



# St Joseph's Primary School

Macklin Street, London, WC2B 5NA

Date of inspection: 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2014

## A. Classroom Religious Education

**What is the overall effectiveness of classroom religious education in developing pupils' religious literacy?**

**Overall Grade I**

The overall effectiveness of classroom religious education in developing pupils' religious literacy is very good. Pupils are provided with a rich and creative curriculum based on the Curriculum Directory and make very good progress in their subject knowledge of the Catholic faith. They show very real enthusiasm for learning in religious education. Teaching is typically very good. A very strong commitment to inclusion results in high aspirations for all pupils, including those with special educational needs. Leadership of religious education is very good; the quality of teaching is regularly monitored and data regarding pupils' progress used very well to inform future planning. The school engages very well with deanery and diocesan moderation activities and values moderation as a key tool for improving outcomes for pupils. The school's Self Evaluation Form highlights areas of real strength and accurately identifies areas for improvement in classroom religious education. Religious education is valued very highly and makes very good contributions to every aspect of school life.

## B. The Catholic life of the school

**What is the overall effectiveness of the Catholic life of the school in developing pupils' experience of the richness of a Catholic way of living and believing?**

**Overall Grade I\***

The overall effectiveness of St Joseph's School in developing pupils' experience of the richness of a Catholic way of living and believing is outstanding. Senior leaders work hard to ensure that the school's Catholic mission is central to the Catholic life of the school. This is evidenced by the allocation of time, excellent budget and high quality resources, as well as by the quality of support offered to teachers new to the school. Highly successful strategies have forged strong links with the parishes the school serves, in particular with the parish of St Anselm and St Cecelia. Prayer and worship are central to the life of the school, with music a key strength. There are very well planned opportunities for pupils to prepare and lead liturgies and acts of worship. The school has rightly identified that it is now ready to develop opportunities for the wider school community to participate in its prayer life. There is a strong commitment to the Common Good and pupils have an excellent range of opportunities to engage in acts of service to others. The school benefits from a supportive and knowledgeable governing body. Pupils flourish at St Joseph's and their spiritual development is excellent.

## Introduction

The inspectors would like to thank the governors, headteacher, staff, pupils and parents for their co-operation over the conduct of the inspection. The inspectors spent one day in school, visited three lessons and one assembly, and carried out five interviews with school staff, pupils and discussion with local clergy, scrutiny of a sample of pupils' work, observation of pupils in and out of lessons and examination of school documents.

The Inspection of St. Joseph's Primary School, Camden, was carried out under the requirements of the Canon 806 and Education Act 2005, and in accordance with the Framework for Section 48 Inspections approved by the Archbishop of Westminster. The inspectors are appointed by the Archbishop. The inspection reviews and evaluates how effective the school is in providing Catholic education. This process begins with the school's own self-evaluation.

## Inspection Team

Mrs Helen Lines	Lead Inspector
Mrs Sheila Nolan	Associate Inspector

## Description of School

The school is a one form entry in the LA of Camden and the locality of Covent Garden. The school mainly serves the parishes of St Anselm and St Cecelia, Lincoln's Inn Field; and Corpus Christi, Maiden Lane. The proportion of pupils who are baptised Catholic is 70%. The proportion of pupils who are from other Christian denominations is 25% and from other Faiths 5%. The percentage of Catholic teachers in the school is 45%.

There are 217 pupils on roll, with 8 pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need. The proportion of pupils from ethnic minority groups is well above average. The number of pupils speaking English as an Additional Language is well above average. There is an above average rate of families claiming free school meals. 36.8% of pupils receive the Pupil Premium.

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Headteacher:	Miss Helen Tyler
Chair of Governors:	Councillor J Fulbrook

Date of previous inspection:	10 <sup>th</sup> February 2009
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## Key for inspection grades:

<i>Grade 1*</i>	<i>Outstanding</i>
<i>Grade 1</i>	<i>Very Good</i>
<i>Grade 2</i>	<i>Good</i>
<i>Grade 3</i>	<i>Requires improvement</i>
<i>Grade 4</i>	<i>Causing Concern</i>

## **A. Classroom Religious Education**

*How religiously literate are pupils in the teachings and traditions of the Catholic faith and how well do they know, understand and appreciate the importance of religious faith and practice in everyday life?*

### **What has improved in classroom religious education since the last inspection?**

There were two main areas for development identified in the last inspection. These were: to ensure that coverage of the religious education curriculum is reflected within the pupils' books; and to develop religious education assessment procedures so that the information gained is used to inform future planning and record pupil progress. The school has responded very well to the latter area, in particular. There are very good procedures in place for the regular collection of data regarding pupils' attainment and progress and this is used to very good effect to inform future planning. Regular moderation activities, both at local and Diocesan levels, mean that teachers are increasingly confident and secure in assessing pupils' achievement in religious education. Since the last inspection, the school has purchased the 'Come and See' programme to successfully improve coverage of the curriculum, although they acknowledge they need to identify ways to capture the wide range of learning in religious education that their pupils engage in.

