



THE CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF
ARUNDEL & BRIGHTON
EDUCATION SERVICE

DENOMINATIONAL CATHOLIC SCHOOL INSPECTION REPORT

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

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School Unique Reference Number: 114542

Headteacher:	Mrs Gillian Foan
Chair of Governors:	Mrs Lyndsey Gravenor
Lead Inspector:	Mrs Hilary Blake
Associate Inspector:	Miss Fiona McGonigle
Inspection date:	2 February 2022
	Previous Inspection: 2
Overall Effectiveness	This Inspection: 2
Catholic Life:	2
Religious Education:	2
Collective Worship:	2

Summary of key findings for parents/carers and pupils/students

St Joseph's is a Good Catholic school because:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Led by the Headteacher and with the support of the governors, the school staff has established a safe and inclusive community where all pupils can grow spiritually and academically; where pupils have the opportunity to be the best that they can be, secure in the knowledge that they are loved and valued as part of the St Joseph's family. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pupils display exemplary behaviour in and around the school and are focused during their lessons. They care for and respect themselves, the environment and each other. Pupils enjoy their lessons, are proud of their work and achieve good standards. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pupils experience and enjoy Liturgy in a range of contexts. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are supported to plan and ably lead class Liturgies. Together, the school and parish are successfully promoting the inclusive nature of the local Catholic community.

St Joseph's school is not yet outstanding because:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The good practice observed in upper Key Stage 2 for contribution to Catholic Life, independent learning in Religious Education and pupil leadership in Collective Worship should be developed across the school in relation to pupils' age and ability. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A robust system of assessment and moderation using the Standards of Attainment is not yet embedded. Teacher subject knowledge is not yet consistently secure to equip all teachers with the skills to bring greater creativity and challenge to lessons. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leaders and governors are working to re-establish the full range of worship experiences to be wholly reflective of the church's liturgical year.

FULL REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Joseph's is a smaller than average, one form entry primary school in the Diocese of Arundel and Brighton. It is maintained by Brighton and Hove Local Authority.

The school admits pupils from 4 to 11 years old. There are currently 151 pupils on roll, of which 15% are baptised Catholics; 35% of pupils belong to other Christian denominations; 4% of pupils are from other faith backgrounds and 45% of pupils are not affiliated to any faith.

The school is situated in the Brighton and Hove deanery where it serves the parishes of St Joseph and St John the Baptist. Of the 151 pupils, 52% are of White British heritage. The remaining 48% come from a wide variety of ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is higher than average. Similarly, we are well above the national average with 26% of pupils on the school's register of special educational need or disability. The percentage of pupils receiving pupil premium funding is well above the national average. A high number of pupils join or leave the school other than at Reception and Year 6.

WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL NEED TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- Establish a strong system of assessment using the diocesan framework including moderation internally and externally to ensure accuracy of judgements.
- Further develop teacher expertise in Religious Education subject knowledge.
- Ensure leaders and governors re-establish a rigorous cycle of monitoring.

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 governors 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

- The school's stated mission: to educate in Faith, Hope and Love, is a driving force within the school community. Most importantly, the impact is evident in the lives of the children, whatever their faith backgrounds. A clear illustration was provided by the parent who spoke movingly of the transformational effect transferring into the St Joseph's community has had on their child in recent months.
- Pupils show respect for themselves and others. They are kind and considerate to one another. Lovely manners, sharing and turn taking was observed in one of the youngest classes. In discussions, pupils stated that there is no bullying and spoke positively about the friendships they form at St Joseph's. They show an understanding of the need to say sorry and move on if any minor upsets occur.
- Behaviour observed throughout the day was exemplary, contributing to the calm atmosphere in classrooms and as pupils move around the school. Pupils in Upper Key Stage 2 are particularly keen to act as ambassadors for the school; members of the School and Religious Education councils spoke warmly and positively of their experiences in their learning and relationships, both with their peers and their teachers.
- Pupils are aware of those in need in the wider world and write their own prayers for the poor, the homeless and refugees. They contribute to fundraising activities to support the hungry in the locality and further afield, for example through donations to Harvest collections and CAFOD.

- The very good reputation of pupils outside the school boundaries was mentioned by the parish priest and cited by several parents/carers as a reason for their initial interest in St Joseph's.
- The school community came together to celebrate Mass for the Headteacher's induction recently, demonstrating the respect and value children and their families share for the school and its religious identity and traditions
- The link governor for religious education described how all children, from whichever faith background, fully embrace the Catholic life and ethos of their school, showing that the school is true to its aims and values. He said: 'within the school, all children irrespective of where they come from consider themselves to be Catholic.'

