



DIOCESE OF
SHREWSBURY

DENOMINATIONAL INSPECTION REPORT:

**THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL
AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

School: St Joseph's Catholic Primary School
Address: Wheatland Lane
Wallasey
Wirral
CH44 7ED

Tel No: 0151 638 3919

URN: 105073

Headteacher: Mrs M Hollis

Chair of Governors: Mr B Sharp

Date of Inspection: 19 May 2022

Inspectors: Mrs E Robb
Mrs L Kelly
Mr M Glynn (shadow)

ST JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT

Together in faith, we nurture, encourage and inspire each other to achieve excellence and become all that Jesus calls us to be

SCHOOL: St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

DATE OF LAST INSPECTION: 22.10.2015

JUDGEMENT FROM PREVIOUS INSPECTION: Good

AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT FROM PREVIOUS INSPECTION

- To ensure teaching is consistently highly effective and challenging across all year groups by the development of more open-ended questioning and extending the use of creative learning opportunities in Religious Education
- To develop the role of Mini Vinnies within the school so that pupils can extend their role in fund-raising and supporting needs within the local community and further strengthen the links with the parish

PROGRESS MADE WITH AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT FROM THE PREVIOUS INSPECTION

Staff have received training in developing the creative Curriculum and this is evident in lessons observed, pupils' books and in displays around the school.

Creative targets have been added to the Religious Education Leaders' appraisal development plan to develop further and share good practice throughout the school.

The Mini Vinnies groups are embedded throughout the school and are having a positive impact on supporting and promoting the Catholic Life of the school.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS: how effective is the school in providing Catholic Education.

1

This is an outstanding Catholic school

The above judgement on overall effectiveness is based on all the available evidence following the evaluation of:

CATHOLIC LIFE

1

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

1

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

1

Summary of key findings:

- St Joseph's Catholic Primary School is an outstanding school where pupils are loved and supported and receive an outstanding education. All involved in St Joseph's are fully committed to the promotion of Gospel values
- The Headteacher provides outstanding leadership in promoting all aspects of Religious Education throughout the school. She is ably supported by the Deputy Head, the Religious Education Leads, all Staff and Governors who work exceptionally hard to provide a school where all feel valued, in an environment of calm and purpose
- All members of staff are fully committed to the mission of the school and work tirelessly to ensure all pupils receive the best possible education in and outside school
- All pupils enjoy their Religious Education lessons and make at least good progress from their varied starting points. They are proud of their faith and are willing to share their ideas and opinions
- There are very strong links with the parish
- The quality of Collective Worship throughout the school is excellent
- There are excellent resources supporting the development of Religious Education
- The Catholic Life of the school underpins the vision of the school

What the school needs to do to improve further

- Embed the newly revised Mission Statement, Vision and Values
- Continue to develop Prayer and Liturgy in the light of the new guidelines and the introduction of the revised Religious Education Directory

Information about the Inspection

The Inspection of St Joseph's Catholic Primary School was carried out under the requirements of the Education Act 2005, and in accordance with the Shrewsbury Diocesan Framework and Schedule for Denominational Inspections approved by the Bishop of Shrewsbury. The inspection reviews and evaluates how effective the school is in providing Catholic education. This process begins with the school's own self-evaluation and the inspection schedule follows the criteria set by the National Board of Religious Inspectors and Advisers (NBRIA 2017).

The inspector reviewed in detail the following aspects:

- 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 pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education
- How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship
- The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school
- How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education, Collective Worship and the Catholic Life of the school

The inspection was carried out by two inspectors and one shadow inspector over one day

- The inspectors observed teaching in four classes
- Four Acts of Worship were observed - Foundation Stage and a visit to Two Year Old provision, Y6 Collective Worship in Hall, Y4 Collective Worship in Classroom, Key Stage 1 Collective Worship led by Headteacher
- Discussions with Headteacher, Religious Education Leads, Governors including Chair of Governors, Leaders responsible for PSHE, RSE and Mental Health, two teachers new to school, Parish Sacristan, Mini Vinnies, School Council, Parents - the Parish Priest provided written information as he was away at the time of the Inspection
- Religious Education Files, Headteacher reports to Governors, Monitoring records, lesson plans, schemes of work, pupils Religious Education work books were scrutinised
- Pupil, Parent, Staff questionnaires were reviewed as well as CPDF records for Staff and Governors
- A range of documentation was made available and scrutinized, including the DSEF, School Improvement plan, school policies, minutes of Governing Body and committee meetings, the school website
- Displays around the school, including classrooms were also noted

