



DIOCESAN CANONICAL INSPECTION REPORT

THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL, COLLECTIVE WORSHIP AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

St Joseph's Catholic Voluntary Academy

Armada Drive, Leicester, LE5 1HF

School URN:	138115
Inspection Date:	30 April 2015
Inspectors:	Mrs Jane Monaghan and Mrs Anne Recchia

Overall Effectiveness	Previous Inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This Inspection:	Good	2
Catholic Life:		Outstanding	1
Collective Worship:		Good	2
Religious Education:		Requires Improvement	3

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR PARENTS AND PUPILS

St Joseph's is a good Catholic school.

- The Catholic Life of St Joseph's is outstanding. There is a strong sense of pupils belonging to a Catholic community where their spiritual and moral development is at its heart. The mission of the school is evident in the relationships and behaviour of pupils. Leaders and managers offer good role models for pupils and work hard to foster strong and supportive links with parents, the other schools in the Catholic academy trust and the local community.
- Religious Education requires improvement. Pupils generally enjoy their lessons but in some classes, they are not sufficiently challenged in order to improve their work. Whilst assessment procedures for Religious Education are in place, more time is needed to embed these in order for them to be used effectively. Monitoring activities are undertaken regularly but as yet are not having the impact required to effectively challenge teaching and learning in Religious Education across the school.
- The quality of Collective Worship is good. Pupils respond to and participate well in Masses and liturgies. The school provides good opportunities for pupils to plan and lead their own Acts of Worship. The skills to do this are being developed effectively from an early age.

FULL REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

- The school converted to an academy in May 2012. When the predecessor school of the same name was last inspected by a diocesan inspection team, its overall effectiveness was judged to be satisfactory.
- The school serves the parish of St Joseph's, Leicester.
- 69% of all pupils are baptised Catholics, 19% are from other Christian denominations, 7% are from other faith backgrounds and 5% have no religious affiliation.
- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is above average with the largest groups being of Indian heritage. An above-average proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language but none are at an early stage of learning English.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is average. The pupil premium provides additional funding for pupils who are looked after by the local authority and those known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The school is part of the Corpus Christi Catholic Academy Trust.

WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL NEED TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- To continue to develop pupil-led Acts of Collective Worship.
 - Use continuing professional development opportunities to support class teachers in developing pupils' liturgical skills across the school.
 - Build upon the use of the 'Let us Pray' materials in order to develop the ability of pupils to use a variety of sources, prayer styles and media in their liturgies.
 - Develop the role of the chaplaincy team in becoming more autonomous in the preparation and leadership of Acts of Collective Worship.
 - Share good practice within and beyond the school.
- To develop the use of assessment information to inform lesson planning and challenge all groups of pupils to reach their full potential in Religious Education.
 - Develop a more robust tracking system that records pupil progress and targets pupils who are not reaching the expected levels in Religious Education.
 - Use the information gained from assessed work to set challenging tasks for differentiated groups of pupils within each class.
 - Develop a consistent approach to marking pupils' work that celebrates success and provides them with the next steps in their learning
 - Develop class teachers' subject knowledge and skills in levelling pupils' work against the *Levels of Attainment in Religious Education* so that there is a consistent approach to this across all year groups.

CATHOLIC LIFE

THE QUALITY OF THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

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- 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 leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school.

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The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school - outstanding

- Pupils have a strong sense of belonging to the Catholic community of St Joseph's. They have had an active role in developing the school's mission statement and recognise the importance of this in their daily lives. They understand that with this sense of community, there are responsibilities and say, for example, 'St Joseph's gives us the opportunity to feel good about ourselves and others. We are encouraged to be responsible with our friends'.
- Pupils have a good understanding of vocation to a Christian life and are able to show this in their behaviour and positive relationships. The behaviour of most pupils is good almost all of the time. They are able to listen, give thanks, forgive and be forgiven at a level which is appropriate to their age. As part of the Catholic academy trust and in the local community, many pupils are involved throughout the year in events that promote the Catholic ethos of the school - taking on roles with enthusiasm. They are generous with their time and talents in giving to charities, often organising these themselves.
- Pupils say they welcome the opportunities provided by the school for them to engage with people of other faiths and backgrounds. They confidently talk about their own commitment to their faith and feel safe and secure enough to demonstrate this through their participation in prayer, involvement in worship and participation in parish and diocesan activities.
- Pupils' evaluation of the Catholic Life of the school is at an early stage at present but is developing. Information gathered by pupil questionnaires, the student council and the chaplaincy team have had a positive impact on the development of the school as a faith community. The school recognises that this is an area for further development.

