

DIOCESE OF LEEDS DBI



## SECTION 48 INSPECTION REPORT

THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL  
AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

ST. JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL  
MANOR SQUARE, OTLEY, LEEDS LS21 3AP

School URN

108014

Chair of Governors

Mrs. Diane Gaskin

Headteacher

Mrs. Jean Smith

RE Subject Leader

Mrs. Jean Smith

Date of Inspection

31<sup>st</sup> March – 1<sup>st</sup> April

Section 48 Inspector

David Gott

## INTRODUCTION

The Inspection of St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Otley was carried out under the requirements of the Education Act 2005, and in accordance with the Leeds Diocesan Framework and Schedule for Section 48 Inspections approved by the Bishop of Leeds.

---

### Description of the school

---

St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School Otley is a smaller than average, highly regarded, family friendly one form entry Voluntary Aided, school of the Diocese of Leeds. The school is situated in the centre of the town next to the Catholic Church of Our Lady and All Saints –the parish from which the majority of its pupils are drawn.

The school has an admission number of 30. Currently there are 195 pupils on roll, taught in seven single age group classes. The school has no nursery provision. Pupils join the Reception class from 13 different nursery settings. A comparatively high number of pupils join the school at times other than Reception. Currently 79% of pupils are baptised Catholic. The school estimates that around one third of these pupils attend religious services with their family's on a regular basis.

Pupils are drawn from a wide range of social and economic backgrounds. Most pupils are of white British heritage. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is well below national average. A higher than average proportion of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, although none have a formal statement of special educational need. Pupil attendance is above the national average.

The current headteacher was appointed in 2007 and was not in post at the time of the last Religious Education Inspection (section 48). The headteacher has continued to assume responsibility for Religious Education (RE) and Collective Worship (CW) – responsibilities which she has held continuously at the school prior to headship, as a class teacher and as deputy headteacher.

From a total teaching staff of 8 (full time equivalent) , 5 teachers are of the Catholic faith, 6 teach RE and 6 hold the Catholic Certificate of Religious Studies (CCRS) or equivalent qualification.

At the end of Year 6, the majority of the pupils transfer to St. Mary's Catholic High School, Menston. Strong links exist between the two schools. Very productive links are also maintained with the Otley based community of schools. Good home/school/parish links exist. The school has an active and supportive parents association. St. Joseph's has already achieved the nationally recognised educational standards of *Inclusion Chartermark*, *Stephen Lawrence*, *Healthy School* and *Activemark* awards.

The school is currently working towards: *Investors in Pupils*, *Eco School* and *Becta ICT* awards in the future.

## **OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL**

**The overall effectiveness of the provision for the Catholic life of the school, of curriculum RE, and the school's main strengths and areas for development.**

---

St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School provides a good quality of Catholic education with several outstanding features. The quality of the leadership and management in promoting the Catholic Life of the School and in raising achievement and supporting all pupils in RE is outstanding. The effectiveness of the teaching and learning in RE is outstanding.

The commitment of the RE Co-ordinator (headteacher), governors, clergy and staff to the Catholic faith ensures that the school mission statement, which aims "to provide an education which has Christ at its centre," is seen to be put into practice and lived out in the everyday life of this school.

The school has correctly identified areas for further development in the RE Action Plan around more fully implementing and regularly monitoring the new levels of attainment in RE across all key stages.

### **The effectiveness of any steps taken to promote improvement since the last inspection**

---

The school has addressed all the key issues raised in the last (s48) inspection report. The school has been particularly successful in embedding ICT into the RE curriculum through use of interactive whiteboards (IAW) and wireless laptop computers. An ongoing moderated portfolio of pupils RE work is being further developed to assist staff in the leveling of pupils RE work.

Leaders have drawn up a School Improvement Plan (SIP) which incorporates an appropriate action plan for improvements in RE.

