

**ARCHDIOCESE OF SOUTHWARK
COMMISSION FOR SCHOOLS & COLLEGES**



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 100729

St. Joseph's Primary School
Crossfield Street
London
SE8 3PH

Chair of Governors Mr Henry Sullivan
Headteacher Mrs Patricia Chantrey
Inspectors Mrs Margaret Liddiard
Miss Christine Edwards

Inspection dates 3 February 2011

**ARCHDIOCESE OF SOUTHWARK
COMMISSION FOR SCHOOLS & COLLEGES**
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Introduction

Description of the school

The school is voluntary aided. It is situated in the Lewisham Deanery of the Archdiocese of Southwark. It is maintained by Lewisham LA. The principal parish served by the school is Our Lady of The Assumption. The proportion of pupils who are baptised Catholics is 69%. The average weekly proportion of curriculum time given to Religious Education is 9% in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.

The school takes pupils from 4 to 11 years. The number of pupils currently on roll is 231. The attainment of pupils on entering the school is broadly below average. The proportion of pupils eligible for free schools meals is 24%. Around 20% of the pupils receive extra support in class. Pupils come from predominantly Black African, Black British and Caribbean heritages with the remainder coming from a variety of other backgrounds. The proportion of pupils from homes where English is an additional language is above average at 76%.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding	Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 2	Good	Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness as a Catholic school

St. Joseph's is a welcoming school with a clear Catholic identity as seen in the artefacts and displays in the classrooms and in the newly built Entrance Hall. Relationships within the school are good, explicitly reflecting the school's Mission Statement which says, "Let our faith shine through in how we treat others and in our achievements." This is clearly displayed in the Entrance Hall and in all classrooms. Pupils are rewarded and praised for their achievements with stickers, letters of commendation to parents, in the 'Big Book of Brilliant' and at the weekly Praise Assembly. They feel valued and are happy to be at the school. The majority of parents are positive in their views of the school. One wrote, "The staff are approachable and they are always willing to listen and support." The headteacher has a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development as indicated on the Self Evaluation Form in which clear targets for the improvement of religious education is outlined. She is establishing a strong and positive atmosphere that will support the maintenance of the school's Catholic character and at the same time raise standards in teaching and learning. The school has successfully addressed some of the issues raised in the last inspection. A new Religious Education Policy and a Policy for 'Sex and Relationships Education' are in place although both are in need of some further refinement. Planning is now more consistent across the school.

Attainment Levels have recently been introduced. The inspectors believe the school has an accurate view of its strengths and the areas to develop. It is well placed to make further improvement.

Grade 3

What steps need to be taken to improve further?

Further develop assessment procedures, including pupil self-assessment and Religious Education levels of attainment so that assessment has a greater impact on teaching and learning.

Develop a variety of celebrations to broaden pupils' knowledge and understanding of the Liturgical Year. This should be reflected in all classes and common areas of the school.

Develop a range of good quality resources to support the teaching of Religious Education including other faiths.

Seek creative ways to improve the Religious Education Curriculum by developing cross-curricular links.

The Catholic life of the school

Leadership and management

Grade 2

The leadership and management of St. Joseph's School is good. The headteacher has a clear vision of Catholic education and the direction in which she wishes the school to proceed. A strong Senior Leadership Team has been established and the headteacher is keen to provide opportunities for this team to develop their leadership skills further. The Religious Education Policy has recently been revised but now needs further refinement in order to outline statements of good practice within the school as well as giving clear guidelines for teaching and learning. The School Mission Statement is displayed prominently in classrooms and in the Entrance Hall and underpins all school policies. There is a policy for 'Sex and Relationships Education' and the school recognises the need to develop a coherent programme to deliver this policy in accordance with the Diocesan Policy on 'Human Love and Relationship Education'. A Collective Worship Policy is in place but, again, needs further review to include clear guidelines for delivery. Members of the Governing Body are supportive of the school and are keen to develop their role by actively visiting and monitoring. Some Governors attend Masses and Assemblies and other school functions. There is a clear desire by all to move the school forward. Pupils are well cared for and provision is made for a wide range of differing needs including moderate learning difficulties, autism, behavioural, emotional and social needs. Ofsted commented, "The school tries hard, with some success, to support pupils and their families who are potentially vulnerable due to their circumstances." Relationships in the school are good. Staff are working hard to develop a collaborative approach towards teaching and learning.

