



## **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 102596**

**St Joseph's Catholic Primary School  
The Fairfield  
Kingston  
KT1 2UP**

**Inspection date: 21 September 2015**

Chair of Governors:	Mrs Emma Piper
Headteacher:	Mrs Frances Robertson
Inspectors:	Mrs Joan Lenahan Mr Damian Fox

### **EDUCATION COMMISSION**

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# SECTION 48

## Description of the school

St Joseph's School is voluntary aided. It is situated in the Kingston Deanery of the Archdiocese of Southwark. It is maintained by Kingston Local Authority. The principal parish the school serves is St Raphael's Surbiton, but pupils also come from St Pius Norbiton, Our Lady Immaculate, Tolworth, St Anne's Kingston Hill, St Agatha's Kingston and St Joseph's New Malden. The proportion of pupils who are baptised Catholics is 47%. Overall, the average weekly proportion of curriculum time given to Religious Education is under 10% in Key Stage 1 and under 10% in Key Stage 2.

The school takes pupils from 3 to 11 years. The school is larger than average with two 'bulge classes' in Key Stage 2. Currently there are 280 pupils on roll, 263 of which are full-time. The attainment of pupils on entering the school is generally below average. The number of pupils on the special educational needs register is 11% with 3 pupils having statements of special needs. The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium is higher than the national average. The number of pupils who are from mixed ethnic backgrounds is above the national average. The proportion of pupils from homes where English is an additional language is above average at approximately 64%, although the number of pupils at the early stages of learning English is relatively low.

Date of previous inspection:

21/10/2010

Overall Grade:

2

### Key for inspection grades

Grade 1      Outstanding  
Grade 2      Good

Grade 3      Requires improvement  
Grade 4      Inadequate

# Overall effectiveness of the school in providing Catholic Education

**GRADE  
2**

St Joseph's is a good school. Leaders, governors and managers demonstrate a commitment to the Church's mission in education.

Overall, the quality and range of opportunities for pupils' moral, social and cultural development is outstanding.

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

Parents state that the school has a "friendly, welcoming, happy family atmosphere where there is an open door approach to dealing with concerns." They appreciate the high level of pastoral care which their children receive and the fact that teachers are available and readily willing to address any issues that arise.

Leadership and management are good. Governors are supportive, actively involved in guiding the school's development and well informed. They perform their role as critical friends, undertake learning walks, participate in relevant staff training sessions and maintain ongoing dialogue between leaders, staff and pupils.

Policies and procedures to support the Catholic life of the school and the development of Religious Education are detailed. A range of procedures to raise standards to a higher level in Religious Education are in the early stages of implementation as a result of changes in leadership. With rigorous monitoring of these procedures, together with the vision and commitment of leaders to succeed, the school is well placed to improve further.

## **What steps need to be taken to improve further?**

Governors, Headteacher and staff should:

- Review provision for Collective Worship to comply with statutory regulations.
- Ensure that 10% of teaching time is allocated to the teaching of Religious Education.
- Continue to raise standards of pupils' attainment in Religious Education through more rigorous monitoring of provision.

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

The school has an all-pervading Catholic ethos. It provides many and varied opportunities for pupils to develop their faith and spirituality. Pupils value and respect others. They understand the importance of caring for each other and enjoy taking on responsibility as part of their school life. Pupils understand that religious belief and spiritual values are important within their school community and in the wider world. They view their Catholic school as a place where "we learn to be loving and caring and this is like a ripple as it affects how we treat each other throughout the day." Parents state that their children develop strong moral values.

Pupils apply the school code of conduct: SORT (be safe, obey, respect, be truthful) and convey a "clear sense of right and wrong and an understanding of the need to forgive and be forgiven." They are confident that bullying is not an issue and any "minor conflicts are easily sorted and they can always talk to the teachers." Pupils understand the relevance of the key celebrations in the liturgical year and appreciate the weekly visits by the Parish Priest who, "helps them understand the Mass and the Gospel message in *The Wednesday Word*." They are taught to respect the beliefs of others and confident to express their own religious beliefs.

