

DIOCESE OF HALLAM SCHOOLS'
DEPARTMENT



**SECTION 48 INSPECTION
REPORT**

THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE
SCHOOL AND RELIGIOUS
EDUCATION

ST JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC
PRIMARY SCHOOL

| | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| School URN | 3735203 |
| Name of Chairman of Governors | Mr M Egan |
| Name of Headteacher | Mrs Sheila Armitage |
| Date of Inspection | 12 th , 13 th December 2005 |
| Section 48 Inspectors | Mr Jarlath Burke, Mr Frank McDermott |
| | |

"... 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 Inspections 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 Catholic Primary School opened in 1875 and serves the parish of St Joseph's, Handsworth. It draws children from Handsworth, Darnall, Manor and Treeton. Its last Religious Education Inspection (Sec 23) took place in November 1999, its last OFSTED Inspection (Sec 10) was conducted in May 2005. This is an average sized primary school in which most pupils are of White British heritage. 54% of the children are baptised Catholics. At the time of this inspection and as a result of significant staffing changes brought about by retirements in July 2005, most of the teachers were experiencing their first term with a new age range. There are five full-time teachers and five part-time teachers, five of whom are Catholics. Three teachers hold the Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies or its equivalent.

The school offers a range of extra-curricular activities managed by both parents and staff. There is an active and supportive group of parents known as the St Joseph's Friends. The school has a good reputation in the area and is held in high regard within the community.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL

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

The provision of Catholic education at St Joseph's Catholic Primary school is satisfactory. Pupils are respected and well cared for in a most welcoming, generally calm environment. The school has a strong ethos with good links with the parish, parents and the local community. The ethos has a positive impact on the pupils' spiritual and moral development.

The school rightly recognises in its self evaluation that there are aspects of religious education, spiritual development and collective worship that need to be developed. These aspects of development are contained in this report and should form the basis of a rigorous action plan as part of the school development plan, approved by the governors.

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

Areas for improvement highlighted in the last inspection in 1999 included: developing monitoring and evaluation; developing guidelines for collective worship; the professional development of staff; increasing the time allocation for religious education; developing an appropriate budget for religious education.

While the school did take satisfactory steps to address all of these issues and an appropriate action plan was devised, changes of staffing, together with other local and national challenges have resulted in little long-term impact. Teaching time has been standardised and a new collective worship policy is in place. However, no monitoring of religious education has taken place this term, the budget allocation for religious education remains insufficient and some staff require support in teaching religious education. The current action plan for religious education needs to address these issues in a more rigorous manner.

The capacity to further deepen the quality of Catholic education

The school completed the Self Evaluation Form (SEF 48) with complete honesty and openness. The judgements made by the school were mostly accurate and the SEF 48 was effective in helping to set the focus for the inspection. The SEF acknowledges that staff work hard as a team to provide a caring, safe and secure environment, and that the good links with the parish and the parents play a strong part in the life of the school. The SEF also recognises that a system of formal and informal methods of observing colleagues in the classroom during RE lessons needs to be agreed upon. For the school to further deepen the quality of Catholic education, this form of observation or monitoring, needs to be agreed as soon as possible. There is much good practice but little sense of continuity. Governors need to receive more regular and more formal reports on the Catholic life of the school and religious education.

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 governors and senior staff are very proud of the distinctive atmosphere and ethos of the school and are deeply committed to its Catholic life. A strong partnership exists with the parish of St Joseph's, the parents and the local community. The parish priest offers good, effective support and actively supports the pupils through weekly visits to classes in school. Classes visit church on a termly basis to enable the children to become familiar with the building itself and to further explore the religious education topic being studied in school. The development of the Catholic life of the school needs to be more clearly defined, developed and monitored. The Catholic life of the

school and religious education need to become a regular feature of the headteacher's report to governors and should also be part of the school's development and improvement plan. Currently, provision is satisfactory.

THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL: COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

How good is the quality of Collective Worship?

The school meets the statutory requirement for Collective Worship and prayer takes place at least twice a day in each class. All classes have a designated prayer board and during the inspection all classes had appropriate Advent displays. The school recognises that prayer and class worship needs to be given a higher profile and further staff development is to be arranged for 2006/07. The school further recognises in its honest evaluation that resources need to be updated and children need to become more involved in planning and presenting prayer and worship. While there are long term plans to improve the quality of accommodation, urgent action should be taken to improve the quality of the environment offered by the hall as the main gathering area. The quality of Collective Worship is currently satisfactory.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION: ACHIEVEMENT AND STANDARDS

How well do learners achieve in Religious Education?

