

# DIOCESE OF LEEDS



## DIOCESAN BOARD FOR INSPECTIONS

### CANON LAW 806 FINAL INSPECTION REPORT INCORPORATING SECTION 48

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

ST JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL  
Barnsley Road, Moorthorpe, WF9 2BP

School URN

140558

Date of S48 inspection and  
OE grade

17<sup>th</sup> & 18<sup>th</sup> November 2021  
GOOD (2)

E-mail address

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Chair of Governors

Mr Steve Dent

Executive Headteacher  
Head of School

Mrs Louise Bird  
Mr Robert Harvey

RE Subject Leader

Mrs Louise Bird

Date and grade of last S48  
Inspection

22<sup>nd</sup> & 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2015  
GOOD (2)

Section 48 Inspector

Mr Alan Dewhurst

## INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection Grades: 1 is Outstanding, 2 is Good, 3 Requires improvement in order to be good, 4 is Inadequate

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

2

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

**CATHOLIC LIFE**

1

**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

2

**COLLECTIVE WORSHIP**

1

### Summary of key findings:

**This is a good Catholic school with several outstanding features.**

- St Joseph's Catholic Primary School has a very strong sense of community where all recognise its distinctive Catholic identity, and strive to do the best for the pupils in all aspects of their education and formation.
- The Catholic Life of the school is outstanding. Pupils willingly participate in and contribute to all of the opportunities provided for them by a dedicated and caring staff. Pupils enjoy a wide range of events and activities that help to develop them morally and spiritually.
- The executive headteacher, in a short space of time, has inspired pupils and staff with her enthusiasm, expertise and her deep care for the wellbeing of all.
- Parents are full of praise for the school's provision, for how their pupils are looked after, and for how they feel important in the school. The head of school enjoys their confidence and support through his skillful nurturing of the community.
- Religious education is good, with teachers demonstrating strong subject knowledge in delivering lessons that the pupils find enjoyable and engaging. Teachers' support of one another, and the continuing professional development (CPD) opportunities offered by the diocese and Trust, is improving practice. However, recent changes introduced by the subject leader still need embedding so some inconsistencies in practice remain.
- Collective Worship is outstanding. The new academic year has seen the school refreshing its provision through varied resources, after a long period of disruption. Practices embedded before the pandemic gave pupils a rich variety of prayer and liturgy to enjoy in celebration, and developed their own skills of planning and leadership to a high standard. After a period of adaptation, utilising remote means to maintain involvement in liturgy and prayer, pupils' skills are developing strongly.

- The mission statement is recognisable in the daily life of the school, but its presence and impact is not explicit.
- The academy council, recently reformed to oversee the work of St Joseph's and Sacred Heart schools, is ambitious for the schools' development and together with the executive headteacher across both schools provides appropriate support and challenge.
- The school also benefits from the support and guidance given by the Bishop Konstant Catholic Academy Trust (BKCAT). Staff are very appreciative of the opportunities for collaboration this entails.
- The school has fully addressed the recommendations of the previous Section 48 inspection.
- All canonical and statutory requirements are fulfilled.

### **What the school needs to do to improve further.**

- Under the oversight of the Academy Council Mission Committee and in conjunction with the BKCAT review, the school should revise its own mission statement to make it more explicit, visible, owned and witnessed to by pupils and staff.
- Increase the quality of teaching and assessment in religious education, thereby raising standards of achievement of pupils through a regular schedule of monitoring and evaluation, continuous professional development and the implementation of strategic plans.
- Continue to rebuild pupil skills in the planning and leadership of prayer and liturgy at age-appropriate levels as they progress through the school.

### **Information about this inspection**

The Inspection of St Joseph's Catholic Primary 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. 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). While following the inspection schedule as published, the inspector acknowledged the significant impact of the Coronavirus pandemic on schools over a sustained period, and took this into consideration when reaching judgements.

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 one inspector over two days:

- Teaching and learning in Religious Education (RE) lessons was observed in four classes.
- A Key Stage 2 Collective Worship (led by the executive headteacher) was attended. There were also observations of three classroom worship gatherings, and a 'remote' school hymn-singing session.
- Discussions were held with the executive headteacher, head of school, representative groups of academy councilors, experienced staff members and staff new to Catholic education; the pastoral lead, Mini-Vinnie leaders, the BKCAT standards officer and a Catholic Care worker.
- Discussions were held with two groups of pupils and a group of parents.
- A sample of pupils' RE workbooks from every class was scrutinised, after discussions about pupils' books with teachers from the Early Years Foundation Stage and Years 2, 4 and 6.
- A range of documents was made available and scrutinised, including the Diocesan Self Evaluation Form (DSEF), the action plan for RE, Catholic Life and Collective Worship, attainment and progress data, surveys, school policies, and minutes of academy council meetings.
- Relevant areas of the school website and postings on the social media platforms of Twitter, Facebook and Class Dojo were examined.
- Displays around the school and in classrooms were also noted.

