



**DENOMINATIONAL INSPECTION  
REPORT**  
(Under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005)

on

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

**School:** St. Joseph's Catholic Primary Voluntary Academy

**Address:** Philip Avenue  
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North East Lincolnshire  
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**School URN:** 138014

**Headteacher:** Mrs Sarah Pollard

**Chair of Governors:** Mrs Amanda Mellows

**Inspectors:** Mrs Fionuala Boucher  
Mrs Geraldine Willders

**Date of Inspection:** 5 November 2013

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The inspection of this school was carried out on behalf of the Bishop of Nottingham under Canon 806 of Canon Law and Section 48 of the Education Act 2005 in accordance with the Diocese of Nottingham Schedule for Section 48 Inspections. The inspection reviews and evaluates how effective the school is in providing Catholic education. The process begins with the school's own self-evaluation and the inspection schedule is in line with the criteria set by the National Board of Religious Inspectors and Advisers (NBRIA).

During the inspection, the inspectors observed 7 Religious Education lessons, 1 Act of Collective Worship and a range of class liturgies.

Meetings were held with the headteacher, the subject leader for Religious Education, governors and the two priests with links to the school. Discussions were also held with pupils and parents.

The inspectors scrutinised a range of documents including the school development plan, governing body minutes, subject leader documentation and performance data, as well as examining the work in pupils' Religious Education books.

## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

St. Joseph's Catholic Primary Voluntary Academy is part of the North Lincolnshire Catholic Academy Trust which was established in April 2012. It is situated in a residential area, just outside the town of Cleethorpes.

The parishes served by the academy are Corpus Christi in Cleethorpes, and St. Pius in Grimsby, which have amalgamated to become one parish since the last inspection. The Parish Priest, Fr James Earley, and the Chaplain for the Apostleship of the Sea, Fr Colum Kelly, are frequent visitors to the school and are involved in school life.

There are 189 pupils on roll, taught in 7 single-age classes. 35% of pupils are baptised Catholics which is a decrease in numbers since the last inspection. A further 25% of pupils belong to other Christian denominations and 37% of pupils have no religious affiliation.

33% of pupils are on the academy's special educational needs record; 1.6% have a statement of SEN. There are a small number of pupils across the school who qualify for Pupil Premium funding.

The children move onto a number of secondary schools at the end of Key Stage 2. However, no pupils moved to the newly created Holy Family Catholic Voluntary Academy in September 2013.

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# INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

**OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS**

**1**

**CATHOLIC LIFE**

**1**

**COLLECTIVE WORSHIP**

**1**

**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

**2**

## KEY FINDINGS

This is an outstanding Catholic school. Improvements since the last inspection are significant in all areas, reflecting a community whose core purpose and mission, 'We value all in the name of Jesus, the Christ', shines through the daily life of the school.

Pupils have a true sense of belonging at St. Joseph's, whatever their faith background; exemplary behaviour, positive relationships and respectful attitudes towards both work and prayer life demonstrate a deep understanding of and commitment to the Catholic mission of the school. 'We love our school!' is expressed verbally and shown through participation in a range of activities, such as providing pastoral support for younger pupils and involvement in charity work. Staff, clergy and governors have forged a strong and purposeful team who are dedicated to on-going school improvement. Parents are supportive; they share feedback such as 'My children are very happy at this school - they feel they are part of a family'.

High quality provision for Collective Worship enhances school life. Vibrant displays, incorporating interesting artefacts, attractive art work and carefully chosen music, reflect the importance placed upon the promotion of prayer and spiritual development. As a result, pupils respond well and participate enthusiastically; leaders and managers are passionate about this aspect of school life.

Religious Education is good at this school. Lessons in Religious Education are purposeful and well planned, with eager participation from pupils. Outcomes at the end of Key Stage 2 have risen significantly over the last 12 months, demonstrating that this is a school where there is a clear drive to improve standards further.

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

- Further develop the chaplaincy team to enable all pupils to gain the skills to plan and deliver Collective Worship from the earliest age.
  - Increase opportunities for pupils to talk and share ideas in lessons and ensure that systems for marking and feedback in Religious Education allow pupils to review and respond to advice about how to improve their work further.
  - Ensure that development planning is strategic and well-targeted so that the impact can be measured and achieved to greater effect.
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# CATHOLIC LIFE

## THE QUALITY OF 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.
- 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 school's self-evaluation rightly judges the Catholic Life of the school to be outstanding. All members of the school family share a common sense of belonging within a faith community, with the mission of the school at its centre. Pupils are involved in a range of activities which promote the school's ethos; the respectful attitudes of pupils in and out of classrooms, pupils' listening and communication skills and their readiness to be involved in positions of responsibility (such as the chaplaincy team) reflect their engagement in school life.

Almost all pupils, including those who are not Catholic, are proud of the school and can articulate why this is the case. They talk enthusiastically about both their learning and spiritual experiences: 'Something special happens every day'. As a result, pupils contribute effectively to and benefit very positively from the Catholic Life of the school.

The learning environment, lessons and atmosphere around the building reflect the distinctive identity of the school and it is evident that, the school's Catholic mission is deep rooted and a firm foundation for all aspects of school life. The staff team and governing body show total commitment to their work. Vulnerable groups and those with additional needs are well supported and are shown the highest level of care and consideration. Clear policies and systems are firmly in place to ensure that the pastoral care for pupils and staff remains a priority - in keeping with the school's mission.

