



# St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Church Lane, Murton, Seaham, SR7 9RD

School Unique Reference Number: **114276**

<b>Inspection dates:</b>	15 – 16 November 2018
<b>Lead inspector:</b>	Mary Tate

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Catholic Life:</b>		Outstanding	1
<b>Religious Education:</b>		Good	2
<b>Collective Worship:</b>		Good	2

## SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR PARENTS AND PUPILS

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

- It is a welcoming school family where everyone is valued and cared for. Staff, parents and governors are united in their vision for the school.
- The quality of Religious Education is good because pupils enjoy Religious Education, can explain its value and are keen to do well, leading to good progress in most lessons.
- The Catholic Life of the school is outstanding with the mission statement and inclusive ethos at the heart of all its work.
- The quality of Collective Worship is good and is central to the life of the school. Pupils are developing the skills to lead worship with confidence.

## FULL REPORT

### INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

- The school is a smaller than the average size primary school.
- The executive headteacher has been in post since 2004 and divides her time between St Joseph's and another local Catholic school.
- The number of pupils attending the school over the past few years has increased from 85 to 155.
- The school building will be extended in 2019, with the addition of two additional classrooms.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action, school action plus or a special educational needs support plan is below average.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage and speak English as their first language.

### WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL NEED TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- Improve the quality of Religious Education by:
  - embedding the best practice in marking and feedback across all classes.
- Improve the quality of Collective Worship by:
  - developing pupil's independence and skills in leading worship across a wider variety of setting.

## CATHOLIC LIFE

### THE QUALITY OF 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.
- 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 outstanding.**

- Pupils make an outstanding contribution to the Catholic Life of the school and benefit greatly from it.
- They are aware of their responsibility to care for the needs of those who are less fortunate than themselves. Pupils speak proudly about their charitable work such as supporting the local foodbank and a range of charities from CAFOD, Macmillan Relief and the Salvation Army. One pupil described their school as a place where they care about everyone and have Jesus as their role model.
- The school's mission, 'to provide a place where the Catholic faith is lived and treasured', is central to the life of the school and is embraced by all.
- Parents, staff and governors, are proud of their school with its strong Catholic ethos. Parents speak of the school as a place where children are taught to care for one another. One parent commented that the school gives their child, 'a grounding' in the faith.
- One pupil represents the school at the Youth Council within the newly formed Catholic Partnership of St Mary the Virgin.
- Pupils demonstrate an excellent understanding of the Liturgical calendar and speak confidently of the school's Catholic identity and what this means.
- The school works in close partnership with the parish and both the parish priest and executive headteacher are committed to developing a living community of faith.

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

- The provision for the Catholic Life of the school is outstanding and is given the highest priority by staff and governors. The Catholic character is visible around the school through displays, prayer areas in classrooms and focal points around the corridors. On arrival at the school, handmade poppies were attached to the school fence to mark the month of remembrance.
- There is a strong sense of family and community in all aspects of school life, which is evident in the quality of relationships that exists between stakeholders. Parents are supportive of the school and speak about a strong, caring atmosphere where everyone is made to feel welcome.

- Governors are committed to the further development of the school and see Catholic Life as the core of the school's mission. One Governor commented that the school was about how you lived your life; for some children it is the only place where they experience calm.
- A newly appointed emotional well-being coordinator works with pupils to support them through difficult times or with processing their emotions. Pupils can access this support for a range of reasons, including friendship issues, bereavement, family separation, self-esteem and confidence.
- The school has an active Mini Vinnies group who are true to their motto of 'turning concern into action'. They talk with pride about their many charitable ventures and their visit to the local elderly care home at Christmas.
- Clear policies and procedures are in place, which are rooted in Gospel values. They provide high levels of support for pupils, staff and the wider community.
- Relationships and sex education (RSE) is taught throughout the school at age appropriate levels and it is in line with the teachings of the Catholic faith.

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

- The executive headteacher, Religious Education leader and governors have a clear understanding and shared vision of Catholic education and are committed to making the Catholic Life of the school the best it can be.
- Leaders see the monitoring and evaluation of the Catholic Life of the school as a continual process and seek to ever improve and extend the experiences offered to pupils at St Joseph's.
- Self-evaluation is accurate and has led to well-targeted, planned developments and improvements.
- The school engages very well with parents and carers. They support the school's mission and believe the Catholic ethos is strong and Christ centred.
- Governors make a good contribution to the Catholic Life of the school. They are highly visible members of the community and are proactive in their attendance and leadership of school events and services as well as working with pupils on an individual level through Mini Vinnies. They discharge their duties effectively and appreciate the need to offer challenge, as well as support, to ensure further development.
- The parish priest is very involved in school life and is proud of the strong links between the parish and school. He commented that the high number of pupils who attend parish events speaks for itself and indicates the growing sense of partnership for families.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

### THE QUALITY OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

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

- Pupils enjoy and understand the value of Religious Education, demonstrating enthusiasm and commitment in their learning. They can talk with confidence about their learning. Behaviour in lessons is good and pupils were observed concentrating well and displaying positive attitudes to their learning.
- Most pupils are making progress in Religious Education within lessons and over time. They are developing well in their knowledge and understanding.
- Overall, outcomes for pupils are good and in line with, or above, Diocesan averages by the end of year four and year six over the past few years. The school's data shows that pupils make good progress over time through early years foundation stage and key stage two. For the past two years there has been some inconsistency with the confidence of levelling pupil's attainment at the end of key stage one, largely due to instability with staffing. The school has correctly identified this as an area for development and has plans in place to address this.
- Pupil's work demonstrates a good standard, with an interesting variety of activities. However, tasks are not sufficiently differentiated to cater for the range of needs between pupils and promote maximum rates of progress.