The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school - outstanding

- The mission of the school is a clear and inspiring expression of the educational mission of the Church. It is shared and owned by all and is evident in the vibrant learning environment and the strong relationships between staff and pupils within the school.
- Pastoral programmes for Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) and Sex and Relationships Education (RSE) are being developed with the support of the diocesan advisory service. There is a need for the current practice to be audited so that the impact of the 'Come and See' programme and 'Statements to live by' can be recognised as forming part of the social, moral and spiritual development of pupils. This would ensure a more consistent approach to this aspect of pupils' education.
- The school is attentive to the pastoral needs of the staff. There is a supportive atmosphere generated by the headteacher and senior leadership team which is supported by the chaplain, governors and parish priest. The honest exchange of views within the school and the Catholic academy trust has further strengthened this.
- High expectations of moral and ethical behaviour are communicated effectively to pupils. Behaviour policies are rooted in Gospel values and the teaching of the Catholic Church.

How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school - outstanding

- The headteacher is deeply committed to the Catholic ethos of the school and is a positive role model for staff and pupils. The development of the Catholic ethos of the school is seen as a core responsibility and one that is taken very seriously for example, prioritising the development of the school chapel.
- The school's self-evaluation of this aspect has brought about significant improvements since the last inspection. The appointment of a school chaplain has had a positive effect on raising the profile and significance of the Catholic Life of the school for the whole community.
- Parents and carers speak highly of the school and are supportive of its Catholic mission. They are appreciative of the strong sense of community created by the leaders and managers.
- Governors are supportive and committed to the development of the school as a Catholic community. They understand their role as critical friends and have undertaken some monitoring and evaluation of the Catholic Life of the school. This needs further development, however, and plans to reinstate the mission committee would help governors to focus their monitoring on this aspect of the school.
- Leaders and managers have developed strong links with the parish and the Catholic academy trust. The headteacher has been instrumental in bringing together groups within the trust to share good practice, worship together and support one another. Her shared vision and reflective approach is valued by members of the trust and the wider community.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

THE QUALITY OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP	2
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- How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship.
- The quality of provision for the Collective Worship.
- How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship.

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How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship - good

- Pupils respond to and participate well in Acts of Collective Worship. They act with reverence, join in community prayers with enthusiasm and sing joyfully. Appropriate to their age and ability, they are able to compose their own prayers and reflect on the varied themes throughout the liturgical year.
- Pupils are becoming more skilful in using the 'Let us Pray' resources to plan and lead their own liturgies. This now needs to be built upon in order to develop the ability of pupils to use a variety of sources, prayer styles and media in their liturgies.
- The chaplaincy team is becoming increasingly prominent led by the newly appointed chaplain. They are beginning to share their skills with younger pupils which is having a positive impact on the quality of worship in Key Stage 1. They are keen to lead and want to be involved in all aspects of liturgy. As their skills develop, they should aim to become more autonomous.
- Irrespective of faith background, pupils are at ease praying and worshipping together. They are able to articulate the difference that belonging to a prayer community is having on their lives. This is particularly evident in the strong relationships within the school.
- Pupils' evaluation of Collective Worship is at an early stage and now needs to be developed further.

The quality of provision for Collective Worship - good

- The quality of Collective Worship impacts positively on the moral and spiritual development of pupils. Prayer is an integral part of school life; it punctuates the day and is part of all school celebrations. Religious Education lessons often begin with prayer or reflection signifying the importance of this within the curriculum.
- Opportunities for voluntary prayer are taken up enthusiastically by pupils where the response has sometimes been overwhelming. Staff and pupils regularly pray together, this has a positive impact on the sense of a worshipping faith community.
- There is a planned programme of expenditure which has focused on improving resources for Collective Worship. This has improved pupils' understanding of the use of liturgical artefacts and symbols and their knowledge of the liturgical year.
- Parents appreciate the opportunities to join in Acts of Collective Worship; response to this is good.
- Considering the short time that the chaplain has been in post, he has been effective in using his skills to help pupils to develop a good understanding of the purpose of Collective Worship. He is also supporting class teachers in developing their liturgical skills and evaluating their delivery of Collective Worship.

How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship - good

- The headteacher, senior leaders and chaplain know how to plan and deliver quality experiences of Collective Worship. They serve as good role models for the whole school community. They understand the Church's liturgical year and ensure that the learning environment reflects this. They are able to engage pupils in prayer and worship and lead them in appreciating the significance of rituals and symbols of the Church. This was very evident throughout the school during the inspection as pupils prepared for the feast of Pentecost.
- Leaders and managers understand the importance of continuing professional development in this area and have used both expertise within the staff, the diocese and the Catholic academy trust to make improvements. Priority is also given to the spiritual development of staff. The response to this is enthusiastic.
- Leaders and managers have begun to regularly review Collective Worship as part of the self-evaluation process. The views of stakeholders, including parents and carers, need to be evaluated so that these can inform future planning and development.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

THE QUALITY OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION	3
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- How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education.
- The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education.
- How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education.

