



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 101803

St Joseph's Catholic Infant and Nursery School
Crown Dale
Upper Norwood
SE19 3NX

Inspection date: 6th May 2016

Chair of Governors: Ms Kate Guest
Headteacher: Mrs Tamsyn Lawlor
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EDUCATION COMMISSION

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SECTION 48

Introduction

Description of the school

St Joseph's Catholic Infant and Nursery School is part of the Federation of St Joseph's Catholic Junior, Infant and Nursery Schools. It is situated in the Croydon Deanery of the Archdiocese of Southwark. The principal parishes which the school serves are Virgo Fidelis, Upper Norwood, St Matthew's, West Norwood and St Margaret Clitherow, Dulwich Wood Park. The proportion of pupils who are baptised Catholics is 84%. The average weekly proportion of curriculum time given to Religious Education is 10%.

The school takes pupils from 3 to 7 years of age. The number of pupils currently on roll is 197. The attainment of pupils on entering the school is below average. The proportion of pupils for whom pupil premium funding is received is 25%, which is around the national average.

13% of pupils receive support for special educational needs. The pupils come from a diverse range of ethnic backgrounds, particularly Black African, Black Caribbean, White British and a growing number of Spanish and Portuguese pupils. The proportion of pupils from homes where English is an additional language is well above average.

Date of previous inspection:

22nd June 2011

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
1

St Joseph's Catholic Infant and Nursery School is welcoming and inclusive. It offers pupils an outstandingly rich and vibrant experience of Catholic education. The school community embraces and nurtures all within it. It is a happy and supportive school. Attractive displays and high quality artefacts and resources enhance the well kept learning environment and proclaim the school's strong Catholic identity.

Pupils are polite and well behaved. They care for each other and are proud of their school. They enjoy participating in school celebrations and events.

The mission statement is at the heart of school life and informs all policies and practice. It is prominently displayed in the school. Pupils are familiar with it and know it is important to their own lives in school and beyond.

Governors, school leaders and staff are committed to ensuring the well-being and personal development of each pupil, fostering spiritual development and a sense of vocation.

Standards in Religious Education are high. All groups of pupils make good progress and achieve well. Pupils enjoy their Religious Education lessons and are keen to do their best.

Prayer and worship are central to school life. The wider school community extends to parents, governors and the parishes; all are included in the school's Catholic life.

Parents are appreciative of the school and the Catholic education it offers. Areas for development identified by the last inspection have been addressed

What steps need to be taken to improve further?

Governors, Headteacher and staff should:

- Embed the recently introduced systems of interactive and developmental marking and ensure consistency of this across the school.
- Include Religious Education and the Catholic life of the school as a regular agenda item at meetings of the governing body.

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

The Catholic life of the school embraces and includes all pupils. It celebrates the cultural diversity of the school and ensures that all pupils, including those of other faiths and other Christian denominations, feel welcomed and are part of the school community.

The mission statement is prominently displayed in the school. *"We learn to love, we love to learn"* is well known by the pupils, who are able to relate it to their own lives. Pupils recognise that prayer, liturgies and other celebrations are an integral part of life at St Joseph's and they are happy to be active participants. Pupils are given many opportunities to take on responsibilities and contribute to their school community. They are conscientious in their duties and know that they are helping others and maintaining the harmonious atmosphere of the school.

Pupils participate in many activities with other schools and in the wider community. They are active in fundraising and other charitable activities and know that they have a responsibility to help others. They appreciate the principles of justice and forgiveness and can relate the teachings of Jesus to their own lives. Pupils are kind and respectful to each other and know that this is expected at St Joseph's.

Close links with the local parishes and with other Catholic schools foster their appreciation of being part of a wider Catholic community.

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education

Despite generally low starting points on entry to the school, pupils make good progress and achieve well in Religious Education, with the great majority of pupils reaching or exceeding age related expectations by the end of Key Stage 1. This includes pupils with Special Education Needs, English Additional Language and those in receipt of pupil premium funding, reflecting the school's drive to support and challenge all pupils as appropriate to their needs and abilities.