Pupils understand and recognise the need to care for others in the wider community and are eager to engage in fund raising for charities such as Cafod, Mary's Meals and Harvest collection for Kingston Foodbank.

'The Buddy System' works very well, as older pupils demonstrate a caring attitude to support younger pupils whilst at work and play.

### **How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education**

Attainment is good overall given the low levels of knowledge and skills at the point of entry. Pupils enjoy their learning and are making good progress throughout. From the earliest age, they participate in lessons with a sense of enjoyment and exude a joy in learning. This was seen when Year 1 pupils explored and reflected on the theme of 'Our Wonderful World' which was linked to St John's Gospel. During the lessons observed, the level of engagement was high overall and pupils produced work of a good quality. Pupils are keen to do well as observed in the Year 6 class where pupils rose to the challenge of linking the message of God's unconditional love as outlined in Beatitudes (Matthew 5:1-12.) to living out the faith. This high level of engagement and quality of output was not evident in the scrutiny of workbooks from the past year. Leaders are aware of the shortfall and are committed to improving standards.

## **How well pupils respond to and participate in Collective Worship**

Acts of Collective Worship engage pupils' interest. They are keen to participate and act with reverence, as witnessed during the whole school assembly which explored St Mark's Gospel message about the importance of each individual in the eyes of God. (9:30-37). The manner in which the pupils engaged in singing the hymn: 'This little light of mine' conveyed their sense of purpose and joy of praising God through song. Pupils cite that they look forward to presenting their class assemblies to the whole school as they are fully "involved in their preparation and enjoy performing."

The school is fully inclusive and no one is expected to act in a manner contrary to their beliefs. The group of pupils interviewed stated that pupils who are not Catholic are "encouraged to pray in their own way."

Pupils appreciate the contribution made by the local Parish Priest in helping them learn about the celebration of the Mass. Pupils understand the significance of the school Chapel as a very special place for reflection and prayer and understand the significance of lighting a candle when they are called to pray. The use of individually named 'prayer pebbles' helps pupils to focus during acts of reflection in class.

Prayer focal areas in classrooms are of high quality and reflect the liturgical year and their Religious Education themes. Pupils know about the different forms of prayer as seen in their written intercessions on display and in class prayer books.

### **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 and governors demonstrate a strong commitment to the Church's mission with the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of every pupil given due priority. Governors have successfully addressed leadership issues that had an impact on performance in the interim years since the previous Section 48 Inspection (October 2010).

Governors communicate effectively with parents through termly news items on the school website. A strong management team is now in place with the Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher giving leadership that is focussed on maintaining and developing the ethos of St Joseph's. The school's mission "to place God at the centre of all we think, say and do" is explicit in policies and practice.

The insightful vision of the Headteacher to drive the school forward is tangible. A strength of leadership is the approach to devolved management that inducts, empowers and supports staff to be fully involved in the Catholic life of St Joseph's.

The focus of raising the profile of the school Chapel to further augment the pupils' spiritual development is coming to fruition with the pupils viewing it as a special place.

Governors and leaders have established solid foundations in formulating policies and procedures that reflect their strengths and areas for development. Their self-evaluation is honest and accurately identifies areas in need of further development.

The level of pastoral care is outstanding as Christian principles are evident in the manner in which each pupil and their families are cared for and supported.

Strong links with the local parish are fostered, thus enhancing the pupils' understanding of a worshipping community. Attendance at Mass in church enables pupils to have first-hand experience of practising the faith.

Issues raised in the previous inspection relating to assessment and world faiths have been addressed and have an impact on provision.

The school's website is explicitly Catholic and newsletters inform parents of key aspects of celebrating its Catholic life.

### **How well leaders, governors and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education and plan and implement for**

## **improvement to outcomes for pupils**

Leaders and governors are fully committed to ensuring that Religious Education is a core curriculum subject following a period of instability at management level in recent years. The appointment of a dedicated Religious Education leader has also strengthened the management of the subject.

A state of transition prevails currently, as 'Come and See' has been introduced as the Religious Education syllabus (September 2015). Leaders identified the need to move to this syllabus because they deem it to be a better fit in meeting the needs of pupils and staff.

