



# St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Armstrong Road, Benwell, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE15 6JB

School Unique Reference Number: **108508**

**Inspection dates:** 05 – 06 February 2020

**Lead inspector:** Dominic Curran

|                              |                      |             |          |
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| <b>Overall effectiveness</b> | Previous inspection: | Good        | 2        |
|                              | This inspection:     | <b>Good</b> | <b>2</b> |
| <b>Catholic Life:</b>        |                      | Outstanding | 1        |
| <b>Religious Education:</b>  |                      | Good        | 2        |
| <b>Collective Worship:</b>   |                      | Good        | 2        |

## SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR PARENTS AND PUPILS

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School is a good Catholic school because:

- It is a highly inclusive school which embraces the diversity of the local community. Pupils feel welcomed and cared for. They are very respectful of themselves and others.
- The quality of Catholic Life of the school is outstanding. Leaders are a visible presence within school, leading by example and ensuring that the mission of the school, based on the Gospel values of love, trust and respect, is lived out fully by all.
- The quality of Religious Education is good. Through creative lessons and increasingly accurate assessment, teachers ensure that those pupils who come into school with low starting points are making good progress.
- The quality of Collective Worship is good. Pupils respond enthusiastically to the various forms of Collective Worship on offer in school. There is a consistent approach to liturgy and the pupils are encouraged to take an active part in planning, preparing and leading such events.

## FULL REPORT

### INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

- St Joseph's is an average sized primary school situated in Benwell, an area of high social and economic disadvantage.
- It has a high proportion of pupils with English as an additional language and from minority ethnic groups.
- The proportion of pupils supported by pupil premium is well above the national average.
- The mobility of the pupils is higher than the national average.
- There are currently 46% of pupils baptised Catholic.

### WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL NEED TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- Improve the quality of Religious Education by:
  - embedding assessment across the school in line with diocesan guidelines to ensure that the pupils attain consistent outcomes over time.
- Improve the quality of Collective Worship by:
  - expanding the current liturgical experience of the pupils by the addition of creative experiences, such as dance and drama.

## CATHOLIC LIFE

### THE QUALITY OF THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

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- 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.
- How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school.

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#### **The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school is outstanding.**

- The mission statement is lived and celebrated by all members of the school community. It is a regular feature of school celebrations, where pupils are acknowledged for the part they play in 'Living, learning and loving together in Christ.'
- Pupils show a deep respect for themselves and each other and are polite, courteous and friendly to all. When asked how they all get on so well together, one pupil remarked, 'We all have the same God.'
- Pupil voice is a strong feature of the school. Pupils speak about the importance of forgiveness and unity as strong features of the school.
- There is a clear commitment to the most vulnerable members of the school community and those in the wider area. Pupils demonstrate this through their activities to support new pupils when they enter the school and through their charitable fundraising events.
- Pupils have a strong sense of justice which helps them understand their place in the world. They understand the influence they can have to make the world a better place.
- Pupils throughout the school demonstrate a very good understanding and importance of key celebrations throughout the liturgical year and understand that religious belief and spiritual values are important for many people.

#### **The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school is outstanding.**

- Given that the pupils have a wide range of ethnic backgrounds, languages and faith traditions, the school is a shining example of a strong community, working together, respecting, tolerating and celebrating difference amongst its members.
- The environment is a vibrant celebration of the Catholic character of the school with the mission statement clearly visible in all areas.
- The Catholic Life of the school is a high priority and is well resourced, creating the tangible feel of community which pervades the environment.
- All staff have high expectations and a shared vision with regards to the school's ethos and to the Church's mission in education. They are involved in living out the school's mission statement and are fully committed to provide every opportunity to enable all pupils to know that Christ is at the centre of everything they do.

- Parents comment on how approachable all members of staff are and how they are willing to support them whenever they can.
- High standards of behaviour are evident throughout the school and pupils are clearly very happy and feel loved in their environment.
- Staff also comment on how supported they feel and say they are very much part of a family.

