



DENOMINATIONAL EDUCATION AND COLLECTIVE WORSHIP INSPECTION REPORT

incorporating Canonical Inspection under Canon 806 on behalf of the
Archbishop of Southwark

URN 140641

**St Joseph's Catholic Primary School
St Peter's Park Road
Broadstairs, Kent
CT10 1EL**

**Inspection
date:**

**11th October
2016**

Chair of Governors:

Mr John Darby

Headteacher:

Mrs Linda Briggs

Inspectors:

Dr Janet Croggon

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EDUCATION COMMISSION

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DENOMINATIONAL EDUCATION

Description of the school

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School is situated in the Thanet Deanery of the Archdiocese of Southwark. It is an academy within the Kent Catholic Schools Partnership. The principal parish, which the school serves, is Our Lady Star of the Sea, Broadstairs. The proportion of pupils who are baptised Catholics is 57%. The average weekly proportion of curriculum time given to Religious Education is 10% in both Key Stage 1 and 2.

The school takes pupils from 4 to 11 years of age. The number of pupils currently on roll is 207. The attainment of pupils on entering the school is broadly average. The proportion eligible for free school meals is 15%, which is below national average and those who are pupil premium are 2% of the school population.

Around 54% of the pupils receive extra support in class. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils where English is an additional language is 11%, which is below national average.

Date of previous
inspection:

11th November 2011

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
1**

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School is an outstanding centre of learning in which all pupils make rapid progress. From their entrance to the school, the pupils receive a solid foundation in the Catholic faith and are taught to love and respect their neighbour. The school's commitment to working with the disadvantaged in both the local and international communities is a cornerstone of the pupils' moral education. The Catholic ethos and the school mission statement underpin all school decisions, policies and the curriculum.

St Joseph's School is outstanding in its pursuit of academic progress for all especially within Religious Education. All areas identified in the previous Section 48 Report have been addressed. Staff feel supported in their teaching and spiritual life. Pupil behaviour is excellent and they are independent learners. St Joseph's school is an inclusive community where staff, pupils and parents worship together in many different ways.

Governors are well qualified to lead a Catholic school. They are well known by the staff, pupils and parents. They are vigilant in their monitoring of school standards and pupils' progress. Minutes of their meetings, visit records and governor involvement in many aspects of school life confirm the governing body's commitment to safeguarding the Catholic ethos of the school. The parish priest is an active governor who works diligently to support the Senior Leadership Team of the school. He plays a vital role in the St Joseph's community by celebrating school Masses and leading assemblies.

Parents are very supportive of the school as reported in their positive response to the questionnaire and during the inspection interviews. A parent wrote "This school offers a wonderful opportunity for children to grow and learn in an environment where the Catholic values are embedded." Another parent commented that, "The link between St Joseph's and Our Lady Star of the Sea is strong. The school also seems very welcoming and inclusive to families of other faiths."

What steps need to be taken to improve further?

Governors, Headteacher and staff should:

- Ensure pupils have more involvement in creating and refreshing prayer focal points within their classrooms.

- Provide specific training for pupil liturgy leaders and offer more opportunities for them to plan prayer and worship services.

Outcomes for pupils

**Grade
1**

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

The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life of the school is outstanding. The child-friendly mission statement is understood and carried out by the pupils. They actively participate in the liturgical life of the school through participation in both school and class assemblies.

Pupils understand that spiritual values are important to many people and that religious worship varies. Parent-led assemblies introduce pupils to other world faiths. Pupil leadership is seen in their active fundraising for Cafod, St Paul's Food Bank and Porchlight. The Harvest Festival Tea provides a further opportunity for outreach to the local community strengthening the links between the parish and the school as pupils prepare, serve and entertain the school's volunteers.

The pupils of St Joseph's School are reflective and offer to lead prayers within their classrooms and in the parish. Each year group begins their day with a peaceful, prayer act lighting their prayer candle. In a Year 2 lesson observed, pupils were encouraged to take their prayers to Mary.