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How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education - requires improvement

- Pupils enjoy their Religious Education lessons and can explain the value of these in their lives. In some classes, pupils apply themselves diligently and work well at their activities. However, when tasks are not effectively matched to pupils' needs, the pace of learning is not sufficiently accelerated.
- Pupils enter school with knowledge and understanding of Religious Education which is slightly below expectations. By the end of Key Stage 1, the majority of pupils achieve levels in line with diocesan averages. The current Year 2 cohort is on target to continue the upward trend over the last two years. Progress overall in this key stage is good but there are some inconsistencies between teaching groups that need to be addressed.
- The majority of pupils achieve expected levels by the end of Key Stage 2. Given their starting point at the end of Key Stage 1, the proportion achieving these levels is generally below diocesan averages. Evidence does show a slight improvement between 2013 and 2014 but the rate of progress is not sufficiently rapid and therefore requires improvement.

The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education – requires improvement

- There is some evidence of good quality teaching both in lessons observed and in pupils' books, however, this is not consistent across all classes. Whilst some teachers have a sound specialist knowledge and expertise which is evident in planning and teaching, this lacks depth and breadth, resulting in tasks that are not sufficiently challenging in order to meet the needs of all pupils.
- In lessons where good teaching is evident, the pace of learning is good. Teachers have designed differentiated tasks that move pupils' learning on. However, in some classes pupils spend too long on work that does not develop their skills and understanding in Religious Education and as a consequence, the pace of learning is too slow.
- The quality of marking requires improvement. Few opportunities are provided for pupils to respond to marking. This is still an issue to be addressed from the last inspection although in some classes, teachers do provide pupils with next steps. This now needs to be fully embedded throughout the school.
- Teachers' skills in levelling pupils work using the *Levels of Attainment in Religious Education* are being developed and confidence is growing in this area. Care needs to be taken however, to ensure that assessment information is used effectively to inform planning in order to accelerate pupils' learning.
- The use of the 'I can' statements is variable which leads to some pupils being unsure about the targets they have been set. This practice needs to be refined to ensure a more focused and rigorous approach to target setting which leads to all groups of pupils being challenged to make good progress in their learning.

The extent to which leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education – requires improvement

- Leaders and managers conduct a range of monitoring and evaluation activities that provide basic information about pupil progress and achievement in Religious Education. This now needs to be developed into a more robust system that effectively tracks individual pupil progress and impacts on the pace of learning.
- The school is implementing plans that are aimed at improving outcomes such as pupil progress meetings but these have not as yet had time to impact the pace of learning.
- The school has sought advice and support from the Diocesan Education Service and the Catholic academy trust to assist in developing staff confidence in levelling and assessment. This is beginning to have an impact on the quality of assessment but is not yet fully embedded.
- The Religious Education curriculum is planned to meet the interest, needs and aspirations of pupils but the success of this is variable.
- Self-evaluation is largely accurate and honest. The headteacher and senior leaders have a shared vision for the development of Religious Education and have accurately identified areas for improvement. There is parity between staffing, capitation and curriculum time compared to other core subjects. The curriculum meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference.
- Leaders and managers have responded to the large turnover in staff since the last inspection with a planned programme of staff induction. They make good use of opportunities provided by the diocese and in-house expertise to ensure that all staff share their vision for Catholic education and the common good.

SCHOOL DETAILS

School Name:	St Joseph's Catholic Voluntary Academy
Unique Reference Number:	138115
Local Authority:	Leicester

The inspection of this school was carried out on behalf of the Bishop of Nottingham under Canon 806 of Canon Law in accordance with the *evaluation schedule* for diocesan canonical inspections in the Diocese of Nottingham. The inspection reviews and evaluates how effective the school is in providing Catholic education. The process begins with the school's own self-evaluation and the inspection schedule is in line with the criteria set by the National Board of Religious Inspectors and Advisers (NBRIA).

During the inspection, the inspectors observed 9 Religious Education lessons and 1 Key Stage 2 Act of Collective Worship. Meetings were held with the headteacher, the subject leader for Religious Education, the parish priest, the chaplain and governors. Discussions were also held with pupils, including members of the chaplaincy team and parents.

The inspectors scrutinised a range of documents including the school improvement plan, the self-evaluation form and additional monitoring and evaluation evidence. Inspectors also examined the work in pupils' Religious Education books.

Chair of Governors:	Mr Arthur Boynton
Headteacher:	Mrs Andrea Leslie
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WHAT INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS MEAN

Within the report, the following grades are used:

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Requires Improvement
Grade 4	Inadequate

In the context of the whole school, the overall effectiveness grades have the following meaning:

Grade 1	Outstanding	The school is a highly effective Catholic school. Pupils' needs are exceptionally well met.
Grade 2	Good	The school is an effective Catholic school. Pupils' needs are met well.
Grade 3	Requires Improvement	The school is not yet a good Catholic school, it is not inadequate however, and there are aspects that require improvement. There will be a monitoring visit within the next 12 months and the school will be re-inspected within 3 years.
Grade 4	Inadequate	There are features in need of urgent and immediate attention. The school is not meeting the basic minimum requirement for adequacy as a Catholic school. The school will receive an annual monitoring visit and will be re-inspected within 3 years.