**How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school is outstanding.**

- The headteacher is fully committed to the pupils in her care. She passionately demonstrates her desire that every pupil should have a 'can do' attitude so that they can overcome any barriers that they face in life.
- The governors are also fully committed to the mission of the school. The link governor for Religious Education was formerly the school chaplain and is still a highly visible and valued member of the team. They ensure that all aspects of Catholic Life are undertaken with care and consideration of the needs of the pupils.
- Leaders are committed to the development of all staff and high quality professional development opportunities are offered to all. As a result, leaders ensure all staff are fully involved in developing the Catholic Life of the school.
- The school supports diocesan policies and initiatives. Leaders actively promote the Bishop's vision for the diocese in their school.
- The school's mission statement is a living document which underpins all policies and procedures throughout the school.
- The school engages with parents and carers extremely well and this has a very positive impact on the pupils and their families. As such the parents have a good understanding of the school's mission and are fully supportive of it.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

### THE QUALITY OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

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

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

- Most pupils are engaged in lessons and are knowledgeable about how well they are doing.
- There is clear progression throughout the school and it is evident that pupils are developing their religious literacy and confidence in the subject.
- Pupils have a clear understanding of their targets for each unit of work. They know what they need to do to improve their work.
- Behaviour in lessons is good with most pupils enjoying their Religious Education lessons. Pupils of other faith traditions are confident in their ability to share their faith experiences with their peers and this has a positive impact on learning across the school.
- Given their varied starting points, pupils are making good progress in each key stage with attainment being comparable to diocesan averages.
- Those pupils identified as having a special educational need make good progress. The school is effective at meeting their needs by ensuring that work is closely matched to their ability. Very good support from skilled teaching assistants, who know the pupils well, ensures that their attainment and progress are similar to that of other pupils.
- Excellent relationships exist in the school between pupils and staff.

#### **The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education is good.**

- Teachers show increased confidence in the school's assessment procedures. Staff have worked closely with partner schools to improve the accuracy of assessed outcomes for pupils. The school acknowledges the need to further embed the systems for assessment and tracking that are currently in place in order to ensure that consistency is maintained throughout the school.
- The teachers provide a range of creative activities, adapting their planning to suit the needs and interests of the pupils, thereby increasing their enthusiasm and engagement in lessons.
- Teachers are confident in their subject knowledge and employ a range of teaching strategies to ensure pupils work collaboratively. As a result, pupils are able to articulate their learning with confidence.
- Religious Education is very well resourced, support staff are well utilised and effectively support pupils with a range of needs to work towards the best outcomes for all.

- Teachers mark work regularly. The quality of feedback given is generally positive and supportive giving the pupils clear targets to further improve their work.

**How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education is good.**

- Leaders and managers at all levels are committed to striving for the best outcomes for pupils and are tireless in their efforts to develop the subject further.
- There are robust monitoring and evaluation procedures in place for Religious Education, resulting in more consistent outcomes for pupils across the school and an increasingly accurate assessment system.
- All staff and governors have been involved in the evaluation of Religious Education to ensure there is a shared understanding of the strengths and areas for development in the subject.
- Governors make a significant contribution to school life, giving their time generously and providing both support and challenge where necessary.
- The Religious Education coordinator manages the subject very well and is very supportive in developing staff, particularly those new to Catholic Education. The need for succession planning is acknowledged by the school and, as such, leadership development opportunities will need to be enhanced.
- New initiatives are introduced well and the subject is given a high priority for resourcing and professional development
- Leaders ensure that the Religious Education curriculum meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference and contributes effectively to the pupils' spiritual and moral development.
- Diocesan guidelines for sacramental preparation are followed enthusiastically, fully supported by knowledgeable staff and governors.

## COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

### THE QUALITY OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

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- How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship.
- The quality of provision for Collective Worship.
- How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship.