Pupils demonstrate a good understanding of the liturgical year and participate enthusiastically in collective worship. The creation of the Mary Garden provides space for prayer and reflection. Pupils would benefit from further involvement in creating and refreshing focal areas in their classrooms.

Pupil questionnaires reveal their satisfaction in accepting responsibilities, especially as monitors, prefects and leaders in specific subjects. The school's integrated curriculum reinforces the Christian teaching that we are the custodians of God's creations. Pupils participate in activities which support fair trade.

Staff and pupils participate in 'Picnic and Praise' sponsored by Kent Catholic School Partnership and the deanery Carol Service. During this academic year, the school community was involved in the deanery celebration of the Year of Mercy.

Posters were created and special assemblies prepared the community to celebrate this event. At the time of inspection, St Joseph's was hosting the deanery Year of Mercy candle.

St Joseph's is located within the former convent of the Sisters of the Christian Retreat. Both the building and the surrounding grounds help to create a peaceful, religious tone to daily life. Reminders of the Catholic faith are integral. Pupil-generated work is displayed throughout the school and is a source of great pride. The reception area, enhanced by religiously themed stained glass windows and icons, provides a distinctively Catholic welcome. Pupils benefit from this environment which nurtures their spiritual life.

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education

Pupils enjoy their Religious Education classes and actively participate in their learning. In the lessons observed, pupils' behaviour for learning was excellent. Pupils were highly motivated and joyfully explored the activities offered during lessons. Targeted study and activities ensure that most groups of pupils make outstanding progress. In the 2015/16 school year, 86% of Year 6 pupils gained Level 4, which was on par with the results in English.

Pupils with specific learning needs make good progress within lessons due to targeted interventions by the teacher and teaching assistants. In the lessons observed, and after a review of the tracking data with particular reference to the most able pupil premium pupils, little variation was found between the groups of learners. Book reviews and pupil interviews confirmed all teachers have consistently high expectations for all pupils in their care.

Pupils benefit from the moderation of their work both at deanery and tri-deanery level. This regular exercise ensures accuracy in marking and facilitates the sharing of good teaching practice between schools. Pupil writing is excellent and demonstrates strong development over the key stages. Pupils are given clear feedback on how to improve their work. Targets for improvement are shared with pupils, updated, and discussed regularly including next steps. The school's record of assessing standards of attainment is exceptional.

Cross-curricular development of religious themes enables pupils to examine faith from a world perspective while deepening their understanding of others' personal beliefs. These experiences, coupled with their regular Religious Education lessons, aid pupils in reflecting spiritually and acting ethically. International links with other

schools challenge stereotypes while emphasising the universality of the Catholic Church.

In total six lessons were observed. They were all well planned and the pupils were creatively engaged in the learning process. Excellent cross-curricular links were observed in a Year 1 lesson as a link was made with the current geography topic. Pupils in all year groups enthusiastically applied religious vocabulary during discussions. In Reception, discovery and learning activities lead pupils to discover their special relationship with God. Awe and wonder filled the classroom as pupils watched their thumbprints reveal how unique each of them is before God.

A high level of religious literacy was seen in all lessons and the assembly. Key religious vocabulary is displayed and used by pupils in their writing. Good questioning encourages pupils to understand the link between religious belief and everyday actions.

How well pupils respond to and participate in Collective Worship

Pupils' response to and participation in Collective Worship is outstanding. In the Harvest Assembly observed, pupils were eager to participate through readings and leading prayers of petition, offering gifts and reflections. Their enthusiasm for the service and deep understanding of thankfulness was evident in their prayerful silence balanced with their joyous singing of a harvest hymn. The school's award winning choir leads singing during collective worship and performs in the parish, at Kent Catholic Schools' Partnership events and within the local area.