### **How well does the content of classroom religious education meet the requirements of the Curriculum Directory?**

**Grade 1**

The school has ensured that the content of its curriculum meets the requirements of the Curriculum Directory very well. Staff are confident in the use of the Curriculum Directory and lesson planning is thorough. The four strands are clearly identified and there is evidence of imaginative planning that meets pupils' learning needs very well. Staff have access to quality resources and are very well supported in their teaching by the subject leader. Very good cross-curricular links are made, especially with music, art and literacy. The study of other faiths is also very well-planned. The school recognises that it has to review its curriculum to identify how they can best help pupils achieve more consistently at higher levels of attainment.

### **Pupil achievement (as well as attainment and progress) in religious education**

**Grade 1**

Pupils' progress in religious education is very good. Pupils' progress is carefully tracked and information on their learning outcomes is used to plan to meet pupils' needs very well. The school works hard to develop teachers' familiarity with the levels of attainment in religious education, engaging in internal and external moderation activities. There is evidence of planning to increase engagement in these activities in the near future. Pupils are very enthusiastic about learning in religious education and were able to talk confidently about their current areas of study. In lessons observed, pupils' behaviour was never less than excellent. Workbooks are neat and well cared-for, showing that pupils take pride in their learning. While there is evidence of very good outcomes for many pupils, the school acknowledges that they need to do more to ensure that outcomes at the end of Key Stage 2 for higher achievers, better match those in other core subjects.

## **The quality of teaching**

**Grade 1**

The quality of teaching is typically very good with some evidence of aspects of outstanding practice. There is strong evidence of the school's commitment to inclusion, and very well differentiated learning tasks in lessons allow the full range of abilities to make at least good, and often better, progress. Teachers display high expectations for all groups of pupils and use time to very good effect. Very good questioning effectively engages and motivates pupils. Marking is supportive and there is good evidence of it providing next steps in learning for pupils, although this is not yet fully embedded across the school. More consistent use of developmental marking would offer greater opportunities for teachers to extend pupils' understanding. The school has a commitment to continual professional development for staff. They plan to increase the school's engagement in moderation activities to further develop teachers' understanding of the levels of attainment. The vast majority of parents who responded to the parent questionnaire feel that their children make good progress in religious education.

## **The effectiveness of the leadership and management of religious education**

**Grade 1**

The leadership of religious education is very good. There is a very clear vision for the school and a deep commitment to the educational mission of the Church. Religious Education has a very strong profile in the school. Staff benefit from very good management and there is very good support for new or less-experienced staff. Regular and rigorous monitoring activities are in place to ensure that standards of teaching in religious education are maintained and further developed. The quality of teaching is never less than good and there is evidence of senior leaders moving swiftly to deal with any performance that falls short of the very high standards expected in the school. Self-evaluation in religious education is broadly accurate and the school has accurately identified key areas for improvement. Detailed plans are in place to achieve these improvements. The school has identified that it needs to increase the numbers of staff, including senior leaders, who have the Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies and are investigating how they can best address this.

## **What should the school do to improve further in classroom religious education?**

- Increase the number of staff, especially senior staff, who have achieved the Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies or an equivalent qualification in Catholic school leadership.
- Ensure that outcomes for pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 are more in line with those in other core subjects.
- Ensure that pupils are given opportunities to reflect on and record the full range of learning they experience in school.

## **B. The Catholic life of the school**

*How well do pupils experience the richness of a Catholic way of living and believing through all areas of school life?*

### **What has improved since the last inspection?**

St Joseph's has continued to provide high quality provision for the Catholic life since the last inspection. It has gone on to deepen its work in supporting the human flourishing of its pupils even more. Connections with Catholic parishes have strengthened and the work of the governing body in supporting the Catholic life has also developed further. The liturgical life of the school has been further enhanced by the growing musical expertise of the pupils who participate exceptionally well in assemblies and liturgical celebrations. In discussion, pupils talked confidently about the many opportunities for reflection and prayer.

