



DENOMINATIONAL INSPECTION REPORT

incorporating Canonical Inspection under Canon 806 on behalf of the
Archbishop of Southwark

URN 100833

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Gomm Road, Lower Road

Rotherhithe

London SE16 2TY

Inspection date: 22nd February 2018

Chair of Governors: Fr Graham Preston

Headteacher: Clare Garofalo

**Inspectors: Stephen Beck
Penny Rickard**

EDUCATION COMMISSION

St Edward's House, St Paul's Wood Hill, Orpington, Kent BR5 2SR
Tel 01689 829331

Interim Director of Education: Mr Stephen Bryan

**DENOMINATIONAL EDUCATION
AND COLLECTIVE WORSHIP**



Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding	Grade 3	Requires improvement
Grade 2	Good	Grade 4	Inadequate

FULL REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is voluntary aided. It is situated in the Southwark Deanery of the Archdiocese of Southwark. It is maintained by Southwark Local Authority. The principal parishes which the school serves are, St Peter's, Rotherhithe and St Gertrude's, South Bermondsey. The proportion of pupils who are baptised Catholics is 83%. The average weekly proportion of curriculum time given to Religious Education is 10% in all Key Stages. The school is smaller than average taking pupils from 3 to 11 years. The number of pupils currently on roll is 252 (including 52 nursery pupils). The attainment of pupils on entering the school has remained unchanged over recent years, being broadly below average. 28% of pupils receive Free School Meals (FSM), this is above the national average. Around 22% of pupils receive extra support in class. Approximately 90% of pupils are from minority ethnic heritages. 47% of pupils come from homes where English is an Additional Language (EAL). The school has commendably high levels of attendance.

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SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR PARENTS AND PUPILS

St Joseph's is an outstanding Catholic school because:

- The Catholic nature of the school permeates all aspects of school life, recognises the uniqueness of the individual and encourages pupils to develop their gifts and talents to the full. There is a high level of commitment from all staff to the pursuit of excellence.
- Pupils are encouraged to lead prayer and worship and do so with confidence. They act with reverence and respect, knowing that these are special times and help to develop their relationship with God.
- Pupils are encouraged to consider the needs of others, in their school community and beyond. They are active in fund raising for those in need and in participating in events in the community.
- Pupils thoroughly enjoy Religious Education and are totally committed to their learning. Teaching is good with some outstanding features. Standards in Religious Education are high. All groups of pupils make good progress and achieve well. Pupils' work is well presented, indicating their pride in their work.

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WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL NEED TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- Use assessment to provide more appropriate opportunities for creative learning in lessons providing pupils with more opportunities for independent learning.
- Continue with the planned moderation across other Catholic schools to ensure accuracy of assessments and share good practice.
- Continue to develop the pupil Faith Leaders in their role to plan and lead collective worship and extend these opportunities as widely as possible to other pupils.

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Overall Effectiveness

How effective the school is in providing Catholic Education.

1

Catholic Life

1

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

1

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

1

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

1

Religious Education

1

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

1

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education.

2

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education.

1

Collective Worship

1

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

1

The quality of provision for Collective Worship.

1

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

1

Commented [SD2R1]: Lead told me he was agreeing to the high standard in books. However, he is adamant that this grading was nit based solely on the snapshot of the day but on the fact that overtime there was not enough embedded. In addition the more able were not sufficiently challenged.

Commented [1]: In my view, despite the children's books reflecting a very high standard and strong marking, the grade reflects as snap shot of lesson observations on the day rather than progress over time.

Agreed



CATHOLIC LIFE

1

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

- The school's mission statement, "...We seek to share with each other the richness of our Catholic faith and provide a safe, happy and caring environment, where we all grow in the love of God and each other with Jesus Christ as our model," is lived out on a daily basis and reflected in the high expectations that are shared by staff, governors and pupils.
- St Joseph's is a child centred school where pupils are given the opportunity and responsibility to help shape the ethos of the community. Throughout their time at the school they are helped to become reflective and work out what it means to live a Christ centred life and put the school's mission statement into practice.
- Pupils are rightly proud of their school and have a sense of belonging to their school family. They flourish in an atmosphere where everyone is valued and is expected to achieve. They are fully involved in decision making processes and enjoy many varied opportunities to support others within, and beyond, their school and local community.
- The behaviour of pupils is exemplary at all times. They are alert to the needs of others and are ready to support each other whenever necessary. Parents and pupils remarked on how they loved being part of the school community, "everyone knows each other and it feels like one big family."
- The school has established two Faith Leaders from each class in Key Stage 2. These pupils were selected carefully based upon their application letter as well as knowledge and application of the Catholic ethos in school. There is a school pride in having these pupils not only support the school and Parish Priests in developing the school's ethos but also in their capacity as role models to the other pupils in school. They have badges to identify themselves so that other pupils can talk to them about things that may be troubling them or to pray with them. The purpose of the Faith Leaders is to promote friendship, love and respect in school and the wider community and uphold the school's mission statement. The role the Faith Leaders fulfil include: leading the prayer boxes for each junior class, leading weekly prayer on Friday lunchtimes, welcoming new pupils and staff to our school, support in the planning of school Masses and Liturgical events as well as presenting the Wednesday Word message during whole school worship.
- The school could consider widening the role of 'Faith Leaders' to widen participation opportunities for all pupils and could link this to more clearly defining the traditional