### **Information about this school**

- St Joseph's Catholic Primary School serves the parish of Sacred Heart and St Joseph, Hemsworth. The school attracts pupils from a varied catchment area from the nearby towns of Upton, South Kirby, Hemsworth and South Elmsall.
- It is a one-form entry school with a part-time nursery; there are currently 197 full-time and 10 part-time pupils on roll.
- St Joseph's is one of the 15 voluntary academies in the BKCAT. It shares an executive headteacher with Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School, Hemsworth. The two schools have a shared academy council, created in May 2021.
- 51% of pupils are baptised Catholics with another 16% from other Christian denomination backgrounds.
- Around 40% of pupils speak English as an additional language, above average for the local area and nationally.
- The school was last inspected by Ofsted in February 2017, and judged to be 'good'.

## Full report - inspection judgements

### CATHOLIC LIFE

#### The Catholic Life of the school is outstanding

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

- Pupils speak highly of their school, and clearly appreciate the significance of its Catholic identity. They recognise that it has a profound influence on how they behave and care for each other.
- Their behaviour is exemplary in class and around the school. They enjoy the achievements of others in the school. They recognise that any difficulties can be quickly reconciled and forgiven. They readily accept and include all within the community whatever their background.
- Parents speak with conviction about the influence of the school's Catholic Life on their children, describing how it has such a positive impact at home and in their daily lives outside school. This was evident during the inspection in the politeness of pupils and their articulation of values during discussions in class.
- Pupils have taken the lead in many activities that promote the school's Catholic Life. Charity involvement is organised by the Mini-Vinnies group, and has seen support for a wide range of national charities as well as for those in need in the local community. Examples are the fund-raising for MacMillan Cancer, CAFOD, Hello Yellow for mental health and the donations to local food banks.
- Other groups are active in school, such as the School Council and Eco-Council, helping to develop improvements and raise awareness of important issues.
- Pupils take advantage of the wide range of activities on offer, such as the after-school provision and the support offered pastorally. They take part enthusiastically in opportunities with other schools, such as the Year 6 retreat to Alton Castle and the BKCAT CAFOD day that resulted in pupils leading their own assembly in school to pass on important learning.
- The school's mission statement is a clear and appropriate expression of the educational mission of the Church. It is lived out daily in the commitment, enthusiastic participation and the quality of relationships of the staff. However, it is implicit in the school's functioning and has no explicit expression to aid the participation of pupils.
- There is a very strong sense of community at all levels, fostered by deep concern for each other and nurtured by prayer. All staff promote high standards of behaviour.
- The school environment clearly demonstrates the Catholic nature of the school.
- Pastoral care has a high priority through the provision of a full time pastoral lead, supported by the Catholic Care access arranged via the Trust. Staff and pupil wellbeing is a key element in the success of the school.

- The school has provided many opportunities for pupils to develop spiritually and morally. Examples are seen in the curriculum, for instance, in the recent focus on Black History Month, the focus on Remembrance during the month of November and in the regular visits of 'More Than Dance'.
- A comprehensive programme of Relationships and Sex Education is evident, reflecting Catholic values and virtues and supported by the Trust.
- The school's leadership is deeply committed to the holistic nurturing of all pupils. The Catholic Life of the school is a clear priority, as seen in the school's annual development plan. Staff and parents acknowledge the impact of the executive headteacher and the head of school in helping to develop the school's Catholic Life in a very short time.
- The executive headteacher has reintroduced strategies to monitor, analyse and evaluate the school's provision, for example through staff and pupil surveys, following the disruption to these activities due to the pandemic; the implementation of these plans is at an early stage.
- School leaders and governors have embraced the opportunity for closer partnership with Sacred Heart School through the shared academy council and executive headteacher; this partnership has a positive impact on the school.
- Staff welcome the services and CPD provided by the BKCAT and the diocese; this service and CPD is helping to develop the school's Catholic Life.
- Parents believe that school leadership and staff are open and friendly and that there are 'no barriers' to overcome in the shared responsibility for their children. They speak warmly of the support given and the extra efforts made to include them, with examples given including the school's online provision, the greeting in several languages given by the head of school and the support given to pupils with particular needs.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

### Religious Education is good

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education	<b>2</b>
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education	<b>2</b>
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education	<b>2</b>

- Most pupils are actively engaged in lessons. They particularly enjoy collaborating with their peers on active tasks. They willingly discuss issues presented to them, and are developing their reflective skills well, increasingly able to express opinions and offer suggestions to moral or ethical questions. Most can concentrate with sustained focus.
- Relative to their age and capacity, most pupils are making good progress, especially when challenged to think more deeply or to develop their learning further.