Information about this school

- St Joseph's is a Voluntary Aided Catholic Primary School catering for 219 pupils (including 16 Two Year Old provision). The annual admission number is 45
- 40% of pupils are baptised Catholic
- The school is organized into 8 classes
- The school is part of St Joseph's and St Alban's Parish
- The Headteacher has worked in St Joseph's since 2002, however she worked as Deputy Head in another Wirral school for 5 terms before taking up the role of Headteacher at St Joseph's in 2020
- Staffing includes a full time equivalent of 11.3 teachers, there are 8 support assistants
- 65% of teachers are Catholic, 3 teachers have CCRS or equivalent and 2 teachers are currently undertaking CCRS
- Pupils usually transfer to St Mary's College

Full report – inspection judgments

CATHOLIC LIFE

The Catholic Life of the school is outstanding

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 governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision of the Catholic Life of the school	1

- The pupils and staff are fully aware of the implications of the Mission Statement, 'Together in Faith, we nurture, encourage and inspire each other to achieve excellence and become all that Jesus calls us to be'- they eagerly participate in and respond to, all that the school provides
- The current Mission Statement is displayed throughout the school and on the website, and a newly reviewed Mission Statement, Vision and Values will be launched in September 2022 - all stakeholders have been involved in the creation of this
- The pupils enjoy coming to St Joseph's school, one pupil commented, 'This is the best school'. The pupils are happy, and they know that they are loved and cared for in this outstanding school
- Behaviour at all levels is outstanding; the pupils show respect for each other and all adults - pupils treat each other with kindness
- All members of Staff provide outstanding support for pupils, and decisions made revolve around positive outcomes for them all
- Pupils are alert to the needs of others and take their responsibilities seriously, for example they respond eagerly to agencies such as, CAFOD, the local foodbanks and more recently to the Ukraine Appeal. There is an active Mini Vinnies team, Play Leaders and a Buddy system in place. The pupils fully embrace the expectations of being a part of St Joseph's school and are outstanding ambassadors for the Catholic Life of the school
- The school has been awarded the School of Sanctuary Award, which indicates the high profile school leaders place on inclusion and safety for all pupils
- Pastoral care throughout the school is outstanding. The school provides a PSHE programme which overlaps with the RSE curriculum, thus ensuring full coverage of age related expectations
- Parents greatly value the school, and many families look to the school for support. One parent stated that she knows she can come into school and ask for help, no matter what the problem. Many families fully appreciate the way in which the school reaches out to them, and especially during the Covid pandemic
- School promotes very successfully a family atmosphere throughout. Staff and pupils feel valued in a school community, based on Gospel values. Relationships at all levels are outstanding. There is a calmness that is almost tangible, recognised and valued by pupils and adults alike - one parent commented, 'This is a lovely school, always very welcoming'

- The school environment reflects the mission of the Catholic Life of the school - there are prayer focal points in all classrooms, each classroom is named after a saint, the newly developed prayer garden for outside reflection and worship, the welcoming entrance foyer, all contribute to promoting the Catholic ethos and identity of the school
- Key areas for development are identified and acted upon by Leaders and Governors, who meet regularly and participate in the monitoring of the Catholic Life of the school as well as Religious Education and Collective Worship. Self evaluation is effective and accurate
- The school is well supported by the Parish Priest and the Parish Sacristan, especially in relation to the Sacramental preparation for the Sacraments of First Forgiveness and First Holy Communion. The Parish Priest who is also a Governor, is proud of the way in which the school and parish support each other
- Staff morale is high, and staff clearly support and care for each other. There is a strong sense of family which permeates throughout the school. They feel valued and make excellent use of the well-being strategies available. Well trained members of the senior Leadership team are always available to help staff, pupils and parents
- Leaders and Governors are deeply committed to the Church's mission in education and are passionate about the school being the best it can be. Catholic Life underpins the vision of the school.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Religious Education is outstanding

1

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education	1
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education	1
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education	1