prayers of the church and in which year groups they would be learnt.

Commented [3]: They did not mention this but it is a good idea.

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

- St Joseph's is a diverse school which is attentive to the needs of all members of its community, evident in the excellent relationships which exist between staff, governors, parents and pupils.
- The school is a supportive and happy place in which to work and learn with the highest level of pastoral care being offered to pupils. The deployment of support staff is used to excellent effect for the benefit of all pupils whatever their level of need.
- The school has excellent well developed programmes that sees SMSC (Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural) taught explicitly at weekly assemblies and during themed weeks such as Anti bullying week and Online safety week.
- Teachers use circle time and Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) lessons to foster positive relationships with Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) being age appropriately taught across the school using the 'Journey in Love' scheme. Parents expressed considerable satisfaction at the school's approach in these areas.
- Gospel values are referred to frequently to motivate pupils and have a positive effect on pupil behaviour.
- With over 50% of parental questionnaires returned it is notable that there is almost unanimous agreement that pupils are exceptionally well served by their school. As one parent wrote, "My child has been at St Joseph's for quite a few years and has achieved so much. The standards are fantastic and staff so nice. I have a new baby and would hope to send them to St Joseph's in the future."

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

- The leadership and management of the Catholic life of St Joseph's school is outstanding. This is demonstrated through sharing the clear vision and mission statement with every member of the school community, implemented by the Leadership Team and a strong collegiate style of management. Developing the Catholic Life of the school is always treated as a priority and this is reflected in the school's development plan.



- Driven by the passionate commitment of the headteacher, all staff and governors consider the Catholic Life of the school vital to their work in educating the pupils of St Joseph's.
- The Headteacher as subject leader for Religious Education, works hard to ensure that the monitoring of the Catholic Life of the school is a priority. She provides strong leadership in modelling good relationships with parents. Currently a teacher is shadowing the Religious Education lead in preparation for taking on the role.
- Religious Education is well monitored and marking provides opportunities for pupils not only to learn about important aspects of their faith but also to explore and think about what their faith means to them.
- St Joseph's has received many awards for outstanding teaching and progress. This includes the Director of Education award 2015 (only one given in Southwark), Good practice award 2016, Outstanding pupil progress award 2015 and 2016.
- The Governing Body are keen and enthusiastic and have a strong skills set. The Chair and Vice Chair are a formidable team and are developing into critical friends. They know the school well and are aware of the role of governors to provide challenge and support. They are beginning to analyse data presented to them and question the school accordingly through development of their link governor roles.
- The school receives excellent support from the Priests from their two main local parishes. They are regular visitors to the school and support at the level of whole staff, class and through the support of liturgy.

Commented [4]: Evidence of strong internal assessment/moderation

Yes but early stages



RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

1

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

- Pupils, from their varied starting points, make very good progress in each key stage, with many achieving outstanding progress. Groups of pupils, including those with Special Educational Needs (SEN), are also making progress comparable to the progress of other pupils.
- Pupils, relative to their age and capacity, are religiously literate and engaged young people. They use their knowledge, understanding and skills effectively and are able to reflect spiritually and to think ethically and theologically. They are well aware of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life.
- Pupils are actively engaged in lessons and are committed to improving their knowledge, understanding and skills further to develop as competent learners. They concentrate exceptionally well, have a clear understanding of how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve. This is well supported by consistent and thorough marking to which pupils are given time to respond.
- In the pupils' workbooks, teachers give relevant comments and questions to extend the pupils understanding. High expectations are central to all that the school does and the pupils rise to these.
- Behaviour for learning in lessons is outstanding because pupils enjoy Religious Education and they are rarely off task. They participate well in lessons showing a keenness to answer questions. They enjoy tackling activities, and respond exceptionally well to opportunities which extend their learning.