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

- Teaching is good, and teachers have a good level of expertise and a real willingness to share good practice. They have a clear understanding of the value of Religious Education, evident in the quantity and quality of work in children's books. The creative approach to Religious Education is evident in pupil's books.
- Teachers demonstrate high expectations of behaviour and engagement; as a result, pupils concentrate well in lessons.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are very positive and are a real strength of the school. One pupil commented during the inspection that teachers are caring and help you to achieve your goal. As a result of good teaching, one pupil said they would leave St Joseph's with a good education.
- Support staff are used effectively to reinforce learning and to support and extend pupils of different abilities.
- In some lessons, tasks are not always sufficiently matched to pupils' abilities to engage all

groups of learners or to enable them to work independently.

- The standard of marking and feedback varies. There are some good examples of focussed marking, however, written comments by teachers on steps to improve learning are not used consistently throughout the school. Where they do exist, pupils are not given enough opportunity to respond to, or action teacher comments to enable further progress.
- Effective assessment procedures are embedded into Religious Education which inform the teacher of the level at which pupils are working. These are not always consistent, and pupil's prior attainment is not always considered when creating tasks for pupils.

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

- The executive headteacher is committed to raising aspirations for all pupils so that they reach their full potential. She has the respect and support of the whole school community.
- A range of monitoring exercises ensures aspects of Religious Education are evaluated regularly. Leaders and managers use their findings effectively to plan for improvement across the school. The experienced Religious Education coordinator attends Diocesan network meetings and supports teaching and learning by leading Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and organising shared moderation exercises.
- The curriculum, based on 'Come and See', enables pupils to gain first hand quality experiences of the liturgical life of the Catholic church. It has a high profile in the school and is well planned to provide a range of interesting activities for pupils. The curriculum meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference.
- The school has strong links with the parish and works closely with partner Catholic schools in joint moderation of standards in Religious Education.
- Governors are knowledgeable about the curriculum 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.
- Sacramental preparation is delivered well and in accordance with diocesan policy. There is a good uptake of parents requesting this preparation and members of school staff act as catechists for the parish programme.

## COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

### THE QUALITY OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

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- 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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#### **How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship is good.**

- St Joseph's is a prayerful community. Collective Worship engages the interest of all pupils and they respond enthusiastically. They participate with reverence, respect and join in with prayers and sing with joy.
- Pupils are gaining confidence in planning and leading Collective Worship in class and they know what constitutes the various elements of Collective Worship. They now need to be given more opportunities to plan and lead worship independently and in a range of contexts.
- Collective Worship contributes positively to the spiritual and moral development of all pupils. The school is heavily involved in the life of the parish and a range of liturgies and services are held jointly for the school community to attend. In the week prior to inspection, the parish church had been full of parents and parishioners who attended the Remembrance liturgy.
- Pupils have an excellent understanding of the Church's liturgical year, seasons and feasts. They speak with confidence about other religions and are respectful of the beliefs of other faiths.
- There is an inclusive approach to Collective Worship and all pupils are involved, regardless of their background or faith. Parents and governors value this inclusivity and talk about a community which welcomes everyone; they feel it to be a real strength of the school.

#### **The quality of provision for Collective Worship is outstanding.**

- School leaders have an excellent understanding of the church's liturgical heritage, its rites and seasons and are committed to ensuring pupil's experience is of the highest quality.
- Collective Worship is central to school life. From their earliest days, pupils are taught how to create an atmosphere for prayer and praying together is a key part of the daily experience for both staff and pupils.
- There is a strong partnership between home, school and parish. Parents, parishioners and governors are given opportunities to share in the spiritual life of the school through assemblies and liturgies, seasonal celebrations and Mass in the parish church.
- Adults model high quality liturgies for pupils which contribute significantly to the spiritual

and moral development of the pupils. They are helping pupils to develop skills and confidence to plan and lead acts of Collective Worship.

- There is a clear policy for Collective Worship at St Joseph's which ensures a clear sense of purpose. It is given the highest priority and is a key part of every day and every school celebration.

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

- Leaders and managers are excellent role models for pupils and have expert knowledge of the Church's liturgical seasons, rites and traditions. The executive headteacher is highly visible in this role and leads whole school worship each week.
- Collective Worship is central to the life of the school and at the heart of every school and parish celebration. There is a clear policy for Collective Worship, where the themes chosen reflect the liturgical year and follow the nurturing human wholeness programme.
- The professional development needs of staff are identified and supported through a well-planned programme of professional development.
- Staff support each other and work together to bring about further improvement. They have a shared sense of direction and one member of staff commented that the school becomes stronger each year.
- Leaders regularly seek the views of parents and staff. The responses are valued and lead to further developments. Governors and staff spoke proudly about seeing the school community as a partnership, constantly evolving and becoming stronger.
- Parents appreciate the welcoming and family community the school offers when they are invited to join in acts of worship in school and in church.
- Sacramental preparation follows Diocesan guidelines and school staff are involved as parish catechists to prepare and support pupils across the year.

## SUMMARY OF INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

**HOW EFFECTIVE THE SCHOOL IS IN PROVIDING CATHOLIC EDUCATION:****2****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 managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school.

1

**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION:****2**

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

2

The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education.

2

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

2

**COLLECTIVE WORSHIP:****2**

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

2

The quality of provision for Collective Worship.

1

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

2

## SCHOOL DETAILS

<b>School name</b>	St Joseph's Catholic Primary School
<b>Unique reference number</b>	114276
<b>Local authority</b>	Durham
This Inspection Report is produced for the Rt Reverend Seamus Cunningham the Bishop of Hexham and Newcastle 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.	
<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr Michael Sawyers
<b>Executive headteacher</b>	Miss Joanne Jones
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	September 2013
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