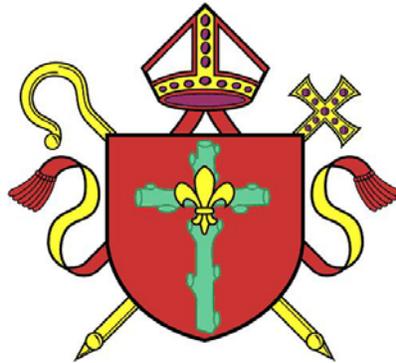


# NOTTINGHAM DIOCESAN INSPECTION REPORT ON DENOMINATIONAL EDUCATION

Spring 2011



St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School  
Coventry Road,  
Market Harborough,  
Leicestershire,  
LE16 9BZ

Date of Inspection: Monday 28<sup>th</sup> March 2011

(Section 48, 2005 Education Act)

## SECTION 48 DENOMINATIONAL INSPECTION REPORT

<b>Name and address of School:</b>	<b>St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Coventry Road, Market Harborough, Leicestershire LE16 9BZ</b>
<b>Headteacher:</b>	<b>Mrs Karen McVea</b>
<b>Chair of Governors:</b>	<b>Mr Mike McGowan</b>
<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	<b>Monday 28<sup>th</sup> March 2011</b>
<b>Inspection Team:</b>	<b>Mrs Joan Stannard and Mrs Helen Booton</b>
<b>URN &amp; DfS Number:</b>	<b>120219 855 3347</b>
<b>Overall Grade Awarded:</b>	<b>2</b>

### A. DESCRIPTION OF THE SCHOOL

St. Joseph's is a smaller than average primary school in the town of Market Harborough within the Catholic Diocese of Nottingham. It serves the parish of Our Lady of Victories, Market Harborough.

The current number on roll is 159 with 75.5% baptised Catholics. 17.6% of children are from other Christian backgrounds and 4.5% of pupils have no religious affiliation (2.5% of parents made no comment). The percentage of pupils eligible to take a free school meal (8.2%) is below the national average. The proportion of children with special needs and/or disabilities is also below the national average; being 5.6% in total. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds, with a small number being Travellers of Irish background. 8.5% of all pupils have English at an additional language, their main language being Polish.

Early Years Foundation Stage provision is provided for children in the reception class with children entering school from a variety of locally based pre-school providers. At the end of year 6, pupils move on to a range of Secondary Schools depending on their particular circumstances.

## INSPECTION SCHEDULE

### B. OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

#### Grade: 2

St. Joseph's provides good quality Catholic Education for its pupils.

The children are worthy representatives of the school's values, demonstrating very good relationships both with each other and with the staff. The Eucharist is central to the life of the school. The prayer life and the Acts of Collective Worship are good. The parish priest is a frequent and welcome visitor to the school, supporting the staff and nurturing the children in their spiritual formation. Behaviour in and around school is exemplary and effective strategies are in place to resolve promptly any issues should they arise. The school offers a wide range of opportunities and experiences for its children within a safe and secure environment.

A number of initiatives have been introduced since the arrival of the newly appointed head teacher and her team are developing these well. Leaders realise that to improve further, attention needs to be paid to embedding these initiatives and ensuring that the whole school improvement cycle leads to raising pupils' attainment in Religious Education and to improving the Catholic life of the school.

Pupils are very happy at school, are keen to do well and to make good progress. Standards in Religious Education are high and match achievement in English. Children with special educational needs and other vulnerable children are well integrated and supported in the classroom so that there is good attainment in all groups. Outcomes for all pupils are good. Pupils have a strong sense of community within the school and participate with reverence in its prayer life.

Leaders and Managers develop the Catholic life of the school to a good standard. The recently appointed head teacher "has brought a smile to the place" and members of the parent community acknowledge that there has been a lot of change "but for the better." Governors generously give of their time, skills and expertise. They are deeply committed to maintaining the high profile of the Catholic character of the school, whilst being steadfastly focused on improving outcomes for children. Governors support and encourage leaders but understand that monitoring and evaluation of the Catholic life of the school and religious education, from their perspective, needs to take place more systematically in order to allow them to gain further insight and plan strategically for the future.

