



DIOCESE OF
SHREWSBURY

DENOMINATIONAL INSPECTION REPORT:

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

School: St Joseph's Catholic Primary School
Address: Etchells Street
St Petersgate
Stockport
SK1 1EF

Tel No: 0161 480 5029

URN: 106122

Interim Headteacher: Mrs C Spinks

Chair of Governors: Mr M Bourke

Date of Inspection: 1 March 2022

Inspectors: Mr K Toms
Mrs R Moores

Mission Statement

Together at St. Joseph's we learn to love,

Following Jesus,

Sharing God's gifts,

Building God's world.

SCHOOL: St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Stockport

DATE OF LAST INSPECTION: 3rd July 2015

JUDGEMENT FROM PREVIOUS INSPECTION: Outstanding

AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT FROM PREVIOUS INSPECTION

- Build on the solid foundations that have been laid by continuing to improve the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school
- Increase and develop opportunities for children to gain confidence in planning, leading and presenting Collective Worship across the whole school and parish community
- Provide opportunities, through professional development and training for all staff to share responsibility for the continued development of Religious Education across the whole school.

PROGRESS MADE WITH AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT FROM THE PREVIOUS INSPECTION

- Very good progress has been made in all areas for development in the last report. Teaching is good overall with some outstanding areas
- Children have become very confident and skilled in leading and presenting a variety of opportunities in Collective Worship and are well placed to develop further their approaches to Prayer and Liturgy as the guidance unfolds
- Good progress has been made in providing professional development for all staff and governors. Relationships and Sex Education is embedded in the school and reflects Diocesan guidelines. Approaches to Prayer and Liturgy are being developed in response to recent initiatives.

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

2

This is a good Catholic school

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

2

Summary of key findings:

- The Catholic Life of St Joseph's is outstanding. The Mission Statement is fully lived out through the school and the pupils are confident and appreciative of their Catholic tradition, embracing their roles as leaders and are enthusiastic about playing a full part in living out their faith in their local and wider community. They feel safe, nurtured, and fully supported in this friendly and loving community
- All staff and governors have a clear vision for the school and are exemplary role models. They continue to strive for improvements and the appointment of a temporary Headteacher has helped the whole community to continue to move things forward, particularly during a very difficult time
- Parish links are extremely strong and there is a true partnership here at St Joseph's. This has been particularly appreciated by parents at this challenging time. There has been an upturn in adults turning to the Church
- The temporary Headteacher is to be commended for her work in guiding, nurturing, and supporting all within the community
- Governors, the Parish Priest, and his assistant offer very effective support for the faith development of the whole community
- The recent appointment of a new Headteacher and the appointment of new governors will ensure the continued development of this vibrant and loving community.

What the school needs to do to improve further

- The school rightly has a focus on Continuing Professional Development at all levels and this should continue as more opportunities open up to share and develop good practice. This will help to continue to develop the consistency of the good and outstanding teaching in the school
- Good progress has been made in developing the roles of pupils' leadership skills
- Leadership skills at all levels in prayer and liturgy can be developed further now
- Review the Mission Statement again following the recent appointments.

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 led by pupils in Key Stage 2 and pupils in Years One and Two
- 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 over one day:

- Prayer and liturgy were observed in Three Collective Acts of Worship in Key Stage One and Two and also one with Early Years. The School Disciples shared a period of meditation and reflection too
- The School Disciples were interviewed about their roles and about the Catholic Life of the School in general
- Discussions were held with the Headteacher and Religious Education Coordinator. A further discussion was held with the Curriculum Lead teacher and how Religious Education permeated the whole curriculum
- Further discussions were held with the governors and also a further one with the Parish Priest and Assistant Priest
- All year groups were observed in lesson observations
- Further evidence was obtained from all the documentation provided and a scrutiny of pupil work
- The Learning and tour of the school contributed to the whole of the evidence gathering process as well as an initial Zoom meeting to gather information of the impact of the recent pandemic.

Information about this school

- St Joseph's has a proud tradition of 160 years serving this Catholic parish in the heart of Stockport
- It has a small school population of 129 pupils, but it is a very wide varied catchment
- The school serves an area of very real need including some of the most disadvantaged in England
- Pupils with Special Educational Needs are above the national average
- There has been a considerable change in the ethnic make-up of the school and is now serving many families Africa, Europe, the Middle East, South East Asia and Indonesia
- Nurturing and therapeutic support provision helps support many pupils at the school.

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 school's Mission Statement, inspired by Anam Cara's Learn to Love and Love to Learn, is fully lived out and appreciated by almost all the children at St Joseph's. It is rooted in all they do both within the school community and the wider parish and local community in central Stockport
- The pupils talk with pride of their Catholic community and are enthusiastic about how they can serve it. They play a leading and active part in all aspects of school and community life. They are involved in many groups promoting the Church's mission. The School Disciples, Faith in Action Group and the CAFOD Club are indicative of how the pupils embrace the mission of the Church
- Pupils are enthusiastic about the support and help they offer within their community, and they show great empathy towards all in need. They value their links to the parish of St. Joseph's, serving at Mass and leading prayer and Rosary groups for them. They have strong links with Francis House and The Wellsprings Centre close by
- Behaviour is outstanding. The pupils feel safe and cared for. They are extremely appreciative of the support they receive, especially through the nurturing and therapeutic opportunities they encounter
- The pupils value the quiet prayer and nurture areas made available for them. A newly created library is keenly awaited
- Religious Education displays around the school reflect the high status given to the Catholic Life of the School. An impressive prayer and notice board for parents, particularly those with little or no English language skills to engage as fully as possible in the prayer life of the school
- All leaders, staff and governors fully embrace the School's Mission statement, they are excellent role models and ensure that the Catholic Life of the School is at the forefront of all their thinking, supporting the spiritual and academic needs of all in the community
- All policies reflect the high status given to the provision for the Catholic life of the School and Relationships and Sex Education is well established, reflecting Diocesan guidance. The Ten Ten resources effectively support this work
- Religious Education is well supported by the good provision made in Continuing Professional Development
- There is a palpable confidence displayed by the pupils and this is indicative of how well they feel supported and nurtