



## **INSPECTION REPORT**

### **ST. JOSEPH'S RC PRIMARY SCHOOL**

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DfE Number: 933 3402

Headteacher: Mr Simon Kingwell

Chair of Governors: Mr John Morton

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Canonical Inspection under Canon 806 on behalf of the Diocese of Clifton  
and inspection of Denominational Education under  
Section 48 of the Education Act 2005

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Date of inspection: 19 & 20 March 2014

Date of previous inspection: July 2008

Reporting Inspector: Mr F Toner

Additional Inspector: Mrs S Wembridge

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## Description of School

St. Joseph's Catholic Primary is a larger than average primary school situated in the centre of Burnham on Sea. The school is situated in the Parish of Our Lady of the English Martyrs. At the time of the inspection there were 279 children on roll of whom 13% were baptised Catholics. The number of children entitled to free school meals is below the national average as is the proportion of children with English as an additional language and children with a Statement of Educational Need (SEN) or additional needs. Attendance is good.

### Key for inspection grades

Grade 1: Outstanding;    Grade 2: Good;    Grade 3: Requires improvement in order to be good;  
Grade 4: Inadequate

## Overall effectiveness of this Catholic school (summary statement)

**Grade 3**

- The school is highly regarded by parents, children and the wider community
- Pupils value the spiritual, moral and ethical ethos of the school; however, some aspects of provision are not distinctively catholic.
- Standards of RE in KS1 are good but much of the written work in KS2 requires improvement and standards are satisfactory in KS2
- As a result of the low % of catholic pupils it views itself as being part of the wider Christian community as opposed to specifically 'catholic'

### The capacity of the school community to improve and develop

- With a more robust self-evaluation process for RE and the catholicity, the school has the capacity to improve. There are already some plans in place to address identified areas for development.
- The Teaching of RE in KS1 is good and with a greater focus on RE in KS2 and Bishops' conference recommendations it has the capacity to improve.
- With strategies to evaluate its provision and outcomes, the Catholic Life of the school will develop further.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Introduce robust systems to monitor the Catholic life of the school at both a school and governance level.
- Teaching and learning in KS2 RE should focus on raising levels of achievement and attainment consistently across the phase.
- Links between the school and the diocese should be further developed and strengthened.

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

Grade 3

The inspectors spoke to a range of pupils in lessons, around school and in Pupil Voice interviews, to find out how they benefit from the Catholic life of the school. Pupils understood the needs of others and were able to share their ideas about why fund raising for organisations such as CAFOD is important. As a result of good guidance from the school, all pupils demonstrated an engagement with moral and ethical issues and this formed part of a unit of work on Lent. Pupils demonstrated an understanding about the need to forgive. One pupil in Key Stage 2 said, 'If you don't forgive, you won't have many friends,' whilst another said, 'Forgiving is a big weight off your chest.'

In KS1, pupil attainment, attitudes and enthusiasm is developing and they are able to use religious language correctly. In KS2, pupils work steadily and can show some links between faith and life: 'We should learn from what Jesus did.'

The prayer life of the school is established with a Mass each term, liturgies and class assemblies. Most pupils are involved, but have limited opportunities to plan and lead prayer and worship independently. A Mass for the feast day of St. Joseph took place during the inspection. Pupils demonstrated that they could participate respectfully in the Mass, and most were engaged. They joined in the singing with enthusiasm. Pupils are aware that there are some religious artefacts around the school and pointed out a statue of St. Joseph in the school entrance and the fact that there is a cross in each class however, they were not able to explain their purpose or significance.

### *What it needs to do to move to a good judgement*

- Increase pupils' contribution to the Catholic Life of the school.
- Provide pupils' with further opportunities to evaluate the Catholic Life and the mission statement of the school.
- Ensure teacher assessment of pupils' progress and standards of attainment in Key Stage 2 are consistently based on the Bishops' Conference document 'Levels of Attainment in Religious Education in Catholic Schools and Colleges'.

## How effective are leaders and governors in developing the Catholic Life of the school?

Grade 3

Leaders and governors are very supportive of St. Joseph's. They are proud of the school's tradition and heritage. Parents praise the school for its promotion of moral values. One parent said they chose the school because they wanted the best for their child. Parents of SEN children spoke highly of the school's support, approachability and inclusiveness.

However, the school feels that a very low proportion of Catholic children on roll present an additional challenge in maintaining the Catholic life of the school. Although effective strategies are put in place to promote pupils' spiritual and moral development, they are not predominately Catholic in nature.

Leaders and Governors have some knowledge of the school's strengths and areas for development. A new scheme of work, for RE, has been introduced to raise standards and outcomes for pupils. Monitoring of the scheme is taking place by RE subject leaders but the

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evaluation of the impact of the scheme needs to drive improvement forward at a faster pace. Governors rely on reports on outcomes for pupils based on assessments carried out by the school. Owing to Catholic pupils being in the minority the leaders and governors believe that St Joseph's belongs to a wider faith community as opposed to being specifically 'Catholic'

*What it needs to do to move to secure a good (2)*

- Systematically conduct monitoring activities related to the provision and outcomes of RE
- Develop further through training with the diocese an understanding of diocesan guidelines and documents and implement these in the Catholic Life of the school.

## **How effective is the provision for Catholic Education?**

**Grade 3**

The 'Come and See' scheme of work is beginning to provide a framework for teaching and learning in RE. During the Inspection nine lessons were observed. In the best lessons, there were clear expectations linked to the Attainment targets for RE. In KS1, pupils are interested and engaged in lessons and as a result are making good progress. In one lesson observed, pupils were motivated and enthusiastic. Questioning about the Last Supper helped to deepen knowledge and understanding, and pupils were able to link the story to the Eucharist. They used religious phrases and vocabulary and activities were carefully planned for progress. In KS2 children show an interest in their work. They work steadily and show they can use religious vocabulary in context. Some lessons observed in KS2 relied heavily on the retelling of a story and explaining how people felt which limited their progression of learning and opportunities to achieve higher levels. Questioning was not sufficiently probing to deepen understanding and make links with other learning in RE. The RE curriculum being taught provided suitable matches to pupils' needs and interests, but does not always communicate the distinctive beliefs of a Catholic community.

The prayer life of the school celebrates key seasons of the Church year. Class assemblies are held regularly. Staff usually take responsibility for planning assemblies and involve the children in sharing their work and reading prayers. Parents are invited to attend, and certain events e.g. The Christmas celebration, are spoken of with enthusiasm. One parent said that 'prayer is a good ritual for framing the day'. The school now needs to give pupils the opportunity to plan, lead and evaluate worship. It needs to demonstrate how the school's prayer life is monitored and evaluated and impacts on pupils lives.

*What it needs to do to secure a good*

- Provide greater continuity and progression in teaching and learning from KS1 to KS2 to improve overall achievement for pupils.
- Ensure the majority of pupils are skilled and equipped in leading prayer.
- Monitor and evaluate the school's prayer life which then leads to action for improvement.

## **Summary of Parental Questionnaires**

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The inspectors received 74 responses to the Parental Questionnaire of which 93% were overwhelmingly positive. Parents cited a range of reasons why they were happy with the school including staff, standards, ethos and values. Recurring comments that were made referred to the school's positive reputation in the community and its caring values. One parent wrote that the school 'is welcoming and friendly' and another that 'the ethos is about awareness and other people's feelings'.