The provision for Catholic education is good. There is a great commitment to providing an interesting and varied curriculum with a great variety of appropriate activities including drama, ICT, art, crafts and discussion in addition to written work. This could be extended even further through improved teaching on other faiths, visits to other places of worship, workshops and speakers from other Christian and different faiths. Dedicated teaching and support staff ensure that the Catholic nature of the school is clearly at the forefront of provision.

The school has a good capacity for sustained improvements. The senior leadership team correctly identifies the school's strengths and areas for development. The school development plan for religious education now needs to be set out in greater detail and include elements referring to the Catholic life of the school. The recently introduced mechanisms and systems once embedded, will increase in effectiveness and ensure that the school is well placed to improve even further the outcomes for the children.

### **C. What does the school need to do to improve further?**

At St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School the strengths of the school far outweigh the areas for improvement. However, all good schools recognise the need for further improvement. We recommend therefore that St. Joseph's School seeks to

- Develop further a systematic monitoring procedure for governors and senior leaders to inform strategic plans.
- Develop assessment procedures so that they are fully embedded and consistently practised.
- Develop knowledge of other faiths, pupils' awareness of ethical issues and cultural diversity.
- Develop independent skills for children to lead both Eucharistic and non-Eucharistic celebrations.

### **D. The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

#### **Grade: 2**

Leaders and managers set high standards. During this period of transition all members of the community are reflecting on their vision for the school, its Catholic dimension and its purpose as it fulfils the Church's mission in education. The children are well motivated and are keen to learn. They are well supported by their parents, teaching assistants and class teachers and so are able to thrive in this good school.

Systems are being developed whereby the head teacher, governors and senior leaders are able to identify and prioritise areas for improvement. Together, they have the drive and enthusiasm to see initiatives through to their successful conclusion. With systematic and sustained implementation (and subsequent analysis) school improvement will be achieved. Leaders are well-supported by an enthusiastic staff, committed to developing the school still further.

# PUPILS

## GRADE: 2

Children from all age groups are actively engaged in their lessons. They are keen to do well and they enjoy learning. They find Religious Education lessons fun: 'We do lots of interesting things and make things.' There is evidence in both Y4 and Y6 of children having competent IT skills that are used to good effect creating thought-provoking presentations whilst some Y1 children also use dictaphones to record their thoughts and help them with their sentence construction skills.

In upper key stage 2, pupils express how belief in the death and resurrection of Jesus gives some explanation of the meaning and purpose of life in general and thus shapes their own life at school. Using powerpoint software, 'freeze frames' taken previously around school are incorporated into the Stations of the Cross devotions. The children are also working towards very challenging objectives trying to understand the notion of dying in order to live in a new way; communicating their thoughts onto the symbolic shape of a cross.

In lower key stage 2, pupils articulate links and give reasons regarding the significance of their Lenten actions and symbols. They recount their prior learning, offer reasons for their choices and reflect on the progress of their Lenten actions having first identified barriers and ways of overcoming them.

The children have made good progress this academic year. There is evidence in Y4 work of exceptional progress, particularly with those who find the work challenging. Great progress is made in Y1; the pupils are working beyond age – related expectations in terms of religious literacy. The overall outcomes for learners are good.

Standards of attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 are mostly above average. There is evidence of good subject knowledge about the Lenten season and what Lent means for the pupils as members of St. Joseph's school community. Children are able to reflect on learning and make links between the Stations of the Cross. Some Year 6 children are working at an advanced level. Vocabulary linked to religious education and faith is used strongly in both key stages; the more able pupils have opportunities to demonstrate their advanced level of learning.

Standards of attainment at key stage 1 were somewhat variable. The younger children are excited with, and very engaged in, their learning. They are keen to express what the symbols of new life seen during Lent are, and to link them with the story of Easter. The older children are encouraged to reflect and to offer questions for their talking partners about their Lenten promises. It was a pleasure to participate in their class-based prayer and liturgy.