### **The capacity to make further improvements**

---

After a period of unavoidable turbulence in staffing and governance, the school now has good capacity for making further improvements in the provision of RE. The school has an enthusiastic and committed headteacher (RE co-ordinator) and chair of governors. The school also has a dedicated and experienced RE Governor (Parish Priest) and a very enthusiastic team of teaching and support staff, all of whom are totally committed to the ongoing success of the school.

### **What steps need to be taken in order to further improve the provision of Catholic education?**

---

In line with the school's own RE Action Plan, the Governors and School Leadership team have already correctly identified the following aspects of RE it seeks to further improve:

- To maintain, build on and capture the existing good practice in RE by developing a school RE handbook to incorporate RE quality assurance support materials already developed by the school and by the Diocese.
- To further develop the setting and regular monitoring of "child friendly" and "age appropriate" RE targets, based around the new Levels of Attainment in RE, using support materials already developed both by the school and by the diocese, so that all pupils know what they have to do next in order to improve their standards in RE.
- To consider cooperative ways of making the current, very comprehensive school mission statement more accessible to pupils, by producing and permanently displaying it in "child friendly" and "age appropriate" language in each classroom/learning space, next to the weekly ethos statement.
- To consider allocating one of the numerous large display boards in the main school hall to displaying pupils work on the current RE topic, perhaps on a termly, key stage, rota basis, thus providing a focal point to support and further inform the whole school community about the work that the pupils are undertaking in RE.

## THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

### LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

#### How effective are Leadership and Management in developing the Catholic life of the school?

---

Leadership and management of the Catholic life of St. Joseph's school is outstanding. The school has a designated RE and collective worship co-ordinator in place. Similarly the school has an experienced governor with designated responsibility for RE. The school is compliant with appropriate, up to date, RE policy documentation. The school mission statement was last reviewed in January 2008. The governing body have established an appropriate and well functioning committee structure which monitors the Catholic life of the school very effectively, receiving regular reports from the headteacher and governor with responsibility for RE. Governors regularly attend the wide variety of services and seasonal liturgical events which the school provides. Governors always seek to appoint well qualified staff to the school who are supportive of the school's Catholic ethos.

Leaders at all levels have a strong sense of the educational mission of the church and the role of the school in expressing it and they provide very clear direction for the Catholic life of the school. The RE governor is a frequent visitor to the school, maintains regular contact with the headteacher, staff, pupils, parents, carers and parishioners and is consequently extremely well informed about the Catholic life of the school. All staff at the school actively endorse and promote the Christian vision that the school provides. Morale is high at the school. Staff, parents and pupils value and contribute to the wide variety of RE opportunities and experiences which are offered by the school, to assist them to reflect on their own individual faith journey. Parents comment very favourably that St. Joseph's is a very warm, welcoming and caring community where home, school, parish links are very strong. Parents and carers appreciate the RE support resources which the school sends home eg travelling cribs, Lenten promise bags and travelling rosary. The very positive impact of the parish priest is a significant contributory factor in sustaining the schools supportive community ethos. The inclusion of all pupils is central to the schools shared vision through its belief that all are created in the image of God. The school is effective in pursuing this goal and has gained the *Stephen Lawrence Award* and revalidation of the *Inclusion Chartermark*. Leaders communicate a strong sense of spiritual purpose with a focus on promoting high standards and the fullest personal development of the pupils. No pupils have been excluded in the last academic year. The school council is actively involved in leading discussions in class codes of conduct. The school celebrates positive behaviour through special award assemblies. Pupil behaviour is exemplary.

Productive school links have been established with a recently appointed parish youth worker who works with year 6 pupils to further aid their spiritual development and assist their smooth transition into high school. The school is committed to raising pupils sense of moral responsibility and awareness of the needs of the less fortunate within the local and wider community. The pupils are encouraged to become actively involved in charitable fundraising for a wide range of good causes. Over the last school year, the school raised over £1036 for such charities as Catholic Care (“Good Shepherd Fund”), CAFOD, and UNICEF. The school has supported schools in India and Peru. This year the school chose to support Leeds General Infirmary (Ward 48) following the dedicated care given to one of the school pupils who recovered from a serious illness.