- Almost all pupils make at least good, with some making outstanding progress, from their varied starting points
- The pupils enjoy their Religious Education lessons. and are enthusiastic and keen to learn. They respond very well to challenges and answer questions thoughtfully, and display excellent knowledge
- Pupils take great pride in their Religious Education workbooks. Their written work, and responses show excellent understanding of themes covered, and teachers develop this further through appropriate written or verbal comments
- The quality of display in the classrooms and throughout the school is outstanding and contributes greatly to the vibrant atmosphere of a busy, happy working environment
- Pupils are taught about other faiths and are respectful of those whose faith is different from their own
- Leaders and Religious Education Leads monitor the provision of Religious Education curriculum termly, ensuring planning and delivery of these lessons is very effective
- Progress and moderation procedures are fully in place and tracking accurately identifies the next steps for pupils. Teachers and leaders are involved with moderation procedures with other schools in their area, ensuring staff are confident in their judgements
- There are high quality resources which maximise learning for all pupils and the impact of creativity in Religious Education is clearly evident
- The Headteacher and Religious Education Leads are united in their vision of promoting outstanding teaching and learning for all pupils
- Tracking and assessment procedures are carried out regularly, ensuring Staff and Governors have an accurate understanding of current standards, and plan accordingly
- A minimum of 10% of the timetable is dedicated to the teaching of Religious Education. Leaders and Governors ensure that the provision meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference, and the additional requirements of the Diocesan Bishop
- Governors are involved in monitoring Religious Education and attend Diocesan organised training to ensure best practices are embedded in the school's procedures
- Covid 19 had a negative impact on the school in many ways, however school leaders have made good use of the recovery funding to put in place strategies and initiatives to address the impact on pupils' attainment and progress

- An Enrichment and Entitlement Programme provides pupils with further opportunities to have 'real life experiences' such as, visits from local people to talk about racism, other religions, and the positive impact charity workers can have on people's lives
- Parents appreciate all the school promotes in Religious Education - one parent commented in the questionnaires submitted, 'Children are taught the importance of God's love from a young age. The children know they can turn to God'.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

Collective Worship is outstanding

1

How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship	1
The quality of provision for Collective Worship	1
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship	1

- Collective Worship is central to the life of the school and contributes to the feeling of family which is deeply rooted in St Joseph's school
- Pupils pray with a calm reflective approach and are aware of the significance of prayer in their lives. They often offer prayers for others, as well as themselves. During the Inspection the pupils invited the Inspectors to pray the Rosary
- All Acts of Collective Worship observed were outstanding. The pupils were engaged, fully focused, prayerful, and their behaviour exemplary
- The Headteacher led a Key Stage One Act of Collective Worship where the pupils reflected beautifully on the theme from Sunday's Gospel – 'Love one another', and were able to relate this theme to their own lives
- Acts of Collective Worship observed in classrooms and/or hall were equally outstanding as pupils demonstrated respect for each other as they prayed, enjoyment as they sang or listened to music, and the ability to explain the message of Scripture age appropriately
- The Parish Priest is very supportive of all the school seeks to achieve in its mission in the parish
- Pupils have an excellent understanding of the Church's Liturgical year, and the beautiful displays around the school and in classrooms reflect the whole ethos of the school which is firmly rooted in the Gospel values
- The prayer focal points in classrooms are well resourced, and Religious artefacts are used to excellent effect to support and enhance Worship in classrooms
- Collective Worship is central to the life of the school and is given a high priority in terms of planning and resources. Leaders ensure that staff and pupils have the appropriate resources to deliver high quality Acts of Collective Worship. They have a shared format to plan and deliver Collective Worship, ensuring continuity and support for pupils throughout the school
- Pupils often choose the focus and themes of Collective Worship. Reflecting on local and global issues provides opportunities for them to develop morally and spiritually as they recognise the need in others
- Staff encourage pupils to evaluate Collective Worship, helping them to continue to develop deeper knowledge and understanding of Gospel values, and feel more confident in sharing their experiences
- The school reaches out to the community to welcome them into Class Collective Worship and Stay and Pray sessions
- During the pandemic links with parents were remotely organised, with paper packs for parents who were unable to participate electronically

- In order to strengthen links further with parents, pupils have the opportunity to take Prayer Bags home and are encouraged to lead Collective Worship with family members
- Parents enjoy Collective Worship and greatly appreciate this link between school and home
- Leaders and Governors have robust monitoring procedures in place to ensure Collective Worship is well planned and evaluated, as part of the school's rigorous self evaluation process. This is evidenced in the Religious Education Plan
- The dedicated Staff, led by the inspirational Headteacher, supported by the Governors, are well placed to address the new Prayer and Liturgy guidelines which are currently being discussed. Prayer and Liturgy will continue to underpin the success of this outstanding school.