Home, School, Parish links are good. The Parish Priest visits regularly to plan and prepare class Masses for Key Stage 2 and prayer services for Key Stage 1 which are held in the local Parish church. Opportunities need to be sought to encourage pupils to become more involved in the preparation of these liturgical celebrations in order to increase their understanding. Pupils are prepared for the Sacraments of Reconciliation and First Eucharist by the parish and the whole school celebrates this joyous event by encouraging the pupils to wear their special clothes and bring their gifts to school. All school events are recorded in the newsletters to parents which contain a wonderful variety of news, pictures of school life, reminders and some prayers written by staff or pupils. Parents are involved in school life in a variety of ways, including attendance at Assemblies, Parents' Evenings and Curriculum Workshops. A very successful International Evening was well supported and enjoyed by the whole school community. The views and opinions of parents are sought through questionnaires. These indicate that they are generally supportive of the school. The headteacher and senior leadership team are seeking ways to involve parents more actively in the life of the school and they are in the initial stage of developing a Parents of St. Joseph's Committee.

Quality of provision for personal and collective worship

Grade 3

The quality of provision for personal and collective worship is satisfactory. The school recognises Prayer and Worship as important aspects of school life but needs to develop a wider range of opportunities for the pupils to become involved. The school makes good use of the Parish Church for Class Masses and Prayer Services. With the development of a new School Hall some celebrations will now be school based. This facility should allow the school the opportunity to broaden pupils' experiences with a wider range of liturgical and non-liturgical celebrations. Pupils are proud of their new Hall and commented, "The new Hall feels more comfortable." Pupils have a good repertoire of traditional prayers. These are supplemented by prayers composed by staff or sometimes by pupils themselves. Some notable examples of these are found in the Prayer Books in the Entrance Hall and in the regular Parents' Newsletter. Each class prepares an assembly once a term based on themes from the 'Here I Am' religious education programme. These provide opportunities for prayer and cross-curricular links. In the assembly attended during the inspection pupils spoke clearly, led prayers, sang and dramatised Gospel stories. The whole school community was attentive and focused, as a clear message about everyday living was delivered. A good number of parents attended the assembly and were welcomed by the headteacher. Staff are well supported by clear documentation. For example, the Religious Education Policy gives clear guidelines for the teaching of this core subject. Visits to other schools to observe good practice is encouraged. The school supports CAFOD and Red-Nose Day and collects for emergency appeals such as that for The Haiti Earthquake. There are focal areas in the classrooms. These now need to be developed to make a greater impact on the classroom learning environment. They would benefit from a wider range of artefacts and by becoming more interactive. Displays around the school celebrate pupils' work. However, there now needs to be greater emphasis on aspects of the Liturgical Year and religious education in order to raise their profile through the school.

Community Cohesion

Grade 3

St. Joseph's is satisfactory at promoting Community Cohesion. It is an inclusive school where all members of the school community are valued and respected. All pupils, including those with additional needs and those of different cultures are well integrated. Pupils show respect and consideration for each other and they are polite and friendly. They are keen to take responsibility and a system for 'Playground Pals' is beginning to work well. The recently re-established School Council has been involved in a variety of projects. For example, they have been seeking pupils' views about behaviour in the playground. Links are being developed with other schools through sports' competitions and debates. The Headteacher, in addition to attending the Local Area Collaborative meetings, meets with a cluster of local Catholic headteachers. The deputy headteacher is forging links with a Primary School in Grimsby. Pupils have some knowledge and understanding of the wider world through the work of CAFOD and of the local community through visits

from the Police and Fire Brigade and trips to the local Library and The Laban Dance Centre. Staff are recruited from a range of different backgrounds and cultures which reflects the pupil intake and the local community. The school recognises the need to do more to acknowledge and celebrate the richness of its diversity.