The school is fortunate in having a number of Polish speaking staff, who have been helpful in communicating with families who have joined the school from Poland.

## **COLLECTIVE WORSHIP**

### **How good is the quality of Collective Worship?**

---

Overall the quality of collective worship (CW) at St. Joseph’s is good with outstanding aspects . The frequency and quality of the provision for prayer, CW and liturgical life of the school is outstanding. Celebration of the Eucharist and prayer are central to the life of the school and the whole school community. Class, key stage and whole school masses are celebrated throughout the liturgical year both in school and in the parish church. Parents and parishioners say how much they appreciate and welcome the opportunities offered by the school to join the pupils in their Acts of Worship, Sacramental preparations, and seasonal liturgical celebrations. They attend in very good numbers. Catholic children and their families who do not attend St. Joseph’s School are always included in the schools Sacramental preparation programme. Meetings for parents and carers are held in the school (outside the school day), organised jointly by the school and the parish catechists. Parents of the previous year group and the kitchen staff, provide a celebratory party for the pupils who receive the first sacraments.

Pupils prepare and lead acts of CW with confidence and are becoming skilled in the use of scripture, religious artifacts, singing hymns and other forms of prayer. Pupils behave with respect and act with reverence. They are keen to participate. Music is seen as making an important contribution towards effective CW. The school is fortunate in having a well qualified and very experienced music teacher who finds opportunities for pupils to enhance CW by becoming actively involved in the musical life of the school, wider parish and local community.

A KS1 CW on the theme of “Growing” began by quietly gathering the pupils to the music of Samuel Barber’s “Adagio for Strings” . Following discussions about how children grow and change, supported by pictures of the pupils when they were younger shown on the IWB, the teacher led the pupils in a scripture reading from Isaiah Chapter 5 . The children sang a hymn (“The Bulb”) which was accompanied by words and pictures on the IWB. The pupils then discussed ways in which they could grow spiritually during the season of Lent. The teacher then gave each child a “prayer leaf” to complete and hang on their class Lent tree. The CW ended with singing the hymn “Everything Grows”.

A KS2 CW, led by Y5 pupils, re-enacted the washing of the feet at the Last Supper, highlighting the fact that Jesus wants us to serve one another just as he served his apostles. The CW concluded with a hymn based upon the prayer of St. Theresa “Christ has no Body now but yours ....”.

A whole school CW, led by KS2 pupils, used role play to reflect on the wonders of God’s creation and how frustrating it can for us if we see something so wonderful that you can’t wait to tell someone else about it, but when we do try, sometimes people are too busy to take any notice of us. The CW re-enacted the visit of the women to the tomb on Easter morning and reflected on how we need to share the “good news” with other people. The CW concluded by lighting the Easter candle to the hymn “Walk in the Light”.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

### **ACHIEVEMENT AND STANDARDS IN RE**

#### **How well do pupils achieve in RE?**

---

Given their differing capabilities and starting points, the pupils at St. Joseph’s achieve good overall standards in RE in all key stages. School RE tracking data suggest that attainment in RE is broadly in line with attainment in other core curriculum areas. At the Foundation Key Stage (FKS) children join the Reception class from 13 different nursery settings. Dedicated and conscientious staff ensure that all children settle in well and make good progress in RE. The school feels that only a minority of pupils experience regular church attendance with their family. Virtually all pupils show good attitudes to their RE work. Few pupils under perform. Most, including those with learning difficulties make at least good progress in RE and some make very good progress. Teaching assistants have a particularly effective impact on helping these pupils to achieve well in RE. Pupils at St. Joseph’s are gaining RE knowledge, skills and understanding at a good rate across all key stages.

The majority of pupils are well able to express themselves orally and in doing so present clear evidence of their good knowledge, understanding and enjoyment of RE. Pupils show good attitudes towards each other and are respectful and courteous towards adults. They gain strength and confidence from the school's infrastructure of care support systems such as the "buddy" system whereby Y6 pupils help and support Reception pupils settle into the school and achieve well. Parents and pupils say that they particularly value and enjoy this aspect of school life.

