



SECTION 48 INSPECTION REPORT

Canonical Inspection under Canon 806 on behalf of the
Archbishop of Southwark and Inspection of
Denominational Education under Section 48
of the Education Act 2005

URN 101045

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School
90 Oakhill Road
Putney
London SW15 2QD

Inspection date: 3 June 2015

Chair of Governors:	Mr John McHugo
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SECTION 48

Introduction

Description of the school

St Joseph's Catholic School is voluntary aided. It is situated in the Wandsworth Deanery of the Archdiocese of Southwark. It is maintained by Wandsworth Local Authority. The principal parish which the school serves is St Thomas a Becket, Wandsworth West Hill. A small number of pupils also come from St Mary Magdalene, Wandsworth East Hill and St Gregory's in Earlsfield. The proportion of pupils who are baptised Catholics is 82%. The average weekly proportion of curriculum time given to Religious Education is under 10% in some classes in both Key Stage 1 and Stage 2.

The school takes pupils from 4 to 11 years. The number of pupils currently on roll is 198 with a further 35 pupils in the Nursery department. The attainment of pupils on entering the school is broadly below average. Around 11.4% of pupils receive extra support in class. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is above average at 20.8%. The proportion of pupils from ethnic minorities is 75.3% which is much higher than the national average. The proportion of pupils from homes where English is an additional language is above average at 63.9%.

Date of previous inspection:

23/06/2010

Overall Grade:

2

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school in providing Catholic Education

GRADE
2

St Joseph's is a good school with some outstanding aspects. Leaders, governors and managers demonstrate commitment to the Church's mission in education. The quality and range of opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is exemplary.

The school is fully inclusive. Provision for pastoral care and community cohesion is outstanding.

The pupils' behaviour is excellent. They are proud of their backgrounds and beliefs and convey a strong sense of personal worth.

Parents cite that, "It is an all-welcoming school where everyone is treated with respect." The partnership between the school and St Thomas a Becket parish is strong. The Chaplain is very much part of the school community and his supportive role is recognised and appreciated.

Pupils' outcomes in Religious Education are good overall, as are Leadership and Management.

Governors are supportive and well-informed through frequent visits, undertaking learning walks and formal dialogue with staff and pupils. They implement improvement in respect to the Catholic Life of the school. More focused target setting in the School Improvement Plan (SIP) and more rigorous monitoring of planning and teaching of Religious Education would serve to raise standards to higher levels.

Issues raised in the previous Section 48 inspection have been successfully addressed in part but the issue in relation to world faiths has yet to be implemented.

The school's self-evaluation (SEE) has identified key strengths and areas for further development and the school has the capacity to improve further under the newly structured leadership team.

What steps need to be taken to improve further?

Governors, Headteacher and staff should:

- Adopt a more rigorous approach to monitoring the teaching of Religious Education focussing on planning lessons, time-tabling, book scrutiny and differentiation.
- Review provision for the world faiths programme in line with diocesan guidelines.
- Review provision for daily Acts of Collective Worship in line with statutory guidelines.
- Ensure that time given to curriculum Religious Education for all classes meets the Bishops' requirements.

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

The pupils at St Joseph's exude an appreciation of all that the school has to offer in terms of its Catholic life and live out the mission of 'Learning to Love and Loving to Learn'.

Through the 'House System', pupils are encouraged to take on responsibilities and leadership. They are proud that their suggestions are incorporated into improvements in the school garden and that their fundraising ideas are acted on, such as those for 'The Marie Curie' and 'Christmas Jumpers' appeals. The Head Boy and Head Girl are excellent ambassadors as they display confidence and pride in their Catholic heritage when undertaking a tour of the school.

Pupils make a very good response to the school's chaplaincy and benefit greatly from the on-going support and guidance from Father Martin.

The pupils benefit from the school's provision for community cohesion and cite how the 'International Evening' "is great as it helps us to understand and respect difference." Links with the local community such as 'Go 4 it', where pupils visit a home for the elderly, as well as ample opportunities to compete and participate in musical and sporting activities with local schools serve to enhance social and cultural development.

The school has an all-pervading Catholic ethos. The initiative to explore a different moral value throughout the whole school each month is outstanding as it gives pupils the opportunity to reflect on their attitudes and behaviour based on Gospel values such as trust, co-operation, honesty, forgiveness and faith. Pupils engage eagerly with the 'Value of the Month' programme and practise what they learn in their relationships with adults and one another.