The quality of pupil achievement is satisfactory overall but varies across the school. Good use is made of the Here I Am religious education programme and progression books show that satisfactory progress is made by most children. In most classes observed, inspectors would agree with the school that pupils enjoy their lessons, are engaged in their learning and achieve appropriately. Pupils achieve well when the objectives are clear, when they are engaged in their learning and where there are high expectations and differentiation, matched with appropriate pace. Some staff, that are unfamiliar with the age of the pupils they are now teaching, may benefit from looking at achievement and progression throughout the school.

QUALITY OF PROVISION OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

How effective are teaching and learning in Religious Education?

The school recognises that it needs to reduce the variability in teaching across the school by sharing examples of good practice which are clearly present in some classes. The school's self evaluation also recognises that some staff need to develop a more secure knowledge and understanding of religious education. The inspection supports this view and would encourage the school to review planning, assessment strategies and classroom management of religious education.

Parents are informed of the content of the curriculum that their children will be studying at the beginning of the year and are given a report of their progress at the end of each year.

The school believes teaching and learning to be good but has little evidence on which to base this judgement as no monitoring has taken place this term. It is the view of the inspection that teaching and learning is variable throughout the school and is indeed good in places. Overall teaching and learning are satisfactory.

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

The 10% of curriculum time now devoted to religious education meets the requirement of the Bishops' Conference. The content of the religious education curriculum follows the 'Here I Am' programme and all teachers use the recommended planning sheets provided by the diocese. The RE curriculum makes a significant contribution to the pupils' spiritual and moral development with frequent opportunities given to pupils for personal reflection.

The school is socially inclusive and provides equality of access and opportunity for all pupils to make progress. It has a comprehensive policy for sex and relationship education and citizenship. Given the recent staff changes it will be important to ensure curriculum continuity in this area. The school extends a warm welcome to parents and children and there are good relationships between adults and pupils. The school actively supports transition to secondary education.

The pupils are gaining a knowledge and understanding of the Catholic Faith and are developing an appropriate knowledge and understanding of the teachings, beliefs, values and way of life of other Christian Churches and other World Faiths. The annual Arts Week and World Faith Week are important aspects of this provision.

The religious education curriculum is broad and balanced but has variable impact on pupils' aspirations and potential. A positive and constructive programme of peer evaluations to assess teaching and learning styles and to ensure continuity of progression should begin as soon as possible. There is much good practice where the religious education curriculum clearly meets the needs and interests of the learners – this needs to be shared across the school where overall the provision is satisfactory.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

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

Leadership and management in religious education are satisfactory. The school has a good religious education policy, approved by the governing body in July 2004 but staff changes since that date have impacted on

developments. The schools SEF recognises that the newly appointed RE Co-ordinator needs support and that some members of staff need to develop their own subject knowledge and deepen their understanding of Here I Am. There has been no evaluation or monitoring of teaching or learning of religious education this term, this now needs to be a priority in the new year. The RE Co-ordinator needs to be more directly involved in supporting staff by affirming the good practice that exists in school and by assisting those who require more support.

The School Improvement Plan currently makes no reference to the development of religious education. This needs to be addressed and governors should receive more regular reports regarding the development of religious education in their efforts to support staff and pupils in raising achievement. The governors should review their long term plans for improving accommodation and resources and seek to improve the quality of the hall as the central gathering place for the community with some degree of urgency.

Information about the school

| | |
|---|--|
| Type of School | Primary, Voluntary Aided |
| Age profile of Students | 3 - 11 |
| Number on roll | 215 |
| Number of Students on Special Educational Needs Register | 39 |
| Number of Students with a Statement of Special Educational Needs | 0 |
| Number of Catholics on roll | 114 |
| Number of Other Christian Denominations on roll | 91 |
| Number of other Faiths on roll | 8 + 2 non-baptised |
| School address | St Joseph's Road, Handsworth, Sheffield S13 9AT |
| Telephone Number | 0114 2692773 |
| Fax Number | 0114 2548 802 |
| Email | address-enquiries@st-josephs.sheffield.sch.uk |
| Website | www.st-josephshandsworth.ik.org |

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

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