## **THE QUALITY OF PROVISION IN RE**

### **How effective are Teaching and learning in RE?**

---

The quality of teaching is outstanding in all key stages. Teachers' high levels of knowledge of the faith and expertise in teaching it together with careful planning and assessment of learning ensures that work in RE is very well pitched and suitably challenging for all pupils. The school follows the approved RE programme of study for the Diocese of Leeds "Here I Am" (HIA).

In a FKS RE lesson on the HIA theme "Growing", the teacher began by showing the children a sequence of photographs of a baby, a toddler, and eventually a child in school uniform. The children then recognised that the photographs were of the class teacher as a child. This provoked lively discussions about how God makes all things grow.

The teacher helped the children appreciate how they had changed over time, by looking at a large wall display featuring photographs of themselves as babies, which the class teacher had thoughtfully requested previously from parents via a class RE newsletter. Using "The Easter Story" big book the children went on to make Easter cards for their parents showing that "Jesus loves us and he wants us to love one another". A Reception class pupil who was out on the patio area drawing daffodils from real life could say that her picture showed "how God makes things grow". Another Reception class pupil was able to say that her picture of an Easter Egg "reminds me that Jesus came alive again on Easter Sunday".

A KS1 class gathered quietly on a carpet in the prayer corner around a central focal point on which a lighted candle and pebbles of various sizes were displayed next to an copy of a children's Bible open at the account of Palm Sunday. Key words and phrases from Holy Week were displayed in the prayer corner next to three extremely effective stained glass windows which had been created by the class. Rays of coloured sunlight shone into the whole prayer corner as the pupils listened to the scripture readings. The class teacher led thoughtful discussions about how Jesus was feeling on Palm Sunday. The pupils then undertook a series of learning activities relating to Palm Sunday. One group produced a "reflective prayer", another group worked on producing two "mixed feeling picture reflections" on Palm Sunday using chalks and pastels. Speech bubbles were used for a "happy picture" and a "sad picture". (The happy picture was in colour, the sad picture in black and white to show how Jesus was feeling). Another group created similar pictures using wireless laptop computers. A further group created "prayer poems" reflecting Jesus' thoughts on Palm Sunday. During the activities, appropriate Palm Sunday pictures were scrolled across the IAW to prompt further discussions about how Jesus was feeling. The lesson concluded with simple prayers and each group sharing their work. Some outstanding results were achieved and all pupils made very good progress in RE.

The teaching methods and use of stimulating resources, such as ICT are precisely judged to enable and extend pupil learning in RE, including those with learning difficulties.

A KS2 class correctly sequenced their own power point presentations of the key events of Holy Week using video clip and scripture references carefully provided by the class teacher. The pupils researched online using their individual wireless laptops. The activity was very skillfully planned and differentiated by the class teacher to ensure that all pupils were fully engaged and suitably challenged in the lesson and as a consequence, the pupils made very good progress in RE. The finished results were of an outstanding standard and were shared with the wider class.

Teachers appropriately challenge pupils in RE to think spiritually, ethically and theologically and to become aware of the demands of religious commitment in their day to day school and family life. Pupils are quick to show concern for the well being of others, especially the weak and vulnerable. They demonstrate a lively awareness that they are members of one human family responsible for one another. Leaders and managers work with others beyond their school to ensure that pupils are given opportunities to enter into dialogue and collaborate with people from different backgrounds. For example, year 6 pupils experienced visiting a mosque.

All classrooms have very appropriate and thoughtfully assembled seasonally liturgical focal points featuring the school's termly RE theme and weekly ethos statement. The opportunity for prayer, reflection and meditation during class RE lessons makes an excellent contribution to the spiritual and moral development of the pupils and to further deepening the Catholic ethos of the whole school. Resources for the successful teaching of RE are good and plentiful. The school gives considerable time, effort and budget to the provision of high quality RE resources and artifacts. A well stocked and well organized RE store room is readily accessible to all staff. Seasonal liturgical RE resources are also loaned out by the school to families to further promote RE in the home.