Prayer is at the heart of the school. All pupils are secure in their daily prayer routines. Classroom focal points display the class prayer book and posted personal prayers. Pupils demonstrate great reverence when they pray within the classroom or in assembly. They participate in parish and school Masses, services of Reconciliation and other celebrations throughout the liturgical year. These include saints' days and the praying of the rosary during the month of May. While pupils frequent the multiple prayer spaces around the school, their experiences would be deepened by further opportunities to be involved in the planning of prayer and worship services.

The Prayer Space Week and the legacy of the petition cross (now displayed in the school entrance) are excellent examples of pupil's prayerful participation. This event gathered all members of the community in peace, love and reconciliation. In interviews and through the sharing of the school's photos, pupils discussed the importance of prayer and reflection in everyone's life. This special week impacted

significantly on staff and pupils alike. All the pupils interviewed spoke with great enthusiasm and joy at their participation in the event.

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

The senior leaders, governors and managers are outstanding in promoting and evaluating the provision for the Catholic life of the school and in the way they plan and implement improvements. The Headteacher leads the school community with a clear vision of Catholic education that benefits each and every pupil of the school. The Chair of Governors has provided excellent leadership and witness over the span of many years. He has served on two Catholic governing bodies concurrently thus sharing good practice within the deanery.

The governors serve as critical friends of the Headteacher and senior leaders of the school. Governors' minutes reveal a consistent drive to tackle the areas for development raised in the previous Section 48 inspection. They actively participate in the school's collective worship and parish events.

Leaders and managers are outstanding in their tracking and evaluation of the progress of pupils in Religious Education. All progress is compared to English to ensure parity of success. The Headteacher, Chair of Governors and Religious Education Coordinator regularly conduct monitoring activities such as lesson observations, learning walks and the evaluation of worship.

Senior leaders and governors accurately diagnose the strengths of the school and areas for development. The Headteacher ensures that all new staff are made aware of the Catholic nature of the school including the Church's mission. The annual staff retreat strengthens the school community through the study of Catholic education themes and reflective prayer. In regards to Catholic leadership in the future, succession planning is well supported in the school.

The School Development Plan is challenging and sets clear targets for all areas of the school. The school engages parents through parents' evenings, the termly Parents' Forum, newsletters, the school website and invitations to class assemblies and Masses. The parish priest works closely with the school to support all families in their work of providing a moral education for their children.

In 2013, Ofsted recognised St Joseph's pastoral care as outstanding. The school's commitment to ensuring restorative justice is employed in daily decisions and prepares pupils take responsibility for their actions from an early age. St Joseph's embraces all pupils and their families especially the most disadvantaged. The inclusive, supportive nature of the school ensures everyone is able to articulate the school's mission with understanding.

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

The Headteacher, together with the Religious Education Coordinator and the link governor, are outstanding in their monitoring and evaluation of this subject. The assessment systems and subject files provide a comprehensive overview of pupil progress. Their reporting to staff and governors enables everyone to carefully monitor the most vulnerable groups and track the rapid progress of the school's most able pupils. Through the use of pupil questionnaires, Religious Education circle time and suggestion boxes, leaders monitor the present provision and plan for the future.

The Religious Education Plan sets clear targets of achievement and the building of the Catholic Ethos within the school. The Religious Education Coordinator participates in the Diocesan training, work moderation and days of reflection. Governors attended the Section 48 training to reassess the school's progress in Religious Education. Religious Education twilight training sessions and inset days ensure staff are skilled for the delivery of the subject.

As part of the school's sharing of good practice, the Headteacher and Religious Education Coordinator delivered training for the deanery governors on Human Relationship Education as relating to SMSC (Spiritual, Moral, Social, Cultural) and British Values.

Provision

**Grade
1**

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

The quality of teaching observed during the inspection is outstanding. Lessons were well planned, differentiated and built on the pupils' previous knowledge. All staff have high expectations of pupils and interact sensitively and skilfully in discussions with pupils. During the inspection learning walks and observations,

pupils spoke with pride of their work. Pupils evaluate their personal behaviour in light of Gospel values.

