



St Joseph's RC Primary School

Musgrave Street, Hartlepool, TS24 7HT

School Unique Reference Number: **111693**

Inspection dates:	06 – 07 October 2016
Lead inspector:	Lisa Stokoe

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Catholic Life:		Good	2
Collective Worship:		Good	2
Religious Education:		Good	2

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR PARENTS AND PUPILS

St Joseph's RC Primary School is a good Catholic school because:

- St Joseph's is an inclusive school where everyone is welcomed and valued. In turn the school is highly valued by the pupils, staff, parents and governors. The mission statement is at the centre of this faith community.
- The quality of Catholic Life is good. Leaders act as excellent role models, provide varied opportunities and encourage the involvement of all in the Catholic Life of the school.
- Collective Worship at St Joseph's is good. It is central to the life of the school on a daily basis and a key part of school celebrations.
- The quality of Curriculum Religious Education is good. The behaviour of pupils is very good and they display positive attitudes towards their learning.

It is not yet outstanding because:

- Leaders and managers, including governors have not yet fully established systems to evaluate and monitor the Catholic Life and Collective Worship of the school.
- The standard and consistency of marking and feedback varies across the school. Opportunities for pupils to accelerate progress by responding to teachers' comments and through differentiated tasks are also variable.
- The accuracy of assessment is inconsistent across all age ranges and pupil's self-assessment needs to be developed further to ensure they achieve the expected progress in each year group.

FULL REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

- St Joseph's is a smaller than average primary school with pupils drawn from all of the churches in Hartlepool making up the parish of the Holy Family.
- The school serves an area of significant deprivation with an above average proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The school roll has fallen over the last 3 years.
- Whilst the majority of pupils are of white British heritage, the proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and the proportion of pupils whose first language is not English are both well above national averages creating a culturally diverse school.
- Pupils' starting point in nursery is well below that typically expected of their age.

WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL NEED TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- Improve the quality of Catholic Life and Collective Worship within the school by:
 - Ensuring more formalised monitoring and evaluation occur and that improvements and changes are recorded and shared with all stakeholders.
- Improve the quality of Religious Education by:
 - Ensuring that marking provides clear guidance to pupils on how to improve their work and that pupils are given the time they need to respond to feedback in order to move their learning forward consistently across the school.
 - Ensuring that pupils are sufficiently challenged and engaged with differentiated tasks planned to allow them to achieve their very best.
 - Ensuring that the best practice in assessment and pupils' self-assessment is implemented across the school.

CATHOLIC LIFE

THE QUALITY OF THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

2

- 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 extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school is good.

- Pupils have been fully involved in renewing their mission statement, 'We belong to the family of St Joseph's school. We love, live, learn and celebrate together; building God's kingdom with Jesus, Our Lord.' As a result they enter wholeheartedly into a range of activities which promote and support the school's ethos.
- Pupils understand the school's high expectations of behaviour and can clearly articulate how they are encouraged by all staff to 'follow in the footsteps of Jesus'; as a consequence their behaviour is exemplary. This view is endorsed by pupils themselves as well as staff, governors, parents and parishioners.
- Pupils are responsive to the opportunities they are given to support both their own and others personal development and the student chaplains and creative prayer group embrace their responsibilities with enthusiasm. They speak with pride about their efforts supporting their 'Water Walk' for CAFOD's 'Make a Splash' campaign and closer to home their food bank collections.
- Pupils have a good understanding of key liturgical celebrations throughout the year and treat religious artefacts with respect. They have taken part in and value diocesan activities such as Faith 15 and the year six transition day for schools held at the Emmaus Village.

The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school is outstanding.

- The quality of provision for Catholic Life has the highest priority. The school's Mission Statement, which is lived out daily, has been further developed as the school song, familiar to all. All staff and governors have high expectations and a shared vision with regard to the Catholic ethos and mission of the school.
- There is a strong sense of family in all areas of school life evidenced in the quality of relationships that exist between all stakeholders, from pupils and parents, to leaders and governors. These excellent relationships are a key strength of the school. As one parent said, 'the school embraces all cultures and allows everyone to shine.'
- Clear policies and procedures are in place, which provide the highest levels of pastoral support to pupils and their families and there is an explicit commitment to the most vulnerable. The many interventions implemented by school such as the 'All about me' group supporting vulnerable pupils, sessions to support English as an additional language

(EAL) families and drop in sessions from the school nurse for pupils and parents have a significant impact within the school.