In line with the school's RE Action Plan, the staff are currently further embedding the revised Attainment Levels in RE into their planning, delivery, assessment and monitoring of RE standards in their classes. The majority of pupils are more than ready to meet their targets in RE and know what to do to achieve and exceed them. The school is looking towards further developing "child friendly" and "age appropriate" RE targets.

RE lessons observed in all key stages were very well planned and paced with clear, appropriately differentiated learning objectives/success outcomes. The teaching staff are confident in their RE subject knowledge and have high expectations of their pupils. Activities were of a practical and active nature. The pupils clearly enjoy their RE lessons and actively contribute towards their own and others learning. Pupils are actively encouraged to become independent learners.

Staff involve parents and carers in their children's RE learning by means of regular RE newsletters outlining the HIA RE topics to be covered in class. At the time of the inspection, seasonal "Lenten Promise Bags" containing a child's version of the Easter story, a small crucifix, laminated copies of school prayers etc in a purple drawstring bag, were being loaned out to families for use at home. The school also supports the diocesan "Wednesday Word" weekly newsletter initiative, based upon simplified versions of the Sunday Gospel reading.

---

#### **How well does the RE curriculum meet the needs and interests of pupils?**

---

The curriculum in RE fulfils the requirements of the curriculum directory for Catholic Schools. It is organized around the life and teaching of Jesus and the Church and the beliefs, celebrations and the way of life of Catholics who follow that teaching. The RE curriculum follows the approved diocesan RE scheme "Here I Am" (HIA). At the time of the inspection, HIA Route A (spring term) RE theme "growing" was evidenced in all key stages. The school fully complies with all diocesan guidelines on RE teaching time - ie 10% (2.5 hours per week) are allocated to RE for each class.

All pupils, irrespective of ability, are able to make progress in their knowledge, skills and understanding and learn to become more fully aware of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life. Significant advantage is taken of opportunities to develop pupils' skills in reading, writing, speaking and listening, and to develop skills using ICT, in RE. The RE curriculum has a significant positive impact on the spiritual and moral development of the pupils.

The school RE curriculum encourages pupils to develop their knowledge of and respect for people of other faiths. The school has a good range of resource packs and artifacts on World Faiths. Pupils from year 6 recently visited a mosque in Leeds. The school is looking to strengthen links with a city school in a contrasting locality where most of the pupils are Muslim. St. Joseph's has achieved the "Inclusion" and "Stephen Lawrence" awards.

The school has a suitability of family life and sex education programme (“In the Beginning”) which incorporates education in personal relationships and citizenship education. Governors, staff, parents, parishioners and the school nurse were extensively consulted in drawing up and approval of the programme which is rooted in the Catholic tradition.

The pupils say that they particularly enjoy coming to this school. They feel that they have lots of friends and the staff are kind and helpful – “particularly if you have a problem”. They enjoy Fr. Tom’s visits and like the fact that everyone is given a chance to be chosen for school assemblies etc - “it is not just the same pupils every time”. They do not find school RE lessons boring.

Parents appreciate the good, two-way communication about the RE curriculum and feel that they are welcome in school. They were particularly moved recently, by the children’s singing at a parishioners’ funeral mass.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF RE**

### **How effective are Leadership and Management in raising achievement and supporting all pupils in RE?**

---

Leadership and management is outstanding in raising achievement and supporting all pupils in RE. The RE co-ordinator, chair of governors and RE governor have a very strong sense of the educational mission of the church and the role of the subject in contributing to the school’s part in this. The deputy head, subject leaders, teachers and support staff each contribute their own individual expertise and faith experience to ensuring that all pupils actively increase their understanding of the meaning and purpose of life and their responsibilities toward each other as a consequence.

