

Report of the Denominational (Section 48) Inspection of
Inspection was carried out under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005.

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

DfE No: 935/3310

URN: 124763

For Catholic Diocese of East Anglia



Chair of Governors: Mr Matthew Spiller

Executive Headteacher: Mrs Maria Kemble

Head of School: Mrs Anne-Marie Price

Denominational Inspector:

Mrs Jan Southgate

Date of Inspection: 23rd June 2017

Date and grade of previous inspection: 9th July 2013. Grade 3

DESCRIPTION OF THE SCHOOL

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School is a small primary school which has a reception class and four mixed year group classes, one of which has pupils from key stage 1 and key stage 2 (Year 2 and Year 3 pupils). Pupils are admitted to the school from 4 to 11 years. There are currently 135 pupils on roll of which 42% pupils are Catholic, 15% are of other Christian faiths and 3% are of other world faiths. The school serves Our Lady & St John the Evangelist Church Parish but includes pupils from within and around the town. Of the 8 members of staff, 50% are Catholic. The school receives pupils from a range of social backgrounds, and in recent years there has been an increase of pupils with EAL (English as an additional language) which is now 19%, in line with the national average.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL AS A CATHOLIC SCHOOL.

Grade: 2

St Joseph's School is a good school because the strong Catholic values permeate the school's daily life. The partnership of St. Edmund's and St. Joseph's Catholic Primary Schools is successful because each member is valued and respected for who they are. This qualifies living out the Mission Statement "We aim to encourage and support the personal growth of each individual through learning together in God's love". The dedicated, hard-working and committed leadership of the executive headteacher and the head of school has been instrumental and effective in providing a strong spiritual purpose throughout the school. This has also had a direct impact on raising standards in attainment and progress for all pupils through improving opportunities for pupils in relation to their personal development, faith commitment, and enjoyment and achievement in their work. There has been a concerted effort to forge and develop further links between home, school, parish and the wider community. A number of governors and parents mentioned how well the school has moved forward due to the head of school having "a positive, cheery attitude and manner that inspires us and is infectious to us all, including our children". Relationships within the school are good and reflect the caring Christian love and concern for all. One pupil explained that "we are very kind to each other, because, if someone says something unkind to you, it usually means that they are sad, and need us to help them". The spiritual and moral development for all pupils is intrinsic throughout the school.

The school's capacity to continue to improve is extremely good as the members of the leadership team, including governors, work collaboratively, and their self-review of success and further actions for improvement is realistic and challenging. Links with other cluster primary schools and local schools have provided pupils with the opportunity of working together prior to transition to Secondary school. During the inspection a number of Year 6 children talked excitedly about their PGL trip to France the following week with Year 6 pupils from two other Catholic schools.

What the school needs to do to improve further?

- Ensure that the marking of pupils' work in all year groups provides regular opportunities for pupils to self-evaluate their learning and to consider further challenges related to their next steps of progress.
- Continue to assess pupils' outcomes in all year groups in Religious Education (RE) using the school's current assessment grid, as well as working alongside diocesan RE leaders in developing a new diocese assessment tool.
- Offer opportunities for pupils to plan, organise and deliver presentations within collective worship and prayer led activities, and to encourage other pupils to evaluate these presentations.

PUPILS. How good are outcomes for pupils, taking account of variations between different groups. Grade 2

The extent to which pupils are involved in and benefit from the Catholic life of the school is good. Pupils live out the mission statement and this is evidenced in their conversations, behaviour and in their enthusiasm to take on responsibilities to involve all other pupils in fund-raising and decision making within the school. The school's council and house captains take an active role in the school organising events and helping to show care and respect to others. The weekly collection of team points for good behaviour and work is collated and the results enthusiastically received. Pupils are good role models for each other, and in the pupils' meeting with the inspector, they spoke highly of their school and stated that "we feel safe and happy because we know that we can always talk to a teacher or any adult in the school and they will listen to us and help us".

Pupils understand why and show reverence when coming into the hall for collective worship and celebration assemblies and they participate well including singing joyfully. They celebrate many of the feast days and the chaplain, (the parish priest), visits the school for Masses and, on occasions likes to teach the pupils about the bible and faith. Some of the older pupils mentioned that they are looking forward to being trained by the deacon to become altar servers. The house captains participate regularly in collective worship, and this is an aspect which could be further developed with opportunities for other pupils to plan and lead assemblies and collective worship. A number of displays around the school and in classes some linked to the curriculum theme, show how pupils value enrichment activities which support their learning. Traditional prayers and personal prayers are shared daily within collective worship or in class, and in some classes there are intention prayers so pupils pray for people affected by current events and tragedies.

Pupils respond well to their religious education lessons and are on task. Where appropriate, pupils are supported by an adult, so they successfully achieve and improve their understanding. Pupils enjoy their lessons and achieve well because their lessons are interesting so the majority of pupils are on task. During class observations, teaching styles varied depending on the learning objective for the lesson, and pupils responded appropriately to tasks set. The head of school recently established links with a local Church of England school, whereby the pupils had the opportunity to write to each other about Reconciliation. The children wrote some beautifully scripted letters of their experiences, thoughts and feelings. Two pupils mentioned that "we felt very proud being able to describe how we feel when we have been to reconciliation, and know that God forgives us all". The data for attainment and progress for pupils in all year groups over the last two years indicates that there is an increase of pupils making at least expected progress, and attainment of more able pupils has increased. Predictions for the end of this year are in line with this achievement and attainment, and is closely monitored by the head of school.

