encourages pupils' enjoyment of and enthusiasm of religious education. They take into account pupils' prior learning and ensure tasks are differentiated when planning so that the work consolidates, builds and extends their knowledge and understanding. They are very aware of the needs of the pupils in their care and consistently strive to meet these needs. Driver words are used effectively in planning and questioning. Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to work independently and collaboratively and communicate to them high expectations for work, attitude and behaviour to which they generally rise.
- A number of additional adults are deployed in classes. They give outstanding support and encouragement to pupils, particularly those with special and additional educational needs.
- The pace of lessons is fast, time is used extremely effectively to maximise learning opportunities and consequently there is no time slippage. Pupils are informed of their progress and how to improve, both orally and through marking.
- Displays of work are of high quality and are often interactive. They offer opportunity for reflection and celebrate pupils' work and their new learning.
- Plenary sessions are used very effectively to revisit the learning objective, move learning on by sharing good practice and to assess progress.
- The assessment of pupils' work in religious education is excellent. The school has quickly adapted to changes recommended developing stringent assessment strategies which provide accurate and detailed information on the achievement and progress of all pupils. Teachers are able to identify how well pupils achieve and tackle any underachievement. They use information gleaned from assessments to inform their planning and this now needs to be embedded.

- From the time pupils start at the school they are encouraged to reflect on the meaning and interpretation of scripture, and this is a considerable strength of the school. In a Key Stage One lesson on the topic of 'water as a treasure' related to CAFOD's work, a pupil reflected that *'People who believe in Jesus will not thirst or hunger. That means they will never be weak and their faith will be strong in their minds'*.
- The school makes excellent use of its outdoor environment in the teaching of religious education reflecting teachers' desire to inspire pupils. One lesson observed involved going to the wooded area where pupils were asked to find biographies of famous people that had been affixed to trees. They had been provided with different scripture passages and they had to decide which of the biographies their passage best related to. Another lesson involved pupils acting as pilgrims travelling to various stations in the prayer garden representing different religious shrines. These lessons created true awe and wonder among the pupils.
- A parent responded on their questionnaire, *'My child's favourite lesson is religious education. She always surprises me with what she learns and retains'*.

### **The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education is Outstanding.**

- Pupils at St Joseph's demonstrate passion and commitment in their learning in religious education. They view it as an important lesson and are able to speak about their religious education lessons confidently when asked.
- School data on lesson observations show that teaching is consistently good with a high percentage of teaching being judged as outstanding. Lesson observations show that all teachers use effective questioning to maximise learning for every child. Teachers use strategies such as mini plenaries to assess pupils' understanding and adapt lessons when appropriate. Observations during the inspection mirrored these views.
- Teachers have been reviewing planning to create challenging yet engaging activities that build upon pupils' prior knowledge and build upon the new assessment framework. Through termly data analysis teachers identify children who are not on track and target support through questioning and focus groups in lessons. These children are highlighted on teachers own planning. The school attends moderation meetings in the Deanery and Diocese to standardise assessments and is an active participant in these groups.
- Pupils are clearly proud of their religious education books which show very high standards of presentation. They evidence good subject coverage and the fact that learning is recorded in a variety of ways such as through writing, drawing and photographs and that pupils of all ability have opportunities to express their understanding.
- St Joseph's marking policy ensures that marking in religious education is effective. In every lesson, pupils across all year groups assess their own learning against success criteria that has been pitched at the pupil's ability. Teachers regularly provide them with extended questions, which offer them the opportunity to respond and extend their own learning.
- Classrooms have a calm and purposeful atmosphere for learning, which ensures that pupils are engaged and ready to learn. All pupils are developing a sense of spirituality through mindfulness activities and regularly take part in the prayer life of the school.

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

- Leaders and governors are outstanding in monitoring and evaluating the provision for religious education at St Joseph's. They ensure that the religious education curriculum meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference and that the required amount of curriculum time is given to religious education.
- Leaders' and governors' self-evaluation of religious education is a coherent reflection of rigorous assessment, tracking, monitoring, analysis and self-challenge as evidenced through their involvement in and knowledge of the self-evaluation carried out for this inspection. This results in strategic action taken by the school leading to very good outcomes in religious education. The Self Evaluation Document feeds into the general School Development Plan and so is carefully monitored by leaders and governors throughout the year.
- The subject leaders for religious education have a clear vision for teaching and learning and an outstanding level of expertise in securing this vision and improving religious education. They lead the subject very effectively. They meet regularly with the religious education link governor to present updates on pupil outcomes and the quality of teaching and learning.
- High quality religious education subject leadership ensures that religious education never 'stands still' and continually improves. This is underpinned by the commitment from the Headteacher, Senior Leadership Team, Governors and the teaching team so that religious education, prayer and worship are strong and are the defining feature of an excellent Catholic school. Religious education is at the heart of initiatives around the school. This results in well targeted planning and strategic action taken by the school, which lead to outstanding outcomes in religious education.

## Summary of Inspection Judgements

**How effective the school is in providing Catholic Education.**

**1**

### **Catholic Life**

**1**

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

**1**

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.

**1**

### **Collective Worship and Prayer Life**

**1**

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

**1**

The quality of provision for Collective Worship and Prayer Life.

**1**

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

**1**

### **Religious Education**

**1**

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

**1**

The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education.

**1**

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

**1**