In the foundation stage, routines are well-established and there is a warm rapport between staff and children. The children are able to remember previous work, having

been on a learning walk to find signs of new life around their immediate locality and record these in their annotated pictures. Observations of flowers and leaf buds are used. Regrettably, there was little opportunity to witness the reinforcement of this learning through a range of child initiated or teacher-led activities across the other foundation stage areas of learning. Nevertheless it is clear that all pupils are making appropriate progress in relation to their starting points and capabilities.

Children have targets to work towards, which are linked to attainment target levels appropriate to the individual. In areas of best practice (when targets are used systematically), children respond well and use them to support learning. In some classes children are unsure how to use their targets to support their progress.

Children with special needs are supported well by teaching assistants who use good questioning skills and thus enhance learning. Travellers are very well integrated into school life, as are other minority groups. All groups of pupils make good progress.

The extent to which pupils respond to, and participate in, the school's Collective Worship is good. The school council has a strong voice and represents the views of other children in the school. It influences areas for development; for example new play equipment has been erected on the playground. Midday supervisors said that this is very popular with the children and as a result the behaviour is good.

The participation of the children in the school Mass and in class liturgy is good. There is a sense of reverence and respect from all the children from foundation stage upwards. Pupils respond well to traditional prayers, they are at ease when praying with the community and in the singing of hymns. Children have opportunities to devise, and to read out their own prayers, and to read out passages from scripture. They act as altar servers and play their recorders and flutes at the appropriate times during Mass.

In key stage 2, children are involved in devising their own liturgy to celebrate the end of a topic in "Here I Am". Unfortunately other opportunities to plan and to lead worship are limited. There are prayer boxes in classrooms, and in some classes they are well used. As yet key stage 1 children do not have the opportunity to devise their own worship materials or have opportunity for non-Eucharistic liturgies that may be appropriate for their age group.

The pupils have strong links with the parish. Fr. Owen is well known to them. They value the Catholic tradition of the school. Behaviour is exemplary in all areas of the school, including during Mass. The children show respect for each other and help one another. They are considerate, caring and have a good sense of right and wrong. They are engaged in fundraising for others, but knowledge of other cultures, beliefs and key world issues linked to human rights and justice could be extended.

## LEADERS AND MANAGERS

### Grade: 2

The effectiveness of leaders and managers in developing the Catholic life of the school is good.

Staff and pupils at St. Joseph's have a high regard for the Catholic life of their school. Leaders and managers demonstrate commitment to the mission of the church. They are currently undergoing a thorough review of the mission statement. This will allow all members of the community to have a sound understanding of both the purpose and the driving force underpinning their vocation as they work together to bring about further improvements.

Members of the school community and indeed those new to the field of Catholic education have availed themselves of quality professional development opportunities and responded positively to diocesan guidance. The school works productively with its key partners locally and indeed within the family of Catholic schools. Currently, St. Joseph's is engaging with a comprehensive review of the provision for sex and relationships education being undertaken by the fraternity of Catholic schools in the area.

The spiritual well-being of both the pupils and the staff remains a priority. The chair and head teacher are aware of the need to support the staff in their personal and professional growth as they fulfil their vocation in Catholic education. Hence, personnel are encouraged to engage with quality staff development, diocesan initiatives and local partnership working.

Leaders and managers have high expectations of themselves and indeed of the school. To this end, all involved in shaping the direction of the school realise that the self-evaluation processes in place need to evolve. The development of more systematic, robust procedures to complete rigorous monitoring and subsequent searching analysis of the Catholic life of their school will provide leaders and managers with a sophisticated evaluation of provision and its impact. In this way, leaders and managers can build on their successes and plan strategically to secure yet further improvements in terms of both the Catholic life and outcomes for pupils.

Community cohesion at St. Joseph's is promoted to a satisfactory standard. Staff and pupils have an inclusive vision, recognising and valuing the range of similarities and differences within the school community. Relationships within the community are good and there is a common sense of belonging. Parents are actively encouraged to engage with the wealth of opportunities that the school offers and speak favourably of recent initiatives and developments.

Whilst the religious education curriculum includes some study of other world faiths, there is scope for improvement and this has been recognised by the leadership team. They have started to liaise with others beyond the school to ensure that pupils from different backgrounds are given opportunities to work together. The development of this will enable the pupils to acquire skills for dialogue and collaboration with people who hold different beliefs and values.