Commented [5]: Could this be evidence of outstanding T & L?

Yes but not until consistent

Commented [6]: Further evidence of outstanding Teaching and learning perhaps?

Linked to comment above

Commented [7]: Evidence of strong assessment for Learning

Agreed

Commented [8]: Would this not also indicate outstanding Teaching and Learning?

On the journey but only in recent evidence. In fact we were given old evidence to show how far on they had moved but it is recent and not fully embedded

Commented [9]: Further evidence?



The presentation of their work is of a very high standard and reflects their considerable pride in their books.

- Relationships between staff and pupils are very positive and are a real strength of the school. Support staff are used effectively to reinforce learning and to support and extend pupils of different abilities.

The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education is good.

- The teaching observed by inspectors and the school over time is never less than good with evidence of outstanding teaching. The school has clear capacity to develop further and is in a good position to share identified outstanding teaching, to provide wider opportunities for a more consistent creative cross curricular approach, to secure less didactic teaching and enable pupils to deepen their learning more quickly in lessons.
- The ability of pupils in classes vary considerably and those requiring extra support are well provided for through well thought out adult support combined with appropriately scaffolded activities.
- Questioning is used effectively to assess understanding, to challenge pupils and to build on prior learning. This is well supported by excellent classroom management creating strong learning environments. The school should consider shaping this questioning in a way that encourages more dialogue between pupils and across the class, in order to further deepen religious literacy and understanding.
- Assessments of pupils' progress are made regularly. This data is recorded by class teachers on the school's own excel based assessment system. This provides a good analysis of pupils' levels of attainment and reflects the use of current terminology in line with other subjects. This is shared with staff ensuring they are familiar with the vulnerable groups in their classes and the progress of individual pupils. The subject leader is keen to encourage closer use of assessment data to impact on planning and grouping pupils, which will in turn strengthen differentiation across the school. These assessments would be strengthened by opportunities to work with colleagues from other schools to moderate work to ensure the accuracy of assessments.
- Planning is efficient and ensures that there is good coverage of the 'Come and See' scheme and a good balance between written work and practical tasks as evidenced in both the pupil's Religious Education books and their class diaries.
- The good assessments made could be used in a more focussed way to develop greater opportunities to undertake a broader range of teaching strategies and to provide differentiated tasks that would offer more challenge and better meet the needs of all



pupils.

- The school's commitment to developing strong subject knowledge in its staff sees all teachers being required to complete the CCRS programme. This not only deepens their knowledge but also impacts on their teaching.
- Pupils at St Joseph's are given an impressive start to their education through outstanding nursery provision that sees the teacher supporting their faith journey in an age appropriate way. In a lesson observed he had baked flat bread with the pupils which was then broken and shared reflecting on Jesus breaking bread with the Apostles at the Last Supper creating an atmosphere of real 'awe and wonder'.
- The use of biblical texts is a strength of the school as is the pupils ability to source passages in the Bible. This was well represented in a lesson that examined subtle differences in versions of the 'Our Father' prayer. Pupils would have benefitted from more analysis of the vocabulary and a longer time to make the best use of talk partner opportunities.
- In Key Stage 2 lessons observed, excellent use was made of cross curricular links with artwork, the use of scripture passages to confirm what different scenarios meant to pupils and scripture written in pupil's own words.

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education is outstanding.

- Leadership of Religious Education is informed by a high level of expertise and vision which focuses on improving teaching and learning, resulting in teaching that is consistently good and sometimes outstanding.
- The Headteacher, as subject leader, provides leadership of the subject which has resulted in whole-hearted commitment from pupils and staff. As a consequence, Religious Education has a very high profile in the life of the school and is actively involved in initiatives within the school, having a profound impact on the moral and spiritual development of pupils and on their ability to discern their own unique vocations. The school is well placed to use the excellent learning environment that it has developed to lead the pupils to experience a wider range of teaching and learning strategies.
- Excellent links are forged with the wider community and local parishes to provide a good range of largely school based enrichment activities to promote pupils' learning and engagement.
- The curriculum enables pupils to gain an understanding of the liturgical life of the Catholic Church and of a wide diversity of religious and belief communities when

Commented [10]: I assume this is in relation to the view that differentiated written tasks are an expectation. Our weakest children can and do access the written tasks making excellent progress as highlighted. The inspectors noted that the books did not show sufficient challenge for the more able. The tasks are open ended and often an extension provided.