Pupils enjoy their Religious Education lessons. They are attentive and approach their tasks thoughtfully; they are keen to do their best. They are confident when talking about their work and appreciate the importance of Religious Education in their own lives.

Work in pupils' books is of a good standard and reflects the care taken by pupils when doing their work. Pupils' books show recent evidence of dialogue between teacher and pupil. Pupils spoke appreciatively of this, saying they found it useful and that it helped them to improve their work. As this becomes embedded in school practice it will contribute to raising standards further.

How well pupils respond to and participate in Collective Worship

Pupils are keen participants in the school's Collective Worship and recognise it as an important part of school life.

The act of Collective Worship observed as part of this inspection was the school's annual May Procession in honour of Our Lady. Pupils enjoyed being part of this tradition. They sang with enthusiasm and acted with reverence and respect throughout. Pupils led the prayers and readings with confidence. The celebration ended with an invitation to take flowers to the wider community, sharing the joy of the day with others. It was a beautiful and spiritually uplifting experience for all present and was an excellent example of the high quality Collective Worship offered by the school.

Pupils appreciate the importance of prayer and are at ease with composing and using their own prayers, as well as being familiar with the traditional prayers of the Church. Class prayers and individual prayers are included in class and school services. Class Prayer Books strengthen the link between home and school and are a feature of the attractive and well-resourced prayer focus areas in every classroom. These prayer focus areas are linked to the Religious Education topics being studied, the liturgical year and class worship. Pupils are aware of the Church's feasts and seasons and enjoy being part of the rich programme of liturgical celebrations.

Leaders and Managers

Grade
1

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.

Leaders, governors and managers are deeply committed to the Catholic life of the school and to promoting its Catholic identity. They recognise the importance of the relationship between home, school and parish and ensure that these links are actively fostered and form part of the Catholic life of the school.

The school has strong links with local parishes. The parish priests are frequent visitors to the school, contributing to the school's Religious Education curriculum as well as celebrating Masses and liturgies. Each parish is represented on the governing body, reflecting the cohesive and inclusive nature of the school.

Governors make a significant contribution to school life. The Religious Education Link Governor shows dedication and commitment to his role and is very much involved in providing informed support and challenge to school leaders. 'Governors Day' is held on the school's feast day and is an occasion for the governors to visit the school and experience the teaching and learning, assemblies

and special services taking place. Although governors are clearly active in their monitoring and evaluation, little evidence of this is noted in governing body minutes. Governors should now consider including Religious Education and the Catholic life of the school as a regular agenda item at governing body meetings to provide further evidence of their monitoring and evaluation role.

The school has a strong culture of partnership with parents. Parents and pupils are greeted by staff every morning, ensuring that they start the day feeling welcomed. Parents are frequently invited into school, for curriculum and information meetings as well as events and celebrations. Parents' views are listened to and form part of school self evaluation and development planning. Annual parent questionnaires help to identify parental concerns and celebrate school strengths. Although a relatively small number of parental questionnaires distributed as part of this inspection were returned, replies were very positive regarding parents' views of the school.

School leaders ensure that new staff receive appropriate induction with a strong emphasis on teaching in a Catholic school. This includes Diocesan training for newly qualified teachers and those new to Catholic schools. A comprehensive professional development programme includes many elements contributing to the Catholic life of the school and Religious Education.

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

Governors and school leaders have a comprehensive monitoring schedule for Religious Education. This includes learning walks, lesson observations, planning scrutiny and book scrutiny. One of the parish priests is the link governor for Religious Education and participates in these monitoring activities, accompanied by the Religious Education subject leader. The results of monitoring activities are discussed and evaluated and inform school development planning. Action planning is strategic and well targeted, with clear lines of responsibility and appropriate timescales linked to improvement in provision and raising standards.

Religious Education has a high profile in the school and has a profound impact on the moral and spiritual development of the pupils, who can relate what they learn in Religious Education to their own lives and the world around them.

The Religious Education subject leader shows passion and dedication to her role and the school benefits considerably from her wealth of experience and knowledge. Support for staff include leading staff meetings and providing professional development opportunities. The school has many links with other agencies and the wider community. School and parish links are actively fostered and enrich pupils' learning and engagement in Religious Education. The Religious Education curriculum is well resourced, with high quality resources and artefacts evident throughout the school.