Leaders and managers may wish to consider developing further the inclusivity of prayer provision by accommodating rites and rituals of other world faiths into their liturgical programme.

The school community at St. Joseph's is mindful of how it can support the poor and needy, promoting the work of CAFOD, Macmillan and Shelter in addition to local parish appeals too. As well as welcoming visitors into school, the staff and children involve themselves in charitable fund-raising activities to support Kilworth Challenge and Seeds for Africa and participate in a broad range of themed days. Although pupils are aware of their own diverse community, further developments are needed. Pupils need to have opportunities to engage at first-hand with a variety of cultural groups in order to develop a positive image of them. The leadership team quite rightly recognises the value in establishing and cultivating tangible links between the school and others both nationally and internationally to achieve this end.

The monitoring and evaluation of the provision for religious education and planning for improvement to outcomes for pupils is at a satisfactory standard. The head teacher, her senior colleagues and religious education coordinator are fully aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and are using assessment, training and intervention wisely to bring about improvements in teaching and learning. Although, the recently introduced system of assessment is still at an early stage, staff are gaining confidence in using it.

The religious education coordinator is well informed and enthusiastic. She is proactive in accessing quality training and diocesan support. She is actively promoting the delivery of a good, creative curriculum which caters for the different needs and learning styles of the pupils. Both the teaching and ancillary staff are well supported by her. There is a sharing of training materials, help with planning and developing assessment strategies, and in the modelling of good practice.

Assessment data now needs to be tracked systematically over a longer period of time in order to gain a more accurate view of the progress of all groups. This information, together with the evaluation of other monitoring activities such as the impact of evaluative marking, can influence future strategic planning and impact even more on pupil outcomes. Assessment for learning is evident in lessons where objectives are made clear to the children and checked with mini-plenaries throughout the lesson. However, this will need careful monitoring to ensure consistency across all key stages.

The governors of St. Joseph's provide effective challenge and support for the Catholic dimension of the school to a good standard. They are well organised and have an appropriate committee structure in place to serve the school. There is a wide variety of skills and expertise available to support and challenge the school as it goes forward.

Governors are aware of, and discharge their canonical and statutory duties effectively and are visible in the school.

Members of the governing body are increasingly gaining first-hand experience of the day-to-day life of the school. They meet with key personnel and have started to participate in focused monitoring activities, as well as continuing to visit the school on a more informal basis.

In recent years, there have been a number of changes at senior leadership level. This has now been stabilised and there is a focus on raising standards and improving all aspects of school life.

The chair has been proactive to ensure that the members of the governing body are developing their knowledge and understanding of the school so that governors are informed on standards, school performance data and the progress of initiatives. The religious education governor is a regular visitor to the school and is proactive in her role as a critical friend, drawing on the wisdom of her many years dedicated to the school. Consequently, in partnership with the head teacher and senior staff, the governing body is now in a position to implement a robustly planned programme of monitoring and evaluation. By developing rigorous and systematic mechanisms of its own, governors can identify strategic priorities and thus make a highly significant contribution to the work and the Catholic dimension of the school.

## **PROVISION**

### **GRADE: 2**

Nearly all the teaching is effective in ensuring the pupils are well motivated and enthusiastic about their learning. No teaching is inadequate. A large majority is good and in two classes outstanding teaching was observed. In these classes, children's learning was rapid. Pupils were motivated through drama, ICT and active engagement in their activities and support was appropriately targeted.

Teachers have strong subject knowledge that has been enhanced through training from the Diocese and by links with the family of schools. In almost all classes, pupils are given good feedback in marking linked to achievement of learning objectives. There is however little evidence of developmental marking to take children to the next level of attainment. There is some evidence of self-assessment using smiley faces to represent high achievement.

Processes are now in place for good assessment procedures. This needs to be analysed in a systematic way and sustained over a period of time in order to ensure that it informs school development planning and leads to school improvement. This will, with the input of further data, indicate trends in achievement, areas of strength and areas for development.