The quality of provision of the Catholic Life of the school is: Good

- The mission statement is clearly visible in the learning environment and all communications with the school, including the school website.
- There are many attractive and well cared for displays and areas throughout the school, both inside and out. The outward signs and artefacts, including inspirational phrases and quotations, reflect the importance that school leaders place on the Catholic character and identity.
- The school has adopted the diocesan recommended scheme, Journey in Love, for the teaching of Relationship Education. Although not yet fully embedded across the school year, appropriate consultation with parents/carers took place and clear information for parents/carers is provided on the school website.
- The parish priest serves as school chaplain and link governor for religious education, promoting strong links between parish and school. He is committed to supporting the school in its mission, recognising the positive impact it has on the pupils and looks forward to re-instating Masses and Acts of Reconciliation into the liturgical calendar as well as resuming his role of supporting the teaching of religious education, particularly the sacramental topics.
- The school's commitment to every member of the school community is praised by parents/carers; responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire were overwhelmingly positive. Parents/carers appreciate the care and support extended beyond the curriculum by the school team to all pupils and their families. Pastoral care is rightly considered a strength of the school; the SEND team works closely with leaders, contributing effectively to the provision for pupils and families in need. One parent commented: 'As a parent I have always been welcomed and reassured that any problem will be resolved... this school is a little bit of magic!'

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic life of the school is: Good

- Governors are loyal to the school and committed to its role in Catholic education. The Chair of Governors is a frequent visitor, consulting with the Headteacher, connecting with staff and joining the pupils for Collective Worship where possible.
- The Chair of Governors reports to the full board at their monthly meetings. Governors are confident that the information they receive from the Headteacher, and subject leaders enables them to contribute effectively to prioritising future developments.
- Governors could give clear examples of the pupil's contribution to the common good, citing the example of gardening for the residents of the adjacent flats.
- In reviewing the school's development plan and specifically the action plan for religious education, governors and the senior leadership team have identified key areas for improvement which coincide with the findings of this inspection.

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 governors 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: Good

- All pupils make progress from their varied starting points and by the end of each Key Stage, the school assesses the majority of pupils as attaining age- related expectations in religious education. The best lessons challenge pupils through probing questioning or extension tasks.
- The school is very nurturing and inclusive of pupils with special educational needs. Support assistants are deployed sensitively to support and facilitate their learning, consequently these pupils also make progress relative to their ability.
- Pupils concentrate and listen very well; they enjoy and respond positively to activities, remaining focused on their tasks. Developing religious literacy is integral to the teaching in most lessons observed. Many pupils draw on prior learning and sometimes make links, for example about other religions: one pupil recalled the special meal in the Jewish celebration of Shabbat when learning about the Last Supper and another made links to the Mass.
- Peer to peer support is used effectively, for example in the use of talk partners or the opportunity to 'phone a friend'. Behaviour in lessons is consistently extremely good.
- All pupils spoke positively of their learning in religious education and could give varied examples of creative activities they have enjoyed, including drama, freeze frame and art, as well as standard ways of recording their learning. Pupils' written work is well presented and the content of their oral and written responses is good and sometimes insightful.
- Teacher assessment indicates that the majority of pupils achieve age related expectations by the end of both Key Stages 1 and 2.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in religious education is: Good

- All teachers plan lessons which are well structured and well resourced. Lessons start with prayer and reflection, often accompanied by music and singing, to signal the start of the lesson and draw children together.
- Inspectors observed a range of motivating activities which engaged the pupils in whole class, paired or individual tasks. In the best lessons, good teacher subject knowledge, pace and skilful questioning together with differentiated tasks are used effectively to challenge pupils in their learning and independence.
- Missed opportunities to pick up either incorrect answers or some insightful remarks made by pupils were observed in a small number of lessons. With greater confidence, teachers could explore these remarks as learning opportunities.
- In every classroom, teachers create a calm working atmosphere; consequently, pupils are focused and concentrate very well in lessons. Signing is used in some classes to reinforce language used.
- The supportive learning environment means that most pupils are confident to share ideas or seek the aid of peers if they are stuck. An example of peer affirmation was seen in a Key Stage 1 class, where the teacher modelled praise for a pupil supplying a correct answer and the other children immediately joined in. In many small ways such as this, the school fosters a positive attitude which encourages personal growth.
- The learning environment is exceptionally attractive and well maintained; religious education displays and the prayer focus in every classroom provides a stimulating and language-rich resource to support children's acquisition of and familiarity with religious vocabulary. In addition to their learning within the Catholic curriculum, attractive displays and resources point to learning in other faiths, reflecting and respecting the diversity of the pupils and their families.
- In Key Stage 2 particularly, teachers use forward marking, giving pupils time to respond in order to reflect on their work and move their learning on.
- Assessment should now be focused on the diocesan Standards of Attainment to facilitate moderation with other schools and thus ensure reliability of judgements.