Individual support is provided for those pupils with the greatest educational needs. On-going assessment aides classroom teachers and teaching assistants in measuring each pupil's progress and planning next steps. Regular lesson observations, book scrutinises by the Religious Education Coordinator assist them in planning inset training. The sharing of good practice among classroom practitioners supports all teachers in providing creative and engaging lessons. In the lessons observed, there was an energy for learning as the pupils went about their activities. The pupils of St Joseph's work well independently and in groups. Teaching assistants skilfully question pupils to think more deeply to find connections between their written work and daily life.

Continual professional development ensures that teachers and teaching assistants have good subject knowledge. The Headteacher holds the CCRS and works diligently with her team to provide high quality inset for Religious Education. The 'The Way, the Truth and the Life' programme is delivered to a very high standard and pupils' work and participation reflect their enthusiasm for the subject. One Year 6 pupil remarked "In Religious Education we always learn but the best thing is we do it." There is good and imaginative use of resources to enhance learning. In Year 2, pupils created lion masks that enlivened the lesson on Daniel, the Reception class's use of a faith rope and fingerprint balloons helped the pupils remember key teachings of the lesson. Pupils connected the 'Prayer Tent' experience with Religious Education and leading a better Christian life.

Lesson observations revealed a range of activities that included extended writing, media production, artistic interpretation and drama. The use of reflective time and talking partners aided pupils in clarifying their ideas and deepening their understanding of each topic. Lesson planning included differentiation for the needs of all pupils.

Pupils' work is marked well and gives clear steps on how to improve. The school's marking policy is consistent in core subjects and Religious Education benefits from this strategy. Pupils' writing is of an exceptionally high standard. Extended writing in Year 6 asked the question of why one would be a missionary today and how you would invite someone into the Kingdom of God. The pupils' answers were deeply insightful and their invitations were presented creatively.

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

The extent to which the Religious Education curriculum promotes pupils' learning is outstanding. Age appropriate and relevant teaching meets all pupils' needs while contributing to their spiritual and moral development. A strength of the school's curriculum planning is the clear link between Religious Education, SMSC and Education on Human Love. This provides a common curriculum space that challenges stereotypes and encourages higher thinking. Observations and pupil interviews revealed the pupils' ability to speak confidently about their learning and why it is important to them. Visits to the local parish church lay the foundation of understanding and belonging to a community.

The curriculum is enriched by imaginative and well planned strategies that encourage the pupils to understand and celebrate differences in the wider community. Pupils visit the local synagogue to understand how the Jewish community worships as they study Judaism. The school draws on the local community to enrich lessons. A Russian guest speaker provided an insight into the differences between Christian denominations while a parent led an assembly on Diwali explaining the religious meaning of the festival. The curriculum is customised to meet the needs of all pupils, including personalised programmes for those who need them. The content of the lessons observed was age appropriate and work was differentiated enabling all pupils to access the curriculum. 10% of the teaching time is dedicated to Religious Education, which fulfils the requirements of the Bishops of England and Wales.

Religious Education underpins learning at St Joseph's by forming pupils who are religiously literate, capable of expressing their own faith and open to the spiritual beliefs of others.

The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school

The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school is outstanding.

Whole school assemblies celebrate the liturgical year with themes that are linked to the moral development of the pupils. Staff and pupils pray together and there are both formal and informal prayer opportunities. Each year group plans and prepares their class assembly assisting their moral education through drama. The school benefits from the dedicated leadership and work of the parish priest who frequently leads prayer with staff and pupils.

Senior leaders, governors and staff review, evaluate and plan improvements to the school's provision for collective worship. The themes chosen are consistent with the Catholic ethos of the school and are responsive to the religious diversity among the pupils. Those of other faiths are encouraged to share and explain their beliefs and why they celebrate their festivals. Collective worship is well supported

by the parents and carers. They are invited to Masses and special celebrations throughout the school year.

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