Provision for the Catholic Life of the school is given the highest priority. Leaders and managers are deeply committed to the Church's mission of education and are passionate in their work; they lead by example. Parents and families are well informed, included in celebrations and given opportunities to share their views and feedback in numerous ways. Albums and 'special books' in the foyer show that this commitment is long-standing. All members of the community are valued and nurtured; relationships are strong. In the words of school governors, 'We are proud of the way staff are looked after, so that they can go on to nurture our pupils; doing their best, so they can be the best they can be'.

# COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

## THE QUALITY OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

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- 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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Collective Worship at St. Joseph's is central to pupils' experience of being part of a prayer community from the earliest years; this is evident in the way that pupils act with great reverence and participate enthusiastically in class and whole school worship. There is a tangible sense of readiness in the gathering of the community, particularly for whole school worship which is vibrant and which has the Good News at its heart. A range of prayer, including traditional, spontaneous, litany and silent reflection is modelled and embedded throughout the school and this, together with the variety of provision, results in Collective Worship being a treasured experience for the vast majority of pupils.

Opportunities for a range of worship are planned throughout the year to reflect the liturgical calendar. Pupils therefore have an excellent understanding of the Church's liturgical year, its celebrations and traditions. Scripture and music are used effectively to enrich this experience so that pupils are drawn in and engaged. The school fosters a deep sense of respect for different faiths and provides pupils with opportunities to come to a sound understanding and appreciation of the differences and similarities between these and the Catholic faith.

Some pupils are becoming skilled in preparing the focal point used in all Religious Education lessons. They use a variety of media and religious articles to encourage all participants to be inspired to join together in prayer and this becomes the foundation for the learning in the lesson. The long standing chaplaincy group, with the support of staff and clergy, have helped to shape a positive model of pupil-led provision. This has enabled some pupils to regularly prepare and lead class and whole school worship with confidence. As a result, Collective Worship has been improved, although the experience of pupil planned liturgy now needs to be disseminated throughout the school. The chaplaincy group are well placed to share their expertise so that all pupils will be equally skilled in the opportunity to prepare and lead worship at all levels.

Leaders and managers have expert knowledge of what high quality worship looks like. They endeavour to draw in the whole school community and regularly seek their views. Staff development has been undertaken to support them in planning and delivering Collective Worship. As a result, staff have an increased confidence in how to ensure that provision is of a high standard.

# 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 (including governors) monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education.

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Pupils enjoy their learning in Religious Education and are keen to do well. Most pupils concentrate diligently and are rarely off task; they show good behaviour for learning and engagement in their work. Pupils answer questions well and respond positively to discussions. In the best lessons, teachers reduce the amount of teacher talk in order to increase opportunities for children to answer open-ended questions, explore and share their thinking and use talk partners to maximise learning.

Assessment data for Religious Education (Summer 2013) shows that pupils are making progress in line with other pupils in the diocese. There has been a sharp rise in standards over the last 12 months and outcomes for pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 are good across all groups. The quality of teaching and learning in Religious Education is not outstanding because standards in the previous two years have been significantly below diocesan averages. Achievement across the school is currently consistently good and pupils meet age-related expectations in all classes. The school therefore has a good capacity for further improvement in this area.

Teaching in Religious Education is mainly good with some examples of outstanding practice. Teachers have a clear understanding of the value of Religious Education and communicate effectively with children. Support staff are highly skilled and enhance provision by supporting learners and reinforcing key points throughout lessons with confidence and a depth of knowledge. Teachers systematically check pupils' understanding and, as a result of clear and consistent assessment procedures, have a good awareness of their pupils' capabilities and how to meet their needs. Providing opportunities for pupils to respond to teachers' marking in workbooks would enhance assessment procedures further and accelerate progress. Effective time management and well-differentiated tasks have a positive impact on securing good learning.

Leaders and managers conduct a range of monitoring and evaluation activities and their evaluation provides a strong basis for diagnosis of school strengths and areas for development. Since the last inspection, great strides of improvement have been made in the drive to raise standards; this work is beginning to show through the recent improvement in outcomes for pupils and teaching over time. The next step is to use the information gathered to more carefully plan measurable and specific targets in the school development plan. Governors are key partners at St. Joseph's; they ensure that resources and staff training are given the utmost priority so that Religious Education is afforded the same 'academic' status as other core subjects within the school's curriculum.

## WHAT INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS MEAN

Within the report, the following grades are used:

<b>Grade 1</b>	Outstanding
<b>Grade 2</b>	Good
<b>Grade 3</b>	Requires improvement
<b>Grade 4</b>	Inadequate

In the context of the whole school, the overall effectiveness grades have the following meaning:

<b>Grade 1</b>	Outstanding	The school is a highly effective Catholic school. Pupils' needs are exceptionally well met.
<b>Grade 2</b>	Good	The school is an effective Catholic school. Pupils' needs are met well.
<b>Grade 3</b>	Requires improvement	The school is not yet a good Catholic school, it is not inadequate however, there are aspects that require improvement.
<b>Grade 4</b>	Inadequate	There are features in need of urgent and immediate attention. The school is not meeting the basic minimum requirement for adequacy. The school will receive a monitoring visit within twelve months.