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for religious education is: Good

- Leaders and governors ensure that the religious education curriculum fully meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference in each key stage, including in the allocation of time devoted to subject teaching. In one class, recorded evidence does not fully reflect the range of learning.
- Religious education is very well resourced and has a high profile throughout the learning environment.
- The Headteacher has recently taken on the additional role of curriculum leader for religious education. She has a clear vision and a high level of expertise and experience in this area with which to secure future developments and improvements.
- The school has collaborated with local academy partners on improvements in religious education. In the medium term, governors may wish to consider sharing the responsibilities of the subject lead role to balance workload, as identified in the school's Self Evaluation, and ensure the capacity to implement and secure planned actions.
- Schemes approved by the diocese have been selected for teaching religious education and relationship education throughout the school. Parents/carers have been consulted and are kept informed of curriculum content.
- The Chair of Governors has informal drop-ins with the Headteacher and the whole governing body meets monthly to share and discuss developments and attainment including in religious education. The governing body approves all policy documents relating to religious education and ensures this contributes to the whole school action plan.

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 governors 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: Good

- Pupils experience collective worship in a range of contexts including class, key stage and whole school. All acts of worship are suitably structured to create a prayerful atmosphere. Even the youngest pupils articulate that the lighted candle reminds us that Jesus is present and is the 'Light of the World.'
- Pupils are very comfortable with prayer. They participate reverently, sing joyfully, reflect in silence and are confident to share spontaneous prayer which reveals their personal reflection and response to Scripture.
- Pupils are confident to lead class collective worship using guided resources, as observed in the Upper Key Stage 2 class liturgy during inspection. They demonstrate an ability to prepare the prayer focus appropriate to the liturgical season and establish a reverent and calm atmosphere. Pupils were beginning to practice Lectio Divina and model spontaneous personal prayer linked to scripture. For example, with great maturity, one pupil drew together the prayers of the group, while referencing the scripture, with a beautiful prayer from his heart and mind. Other groups of pupils could benefit from observing this exceptional practice.
- The practice of Christian Meditation is embedded and provides another opportunity during the day for quiet reflection and personal prayer.
- Members of the Religious Education Council celebrated the Rosary in their outdoor learning sessions by creating a Rosary using natural materials in the outdoor environment.
- Liturgies are inclusive and all pupils are at ease in sharing prayer experiences with those of different faiths.

The quality of provision for collective worship and prayer life is: Good

- Staff and pupils pray together regularly, prayer is woven throughout the day and is part of every school celebration. Each classroom is very well resourced and clearly displays an attractive prayer focus reflecting the liturgical seasons.
- Liturgical themes reflect the Catholic character of the school. Spaces for quiet and personal prayer are available throughout the school, both indoors and out.
- The library is very well resourced with a range of religious books which staff and pupils can access and use in their prayers and learning.
- Attendance by other adults at school celebrations of collective worship is encouraged and facilitated (when circumstances allow). Response to the invitation is positive as evidenced by the significant attendance of school families at the Headteacher's Induction Mass, cited by the parish priest.
- Key staff have a good understanding of the church's liturgical heritage, rites and seasons which ensures pupils' good experiences of liturgical life.

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for collective worship and prayer life is: Good

- Leaders model good practice in planning and leading a range of liturgies. Plans to develop and share good practice include extending leadership of whole school and key stage liturgies to all members of the leadership team.
- The Chair of Governors regularly joins pupils for whole school and key stage liturgies. Monitoring and evaluation is largely informal at this stage.
- The link governor for religious education (the parish priest and school chaplain) supports the school through promoting parish/school links, organising and planning school Masses and encouraging the pupils to be actively involved in a variety of ministries.
- The school chaplain is enthusiastic to re-establish the full range of worship experiences for pupils as the school rebuilds, following the interruptions due to COVID and lockdowns.

Summary of Inspection Judgements

How effective the school is in providing Catholic Education.

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Catholic Life

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

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The quality of provision for the Catholic life of the school.

2

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic life of the school.

2

Religious Education

2

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education.

2

The quality of teaching and assessment in religious education.

2

How well leaders and governors monitor and evaluate the provision for religious education.

2

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.

2

The quality of provision for collective worship and prayer life.

2

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for collective worship and prayer life.

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