



Archdiocese of Birmingham

Section 48 Inspection Report

ST JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Headley Way, Headington, Oxford, OX3 7SX

Inspection dates:

25th -26th June 2019

Lead Inspector:

Denis Cody

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS:

Good

Catholic Life:

Outstanding

Religious Education:

Good

Collective Worship:

Good

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection:

Outstanding

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR PARENTS AND PUPILS

This is a good Catholic school because:

- It has a vibrant Catholic ethos and identity, to which leaders, staff and pupils are committed and which is valued by all.
- Teaching in Religious Education is good so that pupils are interested in and enjoy their learning.
- Focused and purposeful Collective Worship is a central part of school life and pupils take part enthusiastically and reverently.
- School leaders and governors are committed to the Catholic mission of the school and are proactive in driving improvement.

It is not yet outstanding because:

- The formal monitoring and evaluation schedule for Religious Education and Collective Worship needs to be incorporated into the school self-evaluation programme, in order to better inform rigorous improvement planning and show impact over a sustained period of time.
- The quality of teaching is not consistently high throughout the school.
- Pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to plan and lead Collective Worship.

FULL REPORT**What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Ensure the monitoring schedule introduced this year becomes a pivotal part of the self-evaluation process, so that it explicitly leads to well-targeted improvement planning and action, resulting in outstanding outcomes for pupils in Religious Education and Collective Worship.
- Ensure there is ongoing, consistently high, bespoke support of staff who are new to or inexperienced to teaching Religious Education.
- Provide more opportunities for pupils of all ages to initiate, plan and lead Collective Worship.

THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

The quality of the Catholic Life of the school.	Outstanding
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school.	Outstanding
The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school.	Outstanding
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision of the Catholic Life of the school.	Outstanding

The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school.**The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school.**

- Pupils recognise, value and engage with the Catholic Life of the school. They can discuss what it means to be part of a Catholic school and how it impacts on their relationships, attitudes and behaviour.
- School leaders value each person as made in the image and likeness of Christ. This is reflected in the school's commitment to inclusion, in the pastoral support provided for pupils and their families (especially the most vulnerable) and in the sense of community within the school.
- Staff within the school community are valued and pastoral support is also available for them. Their needs are addressed by a staff wellbeing committee.
- Pupils are interested in learning about other faiths and cultures. Pupils and their parents are provided with opportunities to discuss and celebrate their own traditions and beliefs. Pupils of all faiths are articulate and confident in expressing their religious beliefs and views. One pupil said, "It is a spiritual school, we respect other cultures and beliefs, we accept everyone here."
- The school mission statement, based on a quotation from Pope Francis, 'Let us protect with love all that God has given us,' is displayed in classrooms and around the school. Pupils of all ages are familiar with it and refer to it when discussing how they behave, the care and respect they show one another, their responsibility to support the wider community and to protect the environment. One pupil commented, "It is important our school is based around this belief."
- All staff support the Catholic Life of the school and actively promote behaviour and attitudes that reflect gospel values and positive relationships. Staff and governor meetings begin with a prayer and pilgrimages have been organised for staff.
- Pupils readily and conscientiously assume many leadership roles and responsibilities. Through membership of the liturgy group, social justice group, school and eco councils,

as well as anti-bullying ambassadors and playground friends, they promote and live out Catholic Life.

- A Catholic identity is explicit in the physical environment through displays, posters and banners, prayer focus areas in classrooms and an outdoor prayer area. In every class, examples of its experience of Catholic Life are recorded and celebrated in learning journals.
- Spiritual and moral development is based on Catholic teaching and delivered through the Catholic Schools' Pupil Profile (CSPP). The virtues promoted in the CSPP are introduced in assemblies, reinforced in lessons and prayer services and displayed and explained in public areas. Their impact is evident in the positive way pupils relate to others in their everyday lives.
- Catholic Life is supported throughout the curriculum. For example, during the annual 'Spirituality Week', pupils in each class are able to explore their relationship with God in a creative, cross-curricular fashion before delivering a presentation to the school.
- Appropriate to their age, the pupils have a good understanding of vocation as a calling from God and how, as followers of Jesus, it is their duty to help and support others. As one pupil explained, "...to help someone's life go the right way and make the world a better place." This understanding of vocation underpins the school's charitable fundraising.
- There is a particular school focus on Catholic social teaching based on the *Caritas in Action* scheme. This compliments the pupils' understanding of vocation and is evidenced by their strong commitment to social justice and the common good. Older pupils volunteer for membership of the social justice group led by the headteacher. They discuss ways to help the community beyond their school, for example by raising money for local and international charities. The school also has close links with a school in Malawi, which staff have visited, enabling communication and greater understanding between pupils.
- Feedback from parent questionnaires shows their great satisfaction with the Catholic Life of the school and its positive impact on their children. These views were repeated in our interviews with parents, who praised the sense of community in the school and the way their children are cared for and taught to care for each other. One parent wrote, "The school gives every child the strong sense that they are unique, and uniquely loved by God".
- Pupils are able to contribute to the monitoring and evaluation of Catholic Life through pupil questionnaires and interviews.
- Pupils respond positively to relationships and sex education, which is based on the All That I Am programme and delivered to all pupils at an age appropriate level, reflecting Catholic teachings and principles.