Leaders have accurately diagnosed that aspects of planning relating to differentiation for the more able is in need of further development.

Assessment procedures are in place and they now need to be cross-referenced with the new syllabus. The school has a portfolio of levels of attainment but this now needs to be updated in line with the changeover in syllabus. A moderation exercise with another school has not been undertaken to date although the Religious Education Coordinator has participated in Deanery and Diocesan level moderation.

Tracking of pupil performance is undertaken systematically and informs planning. Data analysis of pupils' levels of attainment in Religious Education (2014/2015) reveals that their performance falls short of those in literacy in both key stages. Leaders are aware of this disparity and are addressing the issue. In the lessons observed during the inspection attainment levels were in line with expectations.

The quality of teaching is regularly monitored and feedback given.

Leaders participate in training opportunities at local cluster and Diocesan levels. The subject leader has a clear understanding of what needs to be done to raise standards and has the subject knowledge and enthusiasm to achieve her vision.



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

The majority of teaching enables pupils to make progress and during the lessons observed, teaching was effective overall. Teachers plan lessons that engage the interest of pupils. Where teaching is good or better, as seen in a Year 6 lesson, pace, differentiation of tasks that challenge ability groups and allowed pupils time to reflect on their learning were all key elements. This model of teaching needs to become the norm.

Pupils are provided with good feedback as marking in workbooks is interactive and serves to engage pupils in their learning. Achievement and effort are highlighted and praised.

Teaching assistants are generally well deployed. Imaginative use of high quality resources, including music and Information and Communications Technology (ICT), is effectively incorporated into lessons.

The environment is conducive to learning about religious teaching outside the classroom arena with features such as the Chapel and the Early Years outdoor discovery garden effectively incorporated into the development of pupils' spiritual development. Displays of pupils' work serve to reinforce class based learning such as the Key Stage 2 interpretation of the 'Stations of the Cross', key stage art relating to their Religious Education theme: 'We are all parts of God's family' and 'Come and See' our many gifts at St Joseph's.

A move forward in the school's quest to raise pupils' attainment levels was seen in the quality and quantity of work in pupils' books since the beginning of this year in comparison with that of the past year. Exemplary practice is now evident in workbooks in some classes where content, range of tasks, due focus on the scripture aspect of topics and pupil engagement are all present. This good practice needs to be established and monitored throughout.

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

The Religious Education programme 'Come and See' was introduced as the core syllabus in September 2015. There is a significant shortfall throughout Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 in the allocation of the expected 10% of teaching time for the subject. This needs to be brought into line with the Bishops' Conference expectation. Currently, Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) is taught as a discrete subject, using the 'Twelve Baskets' scheme of work, and this needs to be cross-referenced to dovetail with

the Religious Education Curriculum Directory in line with Diocesan guidelines. The programme to teach pupils about the major world faiths is in place and this is an improvement since the previous inspection. Cross-curricular opportunities for spiritual and moral formation are integrated effectively into lessons through the incorporation of reflections, music, art, geography and history. Enrichment activities such as the Year 6 'Picnic and Praise' at Richard Challoner, service to mark Remembrance Day and the work pupils undertook to gain accreditation for the International School award all serve to develop the pupils' understanding of community cohesion.

The curriculum is enriched by the focus the school places on devotion to the saints including St Joseph, Key Stage 2 Advent Carol service, Stations of the Cross and ongoing support from the Parish Priest.

### **The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school**

The quality of Acts of Collective Worship at St Joseph's is high with pupils and staff coming together to pray and celebrate. The Liturgical Year and lives of the saints are incorporated effectively into provision. Each year group presents a class assembly twice a year and the themes are consistent with the Catholic character of the school and respond to the religious diversity of the school. Attendance by parents is facilitated and encouraged when appropriate.

Pupils are offered a wide range of opportunities to engage in formal and informal prayers daily.

Plans to use the Chapel facility daily during the months of May and October for Rosary devotions will further enhance provision.

Acts of Collective Worship are scheduled for three days each week. In addition there is a rotating schedule of class Masses.

This needs to be reviewed in line with statutory guidelines.