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

Four lessons, across Early Years and Key Stage 1, were observed as part of this inspection. All were securely good or outstanding. Lessons had a strong scriptural basis and fostered the development of religious literacy. A range of teaching styles and strategies engaged and enthused pupils. Planning showed clear differentiation and a range of interesting and appropriate activities. Other adults in the classroom showed well developed skills in supporting pupils and extending their learning, including relating it to the Catholic ethos of the school.

Pupils enjoy their Religious Education lessons and achieve well. All groups of pupils are enabled to make good progress, including disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs. Pupils show good knowledge and understanding and can apply a wide range of skills to their learning. They are able to reflect on what they have learned and apply it to situations in everyday life. They appreciate the importance of following the teachings of Jesus in their behaviour and care towards others.

Work in pupils' books is generally well presented and reflects pupils' interest in this area of the curriculum. Marking is affirmative and in line with the school's marking policy. The school has recently introduced interactive marking, encouraging a dialogue between teacher and pupil. This is popular with pupils, who feel it helps them to improve. This should now be embedded in school practice and applied consistently throughout the school.

Attainment in Religious Education is good, with the majority of pupils achieving age related expectations and a good proportion of pupils attaining the higher levels. Attainment in Religious Education is generally in line with other core subjects.

Regular assessment in Religious Education is well established, with evidence of internal and external moderation to ensure accuracy. Assessment is effectively used to inform planning and differentiation for groups and individuals. The school is currently working to streamline the recording of assessment and pupil tracking; as this becomes established it will help to identify trends over time and within pupil groups as well as informing school development planning.

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

The Religious Education curriculum meets Diocesan requirements and time allocation is in line with the Bishops' Conference. The school follows *'The Way, the Truth and the Life'* programme of Religious Education. The school also has schemes of work for the teaching of Other Faiths and for Sex and Relationships Education. The curriculum is enriched by cross curricular links as appropriate and by visits and school events such as Religious Education weeks.

Differentiation ensures that all pupils are able to access the Religious Education curriculum. Support appropriate to pupils' needs is provided for those with special educational needs.

Planned progression within the Religious Education curriculum builds on pupils' past knowledge and experience and extends their learning. Skilful questioning encourages pupils to think deeply and reflect on their learning, making links between other areas of the curriculum and relating Religious Education to their lives.

Resources, including technology are used very effectively together with adult support for pupils as appropriate.

Imaginative and creative use of teaching styles and strategies enhance lessons encouraging different approaches to learning within the religious education curriculum. Well planned activities foster pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The Religious Education curriculum is also responsive to current issues in the Church and community. The school has responded to Pope Francis' call to witness in the Year of Mercy, including familiarising pupils with examples of mercy in the Gospels and incorporating model "Holy Doors" as part of prayer focus areas.

The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school

The school provides a wide range of opportunities for prayer and Collective Worship. These are inclusive of all pupils and reflect the strong Catholic life and identity of the school. Pupils understand the importance of Collective Worship as part of the school's Catholic Life and an expression of their own faith. They enjoy taking part and welcome the opportunity to be part of a worshipping community.

The school's Collective Worship includes the celebrations and traditions of the liturgical year. As a result, pupils are familiar with the feasts and seasons of the Church Year.

Collective Worship offers pupils experience of a range of prayer methods and styles. Pupils are encouraged to create and contribute their own prayers as well as being familiar with the traditional prayers of the Church. Pupils are able to use periods of silence and reflection for personal prayer.

Links with the parishes enrich the provision for Collective Worship and the parish priests' involvement with the school enables pupils to link their school and worship with their parish communities.

Those of Other Faiths are welcomed. Pupils know that the religious beliefs of others should be respected.

The school invites parents and carers to attend and participate in school services, Masses and assemblies throughout the year. Parents and carers welcome these opportunities, which are well attended.

Representatives of other organisations, such as MISSIO and CAFOD also visit the school and lead assemblies, giving pupils an opportunity to be part of a global Christian community.

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