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision of the Catholic Life of the school.

- The governing body, headteacher and senior leaders are all strongly committed to the Church's mission in education and to maintaining and developing the Catholic Life of St Joseph's School. In a year that has seen significant staff changes and an important leadership post unfilled, they have ensured that the provision and quality of Catholic Life and spiritual development have been maintained.
- Governors have taken part in diocesan training sessions and have carried out the Catholic Education Services governor skills audit. They have a clear understanding of their duties and responsibilities and how to carry them out.
- In response to a diocesan monitoring visit, school leaders established a schedule of monitoring and evaluation for Catholic Life. However, this now needs to be formalised so that it leads to well targeted improvement planning.

- The headteacher has collaborated with and supported other schools within the archdiocese and the local community, helping support the Church's wider mission in education.
- The governing body, including the parish priest, works closely with the headteacher and school leaders, offering challenge and support. Individual governors regularly visit the school, enabling them to carry out informal observations.
- Information regarding Catholic Life is part of termly headteacher reports and is discussed at every full governor body meeting. A Catholic Life sub-committee meets termly and reports to the governing body and the Catholic Life link governor liaises with school leaders, reviewing and evaluating Catholic Life. As a result, governors have an accurate understanding of the strengths and areas for development in all aspects of Catholic Life.
- Monitoring and evaluation of Catholic Life involves learning walks, reviews of prayer areas and Catholic Life journals and feedback from parents and governors. The outcomes of this evaluation inform future planning and actions by senior leaders. For example, following a review of the school environment, governors recommended the purchase of new, more striking crucifixes, and more visible signage outside the school to proclaim its Catholic identity. Similarly, the findings from learning walks have led to improvements in the quality of prayer areas.
- Governors displayed their commitment to Catholic Life, and awareness of the needs of the school, by producing a pamphlet for parents emphasising the importance of the sacrament of Confirmation.
- An annual Catholic Life action plan is produced and progress towards achieving its targets is reviewed termly.
- Every two years the school holds a 'Stakeholders' Day' to review and discuss aspects of Catholic Life. The most recent day discussed Catholic social justice. Pupils, parents, governors and staff took part in mixed groupings, each reporting back at the end of the day. Parents from different communities and parishes worked together, emphasising their partnership with the school. Their feedback was analysed by governors and fed into their improvement planning. The Catholic Life committee have held similar discussion days focusing on Catholic Life and the mission statement.
- Catholic Life features in staff training and induction procedures for all new and inexperienced staff. School leaders also value the headteacher's own spiritual development, allowing her to attend national headteachers' retreats.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The quality of Religious Education.	Good
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education.	Good
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education.	Good
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education.	Good

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education. The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education.

- Most pupils of all abilities make sustained progress in each key stage. Over time, attainment in Religious Education has been at least good and for some pupils it has been outstanding.

- Behaviour in Religious Education lessons is very good. Most pupils are interested and enjoy their learning. They concentrate well and are eager to participate and answer questions.
- Pupils enjoy the creative and cross-curricular approach applied to teaching and learning in Religious Education.
- Pupils are able to work individually, with partners and in groups, carrying out research, sharing ideas and answering questions. However, lessons do not always include significant challenge for more able pupils.
- There has been a school focus on developing higher order thinking skills in Religious Education. For example, when marking written work, teachers increasingly include questions focusing on how we learn from religion and reflect on meaning. As a result, pupils demonstrate an increasing degree of religious literacy as they move through the school. This is evident in their ability to discuss and question religious beliefs and ideas and how they influence their lives. Talking about Religious Education in school, one pupil explained, "In younger years you listen to stories, as you get older you get a deeper understanding."
- In general, most pupils' work in Religious Education is of a high standard, including activities that are matched to different pupils' abilities and extended writing. Most of their work shows progression during and between years. However, the level of progress is not consistent throughout the school.
- Based on the diocesan scheme, Learning and Growing as the People of God, lessons are well-planned and linked to prior learning. Lesson plans highlight how pupils learn about religion and also how they learn from religion (AT1 & 2). Some planning includes links to prayer and the CSPP. At the end of each unit of work, pupils use unit markers to review and reflect on their learning.
- Teachers generally have very good subject knowledge, which enhances their teaching and enables them to better engage pupils' interest and extend their learning. Where this is not the case learning is less effective.
- Teaching assistants are effectively deployed to support the learning of pupils with additional needs, and in some cases clearly form a very successful working partnership with the teacher, to the benefit of all the pupils in the class.
- Teachers use careful questioning and feedback during lessons to assess pupils' understanding, to move their learning forward and to encourage them to think about their own learning.
- Assessment of pupils' work throughout the year is carried out in line with diocesan recommendations. The assessment data for each class, and significant groups of pupils within the class, is analysed by the headteacher and subject leader and discussed with staff. It is used to inform future planning, for example, leading to a renewed focus on boys' performance.
- Teachers work together, with the subject leader, to moderate samples of pupils' work. This ensures their assessment judgements are accurate and consistent.