The curriculum in religious education is planned carefully to engage learners and to meet their needs. It provides good opportunity for spiritual and moral development. A recent retreat led by Fr Cain and members of the Reach4 group was well received and supported staff and children alike. Further provision could be made to enhance community cohesion through working with schools of different cultural backgrounds or e-twinning or video conferencing with children from other countries, cultures and faith backgrounds. Children enjoyed a recent visit to Polesworth Abbey to learn about life as a monk or nun.

There are several extracurricular activities including Lent club, Bible Craft club, various sport activities and music groups as well as an after school care provision.

These are well attended and enjoyed by children who, along with their parents, are enthusiastic about them.

Acts of Collective Worship are given a high profile and are central to the life of the school. Over seventy members of the parish attended the Mass. Many of these had children or other members of the family in school, but others did not. They were enthusiastic about the school Masses and the welcome and cup of tea after the service. There is a strong link with the parish community and very positive feedback from them. The school records feedback from the parishioners to support school evaluation of Catholic Life.

Staff accept the responsibility for leading prayer and involve pupils in its delivery.

Whilst children have good skills in reading at the Mass and participate well, pupils could be skilled further from the earliest ages in leading and developing different styles of prayer. Similarly they could be involved in choosing themes both appropriate to the church's liturgical year and in response to local and international events and festivals of different faiths.

#### **Common grading scale for all inspection judgements**

Grade 1          Outstanding

Grade 2          Good

Grade 3          Satisfactory

Grade 4          Inadequate

## INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

### OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

**Leave this judgement until the end. Then transfer your grades from for the 3 overarching judgements into the boxes below and make the overall effectiveness judgement, the modal grade of these 3 judgements.**

How effective is the school in providing Catholic education ?	<b>2</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• how good are the outcomes for pupils, taking particular account of variations between different groups</li> </ul>	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• how effective leaders and managers are in developing the Catholic life of the school</li> </ul>	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• how effective is the provision in promoting Catholic education</li> </ul>	2

### PUPILS

<p>How good outcomes are for pupils, taking particular account of variations between different groups</p> <p style="text-align: center; color: red;"><b>Please use the modal average of the judgements 2), 3) and 4) to inform judgement 1)</b></p> <p style="text-align: center; color: red;"><b>Judgement 6) informs judgement 5) and finally Judgements 1) and 5) inform the main judgement - with 1) carrying most weight.</b></p>	<b>2</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1) how well pupils progress and enjoy their learning in Religious Education</li> </ul>	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2) <i>the pupils' standards of attainment in Religious Education</i></li> </ul>	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3) <i>the quality of pupils' learning and their progress</i></li> </ul>	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4) <i>the quality of learning for pupils with particular learning needs and / or disabilities and their progress</i></li> </ul>	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 5) the extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life of the school</li> </ul>	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 6) <i>how well pupils respond to and participate in the school's collective worship</i></li> </ul>	2

### LEADERS AND MANAGERS

<p>How effective leaders and managers are in developing the Catholic life of the school</p> <p style="text-align: center; color: red;"><b>Judgement 2) informs judgement 1).</b></p> <p style="text-align: center; color: red;"><b>The modal average of judgement 1), 3) and 4) inform the main judgement.</b></p>	<b>2</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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</li> </ul>	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2) <i>how effectively leaders and managers promote community cohesion</i></li> </ul>	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3) how well leaders and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious</li> </ul>	3

<b>Education for improvement to outcomes for pupils</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4) the extent to which the governing body provides effective challenge and support for the Catholic dimension of the school so that areas for development are tackled decisively and statutory and canonical responsibilities are met</li> </ul>	<b>2</b>

#### PROVISION

<b>How effective the provision is in promoting Catholic education</b> <b>Judgement 2) informs judgement 1).</b> <b>The modal average of judgements 1), 3) and 4) inform the main judgement.</b>	<b>2</b>
1) The quality of teaching and how purposeful learning is in Religious Education	<b>2</b>
2) <i>the effectiveness of assessment and academic guidance in Religious education</i>	<b>3</b>
3) the extent to which the religious Education curriculum meets pupils' needs	<b>2</b>
4) the quality of Collective Worship provided by the school	<b>2</b>