- St Joseph's has a vibrant and engaging learning environment apparent both in the classrooms and around the school itself, where focal points and displays provide opportunities to pray, reflect and celebrate its Catholic character.

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

- Leaders and managers promote and monitor the provision for the Catholic Life of the school well. A range of more formalised and systematic monitoring systems are not yet in place but have been identified by leaders as a priority for this academic year.
- Staff and pupils work together to live the mission of the school with understanding and appreciation, consequently pupils are able to articulate the distinctive mission of the school well. Leaders are ambitious for all pupils providing clear direction for the Catholic Life of the school.
- The headteacher, Religious Education coordinator, chaplain and parish priest, who is a regular visitor to the school, are a source of inspiration for the whole community and they are firmly and deeply committed to the church's mission in education. Together they have a clear vision and high aspirations for future developments. Their strong promotion of Catholic values is clearly shared by the whole community who demonstrate great pride in their school.
- Governors discharge their statutory and canonical duties well. They work effectively with the staff and headteacher, are committed to upholding the strong caring ethos that exists; and view the school as a 'hidden gem'. They are becoming more involved in evaluating the Catholic Life of the school both informally by their attendance at varied school liturgies and masses and good governor links with the Religious Education coordinator and chaplain, and formally through termly reports from the headteacher and annual reports from the coordinator.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

THE QUALITY OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

2

- 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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2

How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship is outstanding.

- St Joseph's is a very prayerful and spiritual community where worship is a regular and meaningful part of the day. There is a calm and peaceful ethos which pervades the school and is reflected in the pupils' excellent behaviour.
- Pupils are inspired by and enthusiastic in their response to Collective Worship. This is evident in their keen participation in liturgies, particularly their joyful singing and prayerful reflection in their 'heart room'. By key stage two (KS2) pupils are able to confidently prepare and lead acts of class and whole school Collective Worship as well as voluntary prayer sessions such as the 'Creative Prayer Group' held on Wednesday lunchtimes.
- From the earliest stages pupils recognise the special nature of liturgical symbols and show respect. They are aware that religious beliefs are important, demonstrating respect for their own faith and the faith of others.
- Adults, particularly the chaplain, provide excellent role models for pupils and contribute significantly to their spiritual and moral development and this is evident when pupils lead their own liturgies. This was reflected when speaking to pupils who said, 'God responds to us – you can feel it inside you' and that it made them feel, 'safe, because you know God is around you'.

The quality of provision for Collective Worship is good.

- Developing the spirituality of all is seen as fundamental. A regular rhythm of prayer is built into the daily life of the school and an established pattern of opportunities are offered for the school community to gather for prayer, reflection and liturgy.
- Collective Worship is central to the life of the school and is well planned and resourced to reflect the liturgical year. Whilst themes for Collective Worship are based upon 'Statements to live by', 'Come and See' and the liturgical calendar, they also reflect the religious diversity and ethnic background of pupils. Traditions such as the Rosary have a high profile within the school.
- Families are involved in pupils' religious development through initial 'welcome bags' and through seasonal artefacts such as 'Travelling Cribs' and 'Lenten Bags'. Attendance at weekly liturgies and masses throughout the year are encouraged and parents feel 'warmly welcomed'.

- The Collective Worship policy provides a clear structure for staff and the school chaplain supports staff across the school. Recent training led by the parish priest has been provided to further enhance staff's understanding and use of liturgy and is impacting positively upon provision

How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship is good.