The senior leadership team and governors have a well developed School Improvement Plan in place which includes an RE Action Plan. This is effectively linked to aspects of the school’s performance management/continuing professional development systems and diocesan RE training and development opportunities. Specific school In Service Educational Training days (INSET) are set aside for RE and may be accessed by both the staff and governors. Highly efficient use is made of all available resources, including expertise from within the parish, diocese and the wider community. Very good links exist between school, home and parish. Morale is high and as a consequence, pupils flourish at St. Joseph’s.

## INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS SUMMARY

ASPECT	GRADE	DESCRIPTOR
<b>OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS</b>	<b>2</b>	<i>Good</i>
<b>THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL</b>		
How effective are Leadership and Management in developing the Catholic life of the school?	1	<i>Outstanding</i>
How good is the quality of Collective Worship?	2	<i>Good</i>
<b>RELIGIOUS EDUCATION</b>		
How well do pupils achieve in RE?	2	<i>Good</i>
How effective are Teaching and learning in RE?	1	<i>Outstanding</i>
How well does the RE curriculum meet the needs and interests of pupils?	2	<i>Good</i>
How effective are Leadership and Management in raising achievement and supporting all pupils in RE?	1	<i>Outstanding</i>

## INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS ANNEX

### OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

<b>How effective and efficient is the provision of Catholic education in meeting the needs of pupils and why?</b>	2
• the effectiveness of steps taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	yes
• the capacity to make further improvements	yes

### THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

<b>How effective are leadership and management in developing the Catholic life of the school?</b>	1
• how well the governing body fulfils its role in relation to the school's Catholic foundation	1
• how effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality care and education	1
• the quality of the leadership of the headteacher and senior staff in leading and developing the Catholic life of the school	1
• how effectively the Catholic life of the school is monitored and evaluated	2
• how effectively leadership at all levels in the school promotes pupils' spiritual and moral development	1
• how effectively leadership at all levels in the school promotes and provides opportunities for the spiritual development and prayer life of the staff	2
• the impact of the involvement of the clergy and/or chaplaincy team on the work of the school	1
• how effectively leadership at all levels promotes the school's contribution to social cohesion	2
• how effectively leadership at all levels encourages the positive behaviour of pupils	1
• the extent to which pupils' contribute to the school and broader community	1

<b>How good is the quality of Collective Worship?</b>	2
• the frequency and quality of the provision for prayer, Collective Worship and liturgical life of the school	1
• pupils' response to the school's provision for prayer and worship	2
• how well Collective Worship contributes to the spiritual and moral development of the pupils	2
• the inclusive nature of the provision for prayer, Collective Worship and liturgical life of the school	2

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

<b>How well do pupils achieve in RE?</b>	2
• the standards reached by pupils in RE	2
• how well pupils make progress in RE, taking account of any significant variations between groups of pupils	2
• how well pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress in RE	1

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in RE?</b>	1
• the adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that pupils are well taught in RE	1
• how well teaching is used to meet the full range of pupils' needs in RE	1
• the effectiveness of planning, monitoring and assessment in RE	2
• the extent to which pupils enjoy their work in RE	1
• the involvement of parents and carers in their children's learning in RE	1

<b>How well does the Religious Education curriculum meet the needs and interests of pupils?</b>	2
• how far the RE curriculum meets external requirements	2
• the extent to which pupils are gaining a knowledge and developing an understanding of the teachings, beliefs, values and way of life of other world faiths	2
• the suitability of family life and sex education, education in personal relationships and citizenship education	1
• the extent to which the curriculum in RE contributes to the spiritual and moral development of the pupils	1
• how far the RE curriculum promotes social cohesion	2

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all pupils in Religious Education?</b>	1
• how effectively subject leaders in RE set clear direction and provide support leading to improvement	1
• how effectively performance in RE is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
• how well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all pupils achieve as well as they can in RE	1
• how effectively and efficiently RE resources are deployed	1
• the extent to which governors discharge their responsibilities in RE	1