The local parish and school form a strong partnership. This has a significant impact on the lives of the pupils' understanding of the practice of their faith. Parents are grateful for the manner in which the school supports pupils when they prepare to receive their First Holy Communion.

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education

Given their starting off point, the standards of achievements and attainment are good and in line with attainment in literacy in both key stages. This is more in evidence orally than in their overall written assignments. Attainment is enhanced by the seamless links with the Catholic life of the school such as teaching pupils about the Mass, devotion to the Rosary, Benediction, Reconciliation, studying the lives of saints and the 'Wednesday Word' Gospel message. Overall, pupils make good progress but this could be raised to a higher level if the teaching of the subject became more focused on meeting the needs of all the different ability levels with classes.

Pupils identify with the motto to 'Be the best you can be' and embrace this concept when 'learning challenges' are presented at the start of lessons. They are attentive listeners, communicate with confidence when using religious vocabulary, work co-operatively in paired and group discussions and respond to teachers questions in a mature manner.

Scrutiny of pupils' workbooks demonstrates that, in general, pupils take pride in their work and view the subject as special.

How well pupils respond to and participate in Collective Worship

Pupils demonstrate reverence and respect during Acts of Collective Worship and view prayer as an integral aspect of school life. Knowledge of the formal prayers of the Church is strong. From the earliest age, pupils are at ease when praying and can relate to the power and purpose of evoking personal intercessions. This was encapsulated when a Year 2 pupil stated that, "God isn't here so we can talk to Him through prayer."

The whole school assembles daily for devotions to the Rosary during the months of October and May. This has strengthened the pupils' understanding of prayer and they cite how much they appreciate this communal act of worship. The whole school assembly observed was a genuinely moving and prayerful experience as the First Holy Communion cohort described the Feast of Corpus Christi, making the link with the Passover and explaining the relevance of the Mass symbols of the candle, cross bread and wine. Joyful singing and music accompaniment added to the prayerful atmosphere.

Pupils are offered opportunities to write their own prayers and, in some classes, prayer books show that pupils can reflect and show concern for others. Prayer areas depicting liturgical colours are a feature in all classrooms with good quality resources, although, only some are child friendly and used as focal points for reflection. Inspectors noted that the incorporation of opportunities for quiet reflection during assemblies would further enhance provision.

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How well leaders, governors and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic life of the school and plan and implement improvement to outcomes for pupils

Leadership and management of the Catholic life of the school is good overall. The newly established senior leadership team is effective in moving the school forward in a business-like and purposeful manner.

The leadership of the Headteacher in fostering the Catholic life and traditions of the school is a factor in its success. She is deeply committed to maintaining the school as a faith community and nurturing the faith journey of each individual.

Governors are supportive and hold the school to account. They visit frequently, undertake training and are instrumental in driving school improvement in respect to the Catholic life, as seen in formal written 'governor visit reports' following up interviews with key personnel. The focus on the development of the whole child, morally, socially and culturally is exemplary. As a result, pupils and parents feel valued and secure. Parents state how much they appreciate 'A Place to Be' counselling facility, which is made available to parents as well as pupils in need.

Displays throughout the school promoting its Catholic life are of high quality, examples being: 'We Celebrate the Life, Death and Resurrection' board depicting the monthly 'Values' and the pupils' study of the 'Holy Mass' in the gallery.

The school website is explicit in its approach to the Catholic life of the school with the 'voice' of the Gospel message coming through clearly in newsletters, calendar of events and invitations to parents to join the school for assemblies, liturgies and Masses.

Home, school and parish links are strong. Members of staff are role models of good practice, supporting the church in preparing pupils for the First Eucharist, involving pupils in preparing Mass readings and encouraging them to be altar servers. The pupils benefit as a result in gaining first-hand experience of belonging to a wider worshipping community.

Responses from the school's annual questionnaire for parents and the pre-inspection survey reveal that parents are overwhelmingly supportive of what the school has to offer. A parent commented on how much she, "appreciated that the teachers are always sensitive to the children's needs and flexible in understanding their moods."