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#### **How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship is outstanding.**

- The experience of living and working in such a diverse community, where all are celebrated and affirmed, has a profound effect upon the pupils. They show a deep sense of respect for their peers, despite the differences in ability, ethnicity or faith background. The school is an exemplary community of tolerance and respect and this is reflected in the way in which pupils prepare and participate in liturgy.
- Collective Worship is well resourced and, as a result, the varied activities engage and enthuse pupils with the quality of singing and responses a real strength throughout the school.
- Pupils are able to use a variety of approaches to prayer and worship and show a reverence and respect for religious artefacts. They confidently prepare, lead and take part in acts of Collective Worship and, as a result, they are able to engage and inspire their peers.
- Pupils act with reverence and respect during Collective Worship, whether this be whole school, key stage or class based. They respond enthusiastically and join in with prayer.
- The majority of parents agree that the quality of Collective Worship is of a high standard commenting that, 'Worship is open to all, regardless of faith or religious denomination. There is a lovely emphasis on spirituality in addition to religious practice.'

#### **The quality of provision for Collective Worship is good.**

- Collective Worship is central to the life of the school. There is a clear thread of liturgical celebrations running throughout the school. As a result, liturgy has a clear purpose and message which can then be adapted appropriately to the age, ability and needs of the pupils.
- Staff are skilled practitioners in Collective Worship and are therefore confident in guiding pupils in their own liturgical preparation, leading to increased confidence as they progress through the school. The experiences of the pupils would be greatly enhanced through an extended use of dance and drama within liturgy.
- There is a good understanding of the Church's liturgical year leading to a range of experiences for pupils through the different feasts and seasons.

- Parental comments confirm that they highly value the opportunity to share liturgical experiences with their children and are always keen to attend when they can.
- The school makes every effort to attend church when possible.

**How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship is good.**

- Leaders and governors place a high priority on evaluating the quality of Collective Worship in school, with the link Governor for Religious Education continuing to be pivotal in the delivery of high quality experiences for the pupils.
- Robust and rigorous monitoring systems are in place which involve governors, staff and pupils, contributing to the development of Collective Worship.
- Leaders are highly confident in their delivery of Collective Worship and, as a result of their example, staff are confident in their own practice in offering a range of appropriate experiences in school.
- Collective Worship is well resourced resulting in accessible experiences for the pupils using a range of contemporary contexts. The whole school environment, including outdoors, is utilised to provide valuable prayer spaces for the pupils.
- Leaders regularly review Collective Worship throughout the school. They seek the views of pupils and parents through questionnaires. Staff are involved in evaluating their own practice through professional development meetings. Responses from all stakeholders are very positive and affirming of their experiences within the school environment.



## SUMMARY OF INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

**HOW EFFECTIVE THE SCHOOL IS IN PROVIDING CATHOLIC EDUCATION:****2****CATHOLIC LIFE:****1**

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

1

The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school.

1

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

1

**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION:****2**

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education.

2

The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education.

2

How well leaders and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education.

2

**COLLECTIVE WORSHIP:****2**

How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship.

1

The quality of provision for Collective Worship.

2

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

2

## SCHOOL DETAILS

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| <b>School name</b>   | St Joseph's Catholic Primary School |
| <b>Unique reference number</b>   | 108508                              |
| <b>Local authority</b>   | Newcastle                           |
| This Inspection Report is produced for the Rt Reverend Robert Byrne CO the Bishop of Hexham and Newcastle under canon 806 of Canon Law. For voluntary aided schools it also fulfils the responsibility the governing body has to inspect the school under s48 of the Education Act 2005. |                                     |
| <b>Chair of governors</b>  | Mr Michael Keller                   |
| <b>Headteacher</b>   | Miss Elaine Matthews                |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b>  | March 2015                          |
| <b>Telephone number</b>  | 0191 2739063                        |
| <b>Email address</b>   | Office @stjosephsrcprimary.co.uk    |