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education.

- Governors and school leaders promote Religious Education in the school by ensuring it is treated as a core subject, resourced accordingly and meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference about the amount of time spent teaching.
- The importance attached to Religious Education is also indicated by the care given by school leaders to the recruitment of key new staff. A new deputy has been appointed for next year and a new teacher, who will share the role of Religious Education subject leader.

- Governors are involved in the monitoring of Religious Education. The link governor liaises with the subject leader and they have carried out learning walks together and reported back to governors. The headteacher's termly report to governors also contains information on standards in Religious Education. As a result, they are well informed about teaching and learning in the subject.
- The Religious Education scheme of work is enhanced by a series of initiatives, such as the link with a school in Malawi, which helps pupils learn about life in an African community. Similarly, the focus on protecting the environment, implicit in the school's mission statement, is reflected in its forest school status.
- The work to develop thinking skills in Religious Education has been supported by introduction of philosophy into the wider curriculum.
- Staff meet in mixed year teams to focus on addressing and evaluating priorities from the school improvement plan. Priority areas associated with Catholic Life and Religious Education are also included as part of teachers' appraisal. In this way, Catholic Life is maintained as a priority for the whole school.
- Parents are informed termly about the focus for their children's learning in Religious Education and how they can be supported at home.
- Along with the headteacher, the subject leader provides good leadership of Religious Education. She attends cluster group meetings and any new ideas and initiatives are discussed and explained at staff meetings. She is currently trialling the new assessment standards to be introduced next term.
- To develop new and inexperienced teachers' knowledge of Religious Education and their confidence in teaching, they have opportunities to see experienced colleagues teach. Teachers also attend diocesan training courses and the parish priest gives supportive talks on such topics as the Old Testament and the sacraments.
- The quality of teaching and learning is monitored through lesson observations, book trawls and monitoring of teachers' planning. Book trawls have also been used to monitor the effective use of questions in marking. Pupils' response to their experience of Religious Education is monitored through interviews.
- In the light of considerable staff turnover this year and an unfilled senior leadership post, school leaders identified the need to prioritise consistency in Religious Education. Support concentrated on new and inexperienced staff. Year group teams were set up, which partnered inexperienced teachers alongside more experienced colleagues. This support will need to be continued next year.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

The quality of Collective Worship.	Good
How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship.	Good
The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school.	Outstanding
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship.	Good

How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship. The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school.

- Pupils play an active role in Collective Worship, engaging positively and respectfully as they sing, pray and reflect in assemblies and prayer services.
- The opportunities for pupil participation through music, singing and drama enhance the quality of Collective Worship.

- The celebration of Mass is an essential aspect of the prayer life of the school. Each term begins and ends with a Mass held in school and pupils from Years 4, 5 and 6 take turns to attend weekly Mass weekly in the nearby parish church.
- Pupils participate reverently and prayerfully during Masses, acting as altar servers, delivering the readings and reading their own introduction and bidding prayers.
- The headteacher leads a Gospel assembly each week and all teachers lead assemblies in their classes and key stages. These assemblies and prayer services introduce and reinforce aspects of the Religious Education curriculum, the liturgical year and the virtues promoted in the CSPP, so they directly support both the pupils' religious knowledge and understanding, and their spiritual and moral development.
- Pupils from Years 5 and 6 volunteer to be involved in the liturgy group. Through this group they help prepare and deliver Collective Worship. They are able to write prayer and Mass introductions, as well as choosing music and hymns.
- Teachers have encouraged pupil involvement in planning Collective Worship by providing them with a pupil-friendly planner. As a result, some pupils have begun to develop their skills in planning and leading worship. These opportunities should now be extended to pupils of all ages.
- Prayer and worship are built into the daily life of the school and make an important contribution to pupils' spiritual development. Pupils have a good knowledge of traditional prayers and are also comfortable composing their own prayers.
- Additional opportunities for prayer experiences are included in the wider curriculum, for example, through school 'pilgrimages.' As part of a Lenten pilgrimage trail, classes in each key stage set up prayer stations around the school, each with a different theme. During Lent all classes visited the stations, pausing for prayer, reflection and meditation. The staff also completed the pilgrimage during a staff meeting.
- Annual retreats are arranged to enhance the spiritual development and experience of prayer for pupils in Years 5 and 6.
- Pupils of all faiths participate together in worship and liturgy, demonstrating their respect for the Catholic nature of the school. Worship reflects the diversity of Catholic tradition within the school and also provides opportunities for pupils of other faiths to share their religious experiences and celebrations. In this way, it contributes to the growing maturity of pupils, as young people who respect and understand one another.

