

DIOCESE OF HALLAM SCHOOLS'
DEPARTMENT



SECTION 48 INSPECTION REPORT

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

**ST JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL
RETFORD**

School URN	122813
Name of Chair of Governors	Mr Jim Patchett
Name of Headteacher	Mr Philip Patterson
Date of Inspection	19 May 2009
Section 48 Inspector	Mrs Mary Barry

“ an enthusiasm for the things of God”

Introduction

The Inspection of St Joseph's Catholic Primary School has been carried out under the requirements of the Education Act 2005, and in accordance with the Diocese of Hallam Framework and schedule for Section 48 Inspectors as approved by the Bishop of Hallam.

The process of inspection in the Diocese of Hallam has been developed as an activity of the Church to support schools in further deepening the quality of Catholic education provided.

Description of the school

St Joseph's is an average size school, serving the Parish of St Joseph's Retford. Children come from not only Retford but also the surrounding villages of North-East Nottinghamshire. This is a large geographical area and over half the children arrive at school each day by car. The parents represent the full range of socio-economic backgrounds. The school employs nine full time teachers including the head, two full time Foundation Stage teaching assistants and eleven part-time teaching assistants. Three teachers hold the CCRS (Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies). The school is organised into a Foundation Stage Unit, for both age groups at foundation stage, and six classes, one for each national curriculum age group. 42% of the children are baptised Catholic, the others being members of other Christian denominations.

The school is well supported by the Parish Priest, and the Parents Association. Some of the families show a significant commitment to the school travelling several miles each day from outlying villages.

Information about the school

Type of School	Primary, Voluntary Aided
Age profile of Students	3-11
Number on roll	203 F/T 43P/T
Number of Students on Special Educational Needs Register	30
Number of Students with a Statement of Special Educational Needs	0
Number of Catholics on Roll	86
Number of Other Christian Denominations	117
Number of other Faiths	0
School Address	Babworth Road, Retford, Nottinghamshire DN22 2SF
Telephone Number	01777 702850
Fax Number	01777 707117
Email	office@st-josephs.notts.sch.uk

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL

How effective and efficient is the provision of Catholic education in meeting the needs of learners?

The overall effectiveness and efficiency of the provision of Catholic education is good with some outstanding features. The governors are well informed, hard working and focussed on promoting and deepening the quality of Catholic education. All the staff are committed to the Catholic life of the school. The pupils are respected and valued. They flourish in a happy, caring environment where staff have high expectations of them. Collective worship which is a strength of the school, has a positive impact on the children's spiritual and moral development.

The school's Self Evaluation Form (SEF) identifies aspects of the school's provision which it is currently developing. This report fully supports these developments as they will enhance what the school currently offers its children. They include introducing target setting in Religious Education, and further developing the monitoring role of the governors.

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

The last Religious Education inspection took place in May 2006. Issues identified at that time were:

- To further develop the process of self evaluation to ensure that there is evidence to support judgements
- To develop monitoring procedures of teaching and learning
- To develop monitoring procedures of Collective Worship

All the above key issues have been addressed. The SEF gives an honest and clear analysis of the schools strengths and areas for development, and these are detailed in the SDP. Evidence to support this analysis is available in the school's records and documentation. Monitoring records for teaching and learning and collective worship have also been kept. All these documents support the work of the school, and help identify priorities for the future.

The capacity to further deepen the quality of Catholic education

The capacity to further deepen the quality of Catholic education is good. The governing body, headteacher and all members of staff are actively involved in the school's mission. They are hard working, enthusiastic and committed to providing the best for the children at the school. Parents are well supported by the school through the provision of leaflets, newsletters and regular invitations to attend Masses and the varied programme of liturgies. The Inspector agrees with the development priorities the school has identified and would add the following areas to enhance the quality of provision:

- To undertake a review of the schools current Mission Statement in partnership with the children, governors, parents and the wider Parish community
- To build into the SDP an annual training day that has Religious Education and the Catholic nature of the school as its focus.

THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL: LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

How effective are leadership and management in the development of the Catholic life of the school?

The leadership and management in the Catholic life of the school are good. Governors are well informed and are currently developing their monitoring role. The parish priest is involved in the life of the school and has a positive impact on many areas of school life. A number of the staff are active members of the parish and this contributes to the relationships between school and parish. The school is fully inclusive. All children are welcomed and recognised as children of God, and therefore deserving of the best possible care and education. The children are well cared for and nurtured in a happy and safe environment, where Gospel values are acted out in the daily life of the school.

THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL: COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

How good is the quality of Collective Worship?

The quality of Collective Worship is outstanding. There is a clear policy which has been regularly reviewed. Collective Worship is central to the life of the school. It is planned within a liturgical framework and follows the Church's liturgical year. The location for Collective Worship varies according to the season and theme, and includes the Church and school gardens. Themes from the Here I Am programme are used to great effect. They allow the children to share what they have learnt and deepen their knowledge and understanding. The children have the opportunity to participate in various forms of prayer including composing their own as well as learning the traditional Catholic prayers such as the Rosary. A recent innovation in the school is developing the role of Prayer Chaplains. This is undertaken by volunteer children. Through careful nurturing they are leading and promoting the prayer life of their own class. The children and the parents spoke with great enthusiasm about this development, and it is apparent that it is having a great impact on the spiritual life of the school.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION: ACHIEVEMENT AND STANDARDS

How well do learners achieve in Religious Education?

The children's achievement in Religious Education is good and the written work in Religious Education books is in line with that found in Literacy. Teaching assistants are employed to good effect, ensuring children of all abilities have the opportunity to undertake their given tasks. Many examples were seen of children working well together with partners and in groups. The SEF highlights target setting in Religious Education as an area for development. This will support the children's progress. The school places great emphasis on cooperation and mutual support and the impact of this is clearly evident in class and many other areas of school life. Fundraising for various organisations such as CAFOD and Mission Together enable children to reflect on their duties and responsibilities to the wider community. Behaviour is extremely good. The school council gives children a voice and they feel that their views are heard. The children told the Inspector that they are proud of their school.

QUALITY OF PROVISION OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

How effective are teaching and learning in Religious Education?

Teaching and learning is good with examples of outstanding practice seen on the day of inspection. Teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge, and are enthusiastic and committed to high quality religious education. Planning is detailed and differentiated ensuring children's particular learning needs and styles are catered for. ICT was used effectively in a number of lessons observed. Good question and answer sessions seen in lessons allowed the children to build on what they already know and take them onto the next step. Children were engaged and interested in their lessons, and expressed enjoyment in their work in Religious Education. Good use was made of the learning environment with teachers frequently referring their learners to various learning prompts that were on display in the class.

How well does the Religious Education curriculum meet the needs and interests of the learners?

The religious education curriculum is of a good standard and meets the needs and interests of all learners. The curriculum time devoted to Religious Education fulfils the requirements of the Curriculum Directory for Catholic Schools and meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference by devoting at least 10% of teaching time to Religious Education.

The children acquire a sound knowledge of the Catholic Faith and an understanding and respect for other Christian and World Faiths.

Relationships in school are good and the children speak highly of the pastoral care offered by staff. The children in Y6 have an annual opportunity for a residential retreat when they visit the Briars Centre in Crich. Both children and parents praised the quality of this experience.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners in Religious Education?

The effectiveness of leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners in Religious Education is good. The subject Co-ordinator with the support of the headteacher has a strong sense of the Catholic education mission of the school. She gives help and support to all members of staff. A generous budget is set each year, and the standard of resources available to support Religious Education lessons is outstanding.

The monitoring of standards in Religious Education in each class is rigorously carried out by the Co-ordinator through lesson observations and scrutiny of planning and work. Findings are detailed in records kept by the co-ordinator.

The school has a system of assessment in place, and is currently developing the use of target setting. Religious Education forms part of the SDP.

Good links exist with parents, the parish, the diocese and other agencies to support and enrich work in Religious Education. A high quality learning environment is

provided for the children both in the building and in the grounds. This affirms the children and reflects the Catholic ethos of the school.

Summary of Inspection Judgements:	
Overall Effectiveness	Good
The Catholic Life of the School	
How effective are leadership and management in developing the Catholic Life of the school?	Good
How good is the quality of Collective Worship?	Outstanding
Religious Education	
How well do learners achieve in Religious Education?	Good
How effective are teaching and learning in Religious Education?	Good
How well does the Religious Education curriculum meet the needs and interests of learners?	Good
How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners in Religious Education?	Good

Further copies of this report are obtainable from St Joseph's Catholic Primary School or from the Diocese of Hallam Schools' Department, The Hallam Pastoral Centre, St Charles Street, Sheffield S9 3WU Tel: 0114 2566440