Religious Education

Achievement and standards

Grade 4

Attainment in Religious Education on entry is below average. As pupils move through the school progress is slow and generally unsatisfactory. Pupils' work in books varies in quality and quantity. Often it is poorly presented or incomplete. Both the coverage of topics and the range of different activities to support learning are limited. Marking of pupils' work varies considerably and requires a more consistent approach. Pupils need to be given targets for future improvement. However, the atmosphere in the lessons observed was calm and positive and pupils were generally on task, working well individually or in pairs. Behaviour is good. Pupils enjoy their lessons, listen well and are keen to contribute when given the opportunity. Activities were differentiated by task but opportunities for the children to work independently are varied. The level of challenge presented to pupils in Year 6 was good as pupils were asked to independently research the different categories of writing in The Bible. In Reception and Year 2, pupils explored the story of 'The Presentation in the Temple' through role play. Younger pupils developed their own understanding of the story through play. However, in Key Stage 1 lessons were more teacher-led and few opportunities were given for the pupils to become more involved in their own learning. Support staff are used well to guide specific individuals or groups.

Teaching and learning in Religious Education

Grade 3

The quality of teaching and learning is overall satisfactory with elements of good practice. All teachers are committed to the teaching of religious education. The school recognises that some teachers will need ongoing support and training in order to increase their knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith. It has been the headteacher's task to improve standards of teaching and learning in the core subjects. Religious Education now needs to be given equality in this drive for improvement. Where teaching is good, a range of teaching strategies is used to engage and motivate the pupils, lessons are well planned, pace is brisk and pupils are involved in their learning. For example, in Year 6 pupils were encouraged to work hard on their own research. In Year 2, partner talk was used to encourage pupils to discuss the importance of The Bible and in Reception; ICT was used effectively to remind pupils of their recent visit to the Church.

Where teaching is less good, too much time is spent listening to the teacher, pupils lose concentration and progress is slow. Often the language used is not appropriate for the age or ability of the pupils. This leads to confusion with the tasks set. In some classes ICT is used well to support and enhance learning, for example Year 1 where pictures of Bible stories were used to remind pupils of previous work. However, in some classes it is used simply to outline lesson content. A good start has been made with tracking pupils' progress and when embedded, this will enable teachers to plan for individual needs and thus raise standards further. Regular lesson observation and the moderation of pupils' work now needs to be established. Pupils with educational needs are well catered for although more challenge is required for the more able.

The Religious Education curriculum

Grade 3

There is a whole school approach to the teaching of Religious Education based on the 'Here I Am' programme. The school almost meets the requirements of The Bishops' Conference with just below 10% of weekly curriculum time given to the teaching of Religious Education. There is a consistent approach to planning. The school recognises the need to plan for cross-curricular links in order to satisfy the demands of the Primary curriculum. Pupils gain a sensitive understanding and tolerance of the religious beliefs of others through the teaching of other faiths. Judaism and Islam have a one week focus each academic year. The school would further benefit from visits to other places of worship and by inviting visitors of other faiths to speak to the pupils. Parents are kept informed about their child's Religious Education experiences through a termly newsletter and they are welcomed into school for Masses and Assemblies. The Religious Education resources are of a poor quality generally and need enhancement and development.

Leadership and management

Grade 3

As a result of staffing circumstances the headteacher has assumed the role of Religious Education co-ordinator. She recognises the need to improve standards of teaching and learning in religious education. Monitoring of this subject will include lesson observations and book scrutinies. The Levels of Attainment need to be used in order to raise standards further. The school has had a programme of INSET for religious education and it recognises the need for religious education to feature more regularly on the agenda of staff meetings. Attendance at the Diocesan co-ordinators' meetings and conference would also be beneficial. Governors are kept informed of aspects of religious education through their visits to the school and through the headteacher's report. Taking account of the challenging issues that the school has had to face in the last two years, the governors and headteacher are alert to the school's current priorities and are anxious to ensure the development of religious education as a strong core subject. The appointment of a co-ordinator to lead and develop Religious Education is a priority.