This comment reflected our view that work on assessment was progressing but was not yet having a significant impact on provision. Rather than having an expectation we view provision and would question current breadth and level of challenge and open endedness.



studying

other

faiths.

- Religious Education is well resourced when compared with other core curriculum subjects within the school. It meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference fully.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

1

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

- Prayer is central to the life of the school and the community draws strength and comfort from the liturgical life of the school. Parents commented on how much they appreciated the many opportunities they are given to attend such celebrations and on the high level of respect and reverence shown by their children in acts of worship, which they attributed to the school's training and expectations of their children.
- Pupils respond well to the periods of quiet reflection offered to them. The engagement of the very youngest pupils in silent prayer is heartfelt. Even the youngest pupils can explain some of the artefacts used in Collective Worship. Pupils in the Early Years, for example, were able to say that the candle was to remind us that 'Jesus is the light of the world' and to appreciate links between the Last Supper and Holy Communion. Within Religious Education lessons, time is provided for reflection and prayer.
- Pupils enjoy participating in acts of worship and their engagement is notably enhanced by their beautiful singing. In a Lenten Liturgy pupils entered and left the hall with great



reverence. The liturgy was very well led by pupils who spoke with clarity and confidence. A lovely penitential rite was included and good use was made of the interactive board.

- From an early age pupils take part and lead in a variety of forms of worship. This includes prayer, liturgy, quiet contemplation, song and celebrating Mass. They are enormously enthusiastic about participating in Collective Worship be it small group or whole school. They show a great respect and interest in people and teachings from other religions and react with enthusiasm and acceptance. The school is looking to extend opportunities for pupils to both prepare, as well as lead liturgies.
- The many acts of worship at St Joseph's school engage all pupils' interests. They are always respectful and take the time to think deeply about their own spirituality. When praying, the pupils demonstrate excellent reverence and respect whether in silent reflection or shared prayers and they participate well in many opportunities provided for spontaneous prayer. Celebrations are enhanced by excellent singing.

The quality of provision for Collective Worship and Prayer Life is outstanding.

- Collective Worship is central to the life of St Joseph's and is given the highest possible priority in terms of preparation, resourcing and leadership. Pupils, governors and parents commented on how much they valued the school's Collective Worship, in all its forms.
- Pupils are given many opportunities to take responsibility for leading worship in the school in a variety of ways. Music, art and drama are widely used in collective worship across the school to make the experience of the Gospel message relevant and meaningful to everyone. They are ready to take on opportunities to plan their own liturgies.
- Themes for Collective Worship throughout the school reflect the liturgical year, curriculum Religious Education and special events, for example, pupils and staff take part in Ash Wednesday, Advent and Lent reconciliation services allowing time for quiet reflection and spiritual development.

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- The school has a Peace Garden, which is a designated area for reflection for both the pupils and staff. Parents too are welcome to use the space for quiet contemplation. Teachers regularly bring their whole class or a focus group of pupils for prayer or reflection. The school is looking to extend this provision.

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship and Prayer Life is outstanding.

- The school's Collective Worship policy ensures that all staff are aware of its expectations and helps to ensure a consistency of content and approach. Staff actively participate in liturgies providing good role models to pupils.
- Senior leaders are committed to leading quality experiences of Collective Worship and to giving all staff opportunities to take a lead. Senior leaders and the Parish Priest offer support to staff in leading prayer and worship, ensuring a good level of skill and subject knowledge across the staff team.
- Each class in turn is responsible for leading liturgy, for example Year 4 plan, prepare and lead the worship for Advent; Year 5 plan, prepare and lead the worship for Harvest culminating in the whole school collecting donations for a local food bank. The Year 5's also prepare a joyous Easter Collective Worship to celebrate the risen Christ. Together with the Faith Leaders, the Year 6's prepare their leavers mass at the end of the school year to celebrate their time at St Joseph's.
- The leadership team place enormous emphasis on staff development. All teachers at St Joseph's are required to complete CCRS. Twilights are planned a minimum of twice a term solely on Religious Education and collective worship to ensure pupils receive the very best provision in their faith journey.
- Every school INSET begins with prayer and quiet contemplation.
- A parent commented that, ".....St Joseph's is an exceptional school that supports children's spiritual and moral development in so many different ways. I am so happy and proud that my children are part of this lovely Catholic community that extends



what they are learning both at home and in church. It is like speaking the same language at school, home and church.....”

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