- Leaders have expert knowledge of how to deliver quality Collective Worship which they share effectively with staff and pupils.
- They have a thorough understanding of the Church's year and are able to lead staff and pupils of all faiths to understand the Church's traditions and their relevance and importance in daily life.
- Liturgical and spiritual development is seen as high priority. Professional development is offered for all staff through Diocesan training and a planned cluster Spiritual day. Staff have engaged with these activities and this has led to improvements in their subject knowledge and delivery of Collective Worship across the school.
- The chaplain, headteacher and parish priest are highly visible leaders of Collective Worship and are excellent role models.
- Together leaders have a good understanding of the strengths and areas for development of Collective Worship mainly through informal monitoring. Parent's views of Collective Worship are sought and school responds to this. Formal monitoring of Collective Worship is not yet fully embedded; however there is a clear commitment to continue to improve this which in turn would enhance provision.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

THE QUALITY OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

2

- 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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2

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

- Pupils enjoy and understand the value of Religious Education, demonstrating commitment in their learning. Behaviour in lessons is good with the majority of pupils concentrating well and displaying positive attitudes to their learning.
- The large majority of pupils are making progress in Religious Education within lessons and over time. They are developing well in their knowledge and understanding. Overall, outcomes are good. Pupils enter school with knowledge and skills which are below what is expected for their age. The school's data shows that pupils make good progress over time through early years foundation stage and key stage one and key stage two, although there are some areas of inconsistency.
- There is a variation in the progress of some groups of pupils in the school, notably those with special educational needs; however pupil premium children are in line with other groups. This has been noted by the school and is to be addressed in the current academic year and forms part of the school improvement plan.
- Through evidence in pupils work and in conversations they are able to demonstrate effective use of prior knowledge when making links between religious ideas and using scriptural references accurately.
- Attainment is below Diocesan averages at the end of key stage one and year four but above by the end of key stage two. The gaps are closing at each stage over time.

The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education requires improvement.

- Relationships between staff and pupils are very positive and are a real strength of the school. Support staff are used well to support and extend pupils of different abilities.
- Teaching is mainly good and pupils generally make progress over time as evidenced in their books. In the lessons observed during the inspection teachers demonstrated good subject knowledge and a variety of teaching strategies.
- The quality of marking and feedback varies. There are some good examples of focused marking, however written comments by teachers on steps to improve learning are not used consistently throughout the school. Pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to respond to teacher comments thereby limiting the opportunities to enhance learning by means of high quality feedback. In some classes insufficient direction is given to pupils and teachers need to provide tighter improvement prompts and guidance as to the next steps in their

learning.

- Lessons are carefully planned but teachers do not consistently use prior assessment to plan differentiated activities that appropriately challenge all pupils. Differentiation is most often achieved through outcome.
- There is insufficient evidence of the use of self-assessment as a means of improving pupil understanding of what they need to do to improve. The school has identified this need and has started to develop self-assessment this year using the 'I can' statements. It is not yet embedded or consistent across the school.

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

- The new headteacher demonstrates and shares an ambitious vision for the school and for what every pupil and teacher can achieve. She inspires and supports the whole school community.
- All aspects of Religious Education are evaluated through observation, discussion, data analysis and questionnaire and the findings used to plan for improvements. These areas for improvement are clearly identified in the school improvement plan but they have not yet had the chance to become embedded and have an impact. The recently appointed Religious Education coordinator has a clear view of strategies to support improvements in teaching.
- The Religious Education curriculum is varied providing a range of interesting activities. The Religious Education curriculum meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference.
- Opportunities exist for pupils to experience their own traditions as well as those of other faiths. For example, key stage two pupils were able to visit a mosque when studying Islam and a visitor to school as well as an older pupil helped key stage one pupils learn more about this faith.
- Sacramental preparation is in line with Diocesan guidelines. There are very strong links with the parish community with parents, governors and catechists extremely supportive of their work with the pupils.
- Governors are regular and frequent visitors to the school and are kept informed of developments in Religious Education within the school. They are extremely supportive but also confident in their ability to challenge. They discharge their statutory and canonical duties well.

SUMMARY OF INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

HOW EFFECTIVE THE SCHOOL IS IN PROVIDING CATHOLIC EDUCATION:**2****CATHOLIC LIFE:****2**

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

2

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.

2

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP:**2**

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

1

The quality of provision for Collective Worship.

2

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

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.

3

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

2

SCHOOL DETAILS

School name	St Joseph's RC Primary School
Unique reference number	111693
Local authority	Hartlepool
This Inspection Report is produced for the Rt. Reverend Séamus Cunningham the Bishop of Hexham and Newcastle Diocese under canon 806 of Canon Law. For voluntary aided schools it also fulfils the responsibility the Governing Body has to inspect the school under s48 of the Education Act 2005.	
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Head teacher	Mrs Rachel Williams
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