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship.

- School leaders understand the importance of liturgy and worship within the pupils' experience of Catholic Life and Religious Education. The importance they place on prayer is made clear in the school prospectus.
- Collective worship is promoted on the Catholic Life page of the school website, which lists the liturgical year celebrations planned for each term, emphasising the appropriate liturgical colours.
- School leaders promote prayer and worship at home by distributing prayer bags to pupils to share with their families.
- The importance of Collective Worship is indicated at the start of each week by a gospel assembly led by the headteacher, which contains a mission or message for the week.
- Governors regularly attend school Masses, assemblies and celebrations. This helps them to develop a good understanding of the school's Collective Worship and the pupils' response to it. They also receive and discuss reports about Collective Worship in the termly headteacher's report.
- Monitoring and evaluation of the quality and impact of Collective Worship is carried out with the involvement of the link governor and subject leader, through learning walks,

monitoring of assemblies and prayer services and feedback from pupils, staff and parents. However, these are not yet collated into a planned and systematic programme.

SCHOOL DETAILS

Unique reference number	123216
Local authority	Oxfordshire
<i>This inspection was carried out under canon 806 of Canon Law and under Section 48 of the 2005 Education Act.</i>	
Of	Primary
School category	Voluntary Aided
Age range	4-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on roll	417
Appropriate authority	The Governing Body
Chair	Cllr Mary Clarkson
Headteacher	Mrs Sue Tomkys
Telephone number	01865 763357
Website address	www.st-josephs-pri.oxon.sch.uk
Email address	office.3838@st-josephs-pri.oxon.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	June 2014

INFORMATION ABOUT THIS SCHOOL

- St Joseph's is a larger than average, two form entry, Catholic primary school. It is situated in Headington, Oxfordshire, and serves three local parishes, St Anthony of Padua, Corpus Christi and Greyfriars.
- Currently almost 73% of pupils are baptised Catholics.
- The percentage of disadvantaged pupils is below the national average.
- The percentage of pupils with special educational needs or disability is below the national average, while those in possession of an Education Health and Care Plan is broadly in line with the national average.
- The percentage of pupils from minority ethnic origins is significantly above the national average.
- The percentage of pupils with English as an additional language is significantly above the national average.
- Attainment on entry is broadly in line with national expectations.
- Between 2013 and 2015 the school gradually increased its pupil intake and from 2015 it has been a two-form entry school throughout.
- There has been a significant turnover of staff this year. Recruitment of Catholic teachers has proved challenging and there has been no deputy head in post since September.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION

- The inspection was carried out by two Diocesan Inspectors - Denis Cody and Krystyna Bickley.
- The focus of the inspection was on the impact, quality and leadership of the school's provision of Catholic Life, Religious Education and Collective Worship.
- The inspectors observed teaching across twelve Religious Education lessons to evaluate the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. All of these lesson observations were conducted jointly with senior leaders.
- The inspectors completed a work scrutiny and held discussions with pupils to evaluate their understanding of Catholic Life, the impact of Religious Education teaching on their learning over time and their experience of Collective Worship.
- Meetings were held with the chair of governors, the Catholic Life link governor, the headteacher, the Religious Education subject leader, assistant headteacher and parish priest. The inspectors also spoke with several parents.
- The inspectors attended a school Mass and both class and key stage Collective Worship. They undertook a learning walk to look at aspects of learning and teaching in Religious Education, the presentation of the Catholic Life of the school and pupils' behaviour.
- The inspectors reviewed a range of documents including the school's self-evaluation, data about pupils' attainment and progress, Analyse School Performance (ASP) data, the school development plan, the Religious Education action plan, teachers' planning and class Catholic Life learning journals.