- Pupils have a broad understanding of how well they are doing and the progress they are making, related to the 'I can' statements in the religious education scheme of work, but these are not always highlighted in their workbooks.
- Behaviour in lessons is generally very good and pupils enjoy religious education, producing good written and artistic work, reacting particularly well to tasks that are made relevant to their daily lives.
- Expectations of what pupils are capable of producing vary, especially when they are called on to evaluate their learning at the end of a unit.
- Teachers plan their religious education lessons well, balancing recall of previous learning, exposition of new content and a variety of verbal, written or active tasks. Questioning is generally good, especially where pupils are challenged to give more information or think more deeply.
- Across the course of a unit studied, teachers give their pupils varied opportunities to present their learning. Presentation of work is mostly good.
- A number of teachers show a high level of confidence because of their subject expertise, and are able to be very creative in their range of approaches, including in the use of technology. These teachers show they have benefited from effective CPD opportunities, which other members of staff will access within the current year.
- Assessment of religious education is in a developmental stage. The school has reviewed its approach to marking and feedback, and is endeavoring to utilize both the 'I can' statements and the 'Interim Standards' in evaluating pupils' attainment, after much disruption to this area during lockdown periods.
- Some inconsistencies in adherence to the school's marking and feedback policy is evident in pupils' books.
- Teaching assistants contribute effectively to pupils' understanding and progress. They support individuals and groups with their learning tasks and play a valuable role in helping to record pupils' responses, particularly in the younger age groups.
- Leaders and governors ensure that the religious education curriculum meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference, and that a minimum of 10% of the teaching timetable is devoted to the subject. '*The Way, The Truth and The Life*' forms the basis of the curriculum, as approved by the diocese. Religious education is well resourced in terms of opportunities for professional development and aids for learning.
- The executive headteacher, as RE coordinator, has started to address the monitoring of teaching and learning in the subject and has put in place suitable plans to develop this over the course of the year, in the expectation that this will increase understanding, and raise standards. She has considerable successful experience and a clear vision for the subject, which is already yielding improvements in the short time she has been in post.
- Parents acknowledge the quality of the online provision the school offered during periods of lockdown over the past 18 months, and praise the school staff for going 'above and beyond' in their efforts. In their turn, teachers recognise the benefits that membership of the BKCAT brought during this period, with laptops quickly purchased for pupils and sharing of expertise and resources made easier through Google Classroom.

## COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

### Collective Worship is outstanding

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

- Prayer is central to the life of the school's daily experience.
- Pupils are very keen to participate in Collective Worship, showing enthusiasm but great reverence in how they behave during prayer and liturgy. They sing with gusto, enjoying the range of opportunities the school offers.
- Pupils commence any prayerful occasion with a noticeable sense of calm, showing through their behaviour and gesture that they recognise the nature of the occasion. This helps to create a meditative atmosphere in which the act of worship can take place.
- During the pandemic restrictions, opportunities for pupils to plan and lead liturgy were restricted. However, before this disruption, pupils were able to take the initiative in planning and leading prayer with confidence and enthusiasm, both in the classroom and in larger gatherings in hall or church, at a level appropriate to their age and stage of development. This included a wide variety of traditional and contemporary approaches to prayer.
- These skills are once again coming to the fore in the daily prayer life of the school. Following the guidelines adopted from the Trust, young pupils show how they can help prepare the prayer focus area through choice of artefacts, such as cloth, crucifix, appropriate statue, bible and candle. As they move through the school, pupils' roles become more involved until, as seen in Year 6, they are able to write out a detailed plan, choose an appropriate reading with help, and lead with confidence, often utilizing the benefits of technology.
- Pupils' understanding of the liturgical year is well developed. In this year alone, they have already had experience of the month of the rosary, were actively praying for the holy souls in November, including a focus on Remembrance, and were starting to prepare for Advent.
- Senior staff have an excellent understanding of Catholic traditions of prayer and liturgy, and ensure that any planned acts of worship are accessible to the pupils present. Staff utilize a wide variety of methods and styles of prayer. These include formal prayers, said in unison, meditative reflections, informal prayer and joyful singing.
- The school has ensured that pupils have a range of styles to experience. The '*Virtues to Live By*' have formed the basis for weekly themes, and have had a significant impact on pupils, who understand the relevance of the virtues and how they help them to live their lives. The 'Wednesday Word', the 'Mark 10 Mission' and the themes provided by '*Ten Ten*' ensure a rich resource bank is available to teachers.
- Display and prayer focus areas are present in all classes, with pupils encouraged to write private prayers but also requests for public prayer.

- Before restrictions, parents were welcomed to all school celebrations, and enjoyed being part of the school community at prayer. During school closures, Collective Worship was still at the forefront of provision through virtual channels.
- The RE coordinator has brought a wealth of experience to organizing the weekly and termly schedule of prayer and liturgy. The annual schedule of prayer and liturgy is planned jointly by the RE coordinator and parish priest so that every opportunity is taken to ensure all seasons and feasts are celebrated appropriately. School and parish worship is interweaved so pupils see the close link between their school and parish church experiences.
- The RE coordinator models outstanding features of worship for staff to follow and replicate. This was evident in the Key Stage 2 gathering when pupils considered the meaning of 'Hope', with balloons representing the pupils' own hopes given to them to have as a reminder in class.
- Regular professional and formative development opportunities, such as '*Ten Ten*' training, augments staff leadership of prayer and liturgy.
- Leaders and governors review the policy for Collective Worship regularly. Guidance from the Trust on 'Child-led Liturgy in Primary School' is available for staff, but reference to the development of pupil skills at different ages, is not yet incorporated into the policy.
- Self-evaluation of Collective Worship has restarted (following restrictions) with pupil voice surveys.