How well leaders, governors and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education and plan and implement for improvement to outcomes for pupils

Responsibility for the management and delivery of Religious Education is shared between the subject leader and two members of the senior leadership team. This newly formed partnership is effective in implementing assessment procedures in line with that in place for the core subjects. Consequently, pupils' attainment is monitored and facilitates tracking individual progress. Written policies and procedures for implementing the Religious

Education programme are detailed. Leaders currently undertake monitoring of provision through lesson observations, work book scrutiny as well as supporting staff through in-house training. However, leaders need to adopt a more rigorous system of monitoring as inspectors found gaps in provision relating to time-tabling, lesson plans not fully addressing the varying needs of different ability groups and a wide variation in the quality and quantity of work in pupils' workbooks ranging from outstanding to in need for improvement. The newly established marking and feedback policy needs to be implemented in all classes.

Governors recognise the need to raise standards higher and have set in motion a drive to raise teaching levels from good to outstanding throughout. As the pupils are poised and eager to learn, and in order to bring this goal to fruition more speedily, governors need to make specific target setting a feature of items identified for development within the School Improvement Plan (SIP).

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The quality of teaching and how purposeful learning is in Religious Education

Four lessons were observed together with across the board book scrutiny of pupils' achievements throughout the year.

The quality of teaching is good overall but there are a number of aspects in need of improvement if standards are to be raised to the next level.

Teachers use questioning skills effectively to develop pupils' literacy, extend learning and build on previous learning. Pupils are offered a wide range of learning opportunities, incorporating the effective use of ICT, role-play, drama, creative arts and pupil conferencing. Lesson plans adhere to the learning objectives of 'The Way, The Truth and The Life' programme but require further enhancement in the following areas: setting tasks to challenge the more able; more focus on supporting pupils with English as a second language; more efficient use of teaching assistants to support groups or individuals and better pace in lessons with a greater emphasis on pupil action rather than on teacher input.

Marking of pupils' work and feedback needs to be embedded so that the good practice seen in a few classes is consistent throughout. Pupils also need to be made aware of the 'next steps' in the learning process and what they must do to improve.

The assessment procedures are effective with an 'uplift' strategy in place to support pupils who are underperforming.

The quality of teaching is monitored and developmental feedback given to individuals. However, systems to follow up feedback and target setting that leads to sustained improvement need to be established to ensure that good practice is shared and leads to consistency across the board and to raising standards to the next level.

The introduction of a 'Coaching Team', comprising of the subject leader and two assistant headteachers to coach teachers in improving the quality of teaching is beginning to have an impact as there are examples of outstanding practice in pupils' workbooks in a small number of classes.

The subject leader is in post for two years and is pro-active in his endeavours to foster closer links with other schools within the deanery with a view to updating the school's moderation port-folio and sharing best practice.

The extent to which the Religious Education curriculum promotes pupils' learning

The Religious Education programme, 'The Way, The Truth and The Light' is extended and enhanced by a wide range of activities relating to the Catholic Life of the School. Examples of these enrichment opportunities are as follows: the manner in which Gospel values are at the heart of curriculum provision for 'Values of the Month; Philosophy lessons forming part of the Gifted and Talented provision, cultural diversity celebrated through the Inter Faith International Advent Service; Circle time and opportunities for pupils to engage with a school community in Brazil. All of these elements are thoughtfully integrated into

the curriculum and contribute to pupils' knowledge and to their spiritual and moral development.

Although documentation states that 10% of curriculum is designated for teaching Religious Education, scrutiny of time-tables shows under provision in a number of classes. This needs to be addressed by managers.

Learning about the major world faiths is in need of improvement to bring it into line with Diocesan guidelines. This was highlighted as an area requiring development in the previous inspection and has yet to be acted on.

Pupils are aware that consideration for others is an important part of the Christian way of life and the school has achieved Level 1 of the UNICEF 'Rights Respecting Schools' accreditation.

The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school

Collective Worship is central to the life of the school and a key aspect of celebrations. Close links with the parish and on-going guidance from the Chaplain enhance the quality of the prayer life of the school.

Governors and leaders evaluate and monitor provision regularly and subsequently set targets. The success of this approach led to recent improvements to raise the quality of the pupils' participation in, and understanding of the Mass and also the successful introduction of the 'Wednesday Word' Gospel message.

Pupils have regular opportunities to attend Mass in the parish as well as having class based Masses in school.

Pupils learn the traditional prayers of the Church as well as having opportunities to compose their own personal intercessions, some of which they share in prayer books in a few classes. The inclusion of opportunities for quiet reflection during assemblies would further enhance provision.

Provision for daily acts of Collective Worship outside the months of October and May needs to be extended as currently assemblies are only time-tabled for three days of the week.