LEADERS AND MANAGERS. How effective are leaders and managers in developing the Catholic life of the school? Grade 2

The executive headteacher and head of school, who is also the Religious Education (RE) leader, together with governors, are deeply committed to promoting the Catholic Life of the school. They demonstrate a firm commitment to the Church's Mission in education with spiritual and moral development a priority. They communicate a clear vision for the Catholic ethos which inspires all in the school community. Valuable links have been further established over the last two years with home, parish and the wider community. Successful systems to support school improvement are firmly in place to continue to move the school

forward. This commitment has made a positive and direct impact on the Catholic life of the school and on standards of achievement and attainment for all pupils.

Governors fulfil their statutory and canonical responsibilities and visit the school regularly, taking an active part in monitoring and evaluating the Catholic life of the school. Parents view the school very positively and spoke highly of not only the “family feel” of the school, but also of the increased standards of achievement for the pupils. “The homework given to the children supports their learning in school” Parents unanimously stated that their children “feel very safe and are well cared for” in school.

Provision for pupils’ education for personal relationships through the developmental programme of “a Journey in Love” approved by the diocese, supports pupils in making choices and is linked to Catholic values. A number of the older pupils spoke about how “these lessons help prepare us to become responsible and loving adults”.

The head of school as an RE leader meets regularly with the staff to support them with the teaching of RE and she attends diocesan meetings and RE leader’s days.

The head of school, works extremely hard to ensure that this subject has parity with other core subjects and the budget qualifies this. She provides effective support and guidance for staff, especially for those with a non- Catholic background and this support has had a direct impact on the quality of planning and delivery of RE lessons. Whilst pupils work is assessed for progress and attainment in each year group, and assessments are made through dialogue as well as formatively in written work, teachers now need to offer within the marking of pupil’s written work, extension questions for pupils to consider and respond to, thus challenging the more able pupils and providing more opportunities for pupils to self-evaluate their work.

PROVISION. How effective is the provision for Catholic education: Grade 2

Collective worship, Mass and opportunities for shared prayer are central to the life of the school. Pupils’ liturgical formation is well planned to create experience of Catholic traditional prayer, worship and celebrations, and these are evaluated by the governors and senior leaders. The school has a prayer programme where the children are taught the prayers of the Mass so they can fully participate and understand the relevance of the prayers. The parish priest makes a good contribution to the sacramental life of the school, and reconciliation forms an important part of the liturgical calendar and worship as well as on a day to day level.

The quality of religious education lessons is good overall and teachers plan well with clear learning objectives made explicit to the pupils. The teaching is informed by the long term and short term planning and these are monitored by the senior Leaders and governors. Teaching styles vary depending on the type of learning objective and the curriculum theme, with some lessons more teacher-led, directing pupils in their learning activity to arrive at an interpretation and understanding of the characteristics of the religious enquiry. Others involved some teacher-led activities interspersed with peer discussion and feedback from groups of pupils. Differentiated tasks were evidenced in some classes for pupils to choose tasks which they felt appropriate, whilst in other classes, differentiation was by outcome. Curriculum themes are evident in classrooms and in corridors with colourful displays and reflections.

The school’s RE curriculum meets the requirements of the Bishops’ Conference, and 10% of curriculum time is given to religious education, sometimes taught discreetly, and at other times taught cross-curricular involving art, history or geography, or for relationships and sex education (RSE). Other faiths are taught throughout the year, and these opportunities are met enthusiastically by the pupils who enjoy finding out about artefacts, places of worship

and other styles of prayer in relation to the particular faith. The quality of the curriculum impacts well on the spiritual, moral and social development for all pupils. The quality and quantity of work within pupils' workbooks throughout the school along with verbal activities evidences good use and understanding of religious vocabulary.

The inspector wishes to thank the executive headteacher, head of school, governors, staff, children and parents for their very warm welcome and for contributing to her most enjoyable, informative and interesting visit.



EAST ANGLIA DIOCESAN SCHOOLS' SERVICE

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Letter to pupils explaining the findings from the Diocesan Inspection

27th June 2017

Dear Pupils

Diocesan Inspection of St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Thank you very much for making me so welcome to your school on Friday 23rd June, and thank you to all the pupils who met with me to tell me about your school and how you worship and work together. I was very interested to see you all participate and enjoy your celebration assembly, and I enjoyed your gentle and prayerful singing and signing. I was also interested to see you enjoying your RE lessons.

Here are some of the things I especially liked:

- The senior leaders and governors, together with your teachers ensure that you all have the opportunity to grow in faith and wisdom within the strong Catholic ethos of your school.
- The way you respond to challenges within your RE lessons, work hard and enjoy learning.
- You are very caring and considerate with each other, you listen to each other, and your behaviour is excellent, especially coming into and during the celebration assembly.
- The school provides good opportunities for you to develop spiritually, morally and socially as well as academically.

I have asked your teachers to consider when marking your work, to offer challenging thoughts and ideas for you to respond to, which are linked to your next steps of progress, and give you opportunity to consider how well you have understood your work. They check how well you are learning throughout the year, and they will continue to do this using and matching some new statements for your learning, which other schools will be using too. And they will encourage some of you to help plan, organise and lead collective worship and prayer, both in class and with the whole school.

Thank you again for your wonderfully friendly welcome and help. I wish you all continuing success in all that you do.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Jan Southgate
Diocesan Inspector