### **The place of religious education as the core of the curriculum – time, staffing, accommodation, resources, budget**

**Grade I\***

The religious education curriculum securely receives its full allocation of 10% of curriculum time. The budget is well on a par with the other core subjects. The school provides a very good programme of training for those staff who are non-Catholic or have no formal Catholic qualification. Despite the restrictions on the space within the school building, the religious character of the school is very well orchestrated through art work, religious artefacts, posters and children's work.

### **The experience of Catholic worship – prayer and liturgy – for the whole school community.**

**Grade I\***

Prayer is central to the daily life of the school. It has a very strong impact on the pupils' spiritual and moral development. Prayer and worship are at the heart of the school's family ethos. The celebration of Mass is regularly shared with the local parishes so that parents, carers and friends can join the school community. The commitment to the pupils' families as well as to the children themselves runs throughout the school's work. They are strongly supportive, for example, of those experiencing bereavement. The school's Catholic practice is summed up well through its Mission Statement which is well known by all its pupils: 'In our family, we care for each other, learning together through Jesus'.

Whole-school acts of worship are reverent and well organised. Pupils contribute very well through, for example, their music. In an assembly during the inspection, pupils used their hand bells, sang individually and together and joined in prayer whole-heartedly. The Angelus is now part of the school day as are class and staff prayers. Children have a prayer wall to which they attach their prayers. At other times of the school year, pupils can experience other traditional Catholic practice, including the rosary and Stations of the Cross.

## **The commitment and contribution to the Common Good – service and social justice.**

**Grade I\***

Pupils at St Joseph's have an excellent understanding, at their own level, of the importance of justice and fairness in their daily activities. Staff instil in the school community a very strong commitment to the Common Good. Pupils are very active in their service to others. 'We put others before ourselves,' explained one pupil. Respect and value for individuals is central to how pupils and staff interact. Children engage well with local, national and international causes to fight injustice. The school was part, for example, of the 'BIG TODDLE' for Barnardo's, the 'Send a child to school' campaign, the 'Shoebox Appeal' and the 'Street Child of Sierra Leone'. Pupils are actively encouraged to take the initiative and are very well supported by the school to carry out projects such as fund-raising. This was evident in the excellent way the school supported a pupil who had been inspired by a television advertisement that spoke of the plight of children living in areas of conflict. Pupils were also seen confidently leading in acts of worship and assembly, where they were encouraged to make excellent use of their talents for singing, signing and playing musical instruments to enhance the experience for their peers. Children flourish at St Joseph's and their spiritual, moral, cultural and social development is excellent.

## **Enabling the authentic partnership between parents, school and parish as an integral part of the Diocese, particularly through its relationship with the Diocesan Bishop and those acting on his behalf;**

**Grade I\***

The school has excellent links with parents, local and deanery schools and the Diocese. It is keenly aware of being part of the Diocesan community of schools and is active in professional development activities, including supporting other schools. Links with diocesan advisers are strong. Parents are much welcomed to the school to events and celebrations and surveyed regularly to elicit their views. Well over half of the parents responded positively to the questionnaire. Parents value highly the contribution the school makes to the development of the children's faith. There are regular weekly newsletters for parents as well as the Wednesday Word. Parish liaison is also very strong and this is supported through encouraging pupils to join Church choirs and through preparation for First Communion.

## **The effectiveness of the leadership and management in promoting the Catholic life of the school.**

**Grade I\***

The senior leadership, governors and staff fully share a deep commitment to the Church's educational mission and strive to carry this out as well as possible within St Joseph's. High priority is given to worship and to the pupils' spiritual and moral development. This is evidenced in the way the pupils respond to the school's Catholic identity and how they understand their roles within it. Outstanding leadership at all levels enables the whole school community to experience the richness of opportunities of a Catholic way of life. The governors monitor and evaluate the work of the school as a whole and also of the religious education department. The school's self-evaluation is a generally accurate reflection of a school where pupils flourish. School leaders seek to act as role models and witnesses of their Catholic faith. All staff are exceptionally well motivated to do the very best to ensure that pupils develop into well-informed Catholic young people.

**What should the school do to develop further the Catholic life of the school?**

- Find ways of developing a prayer group that allows for all groups within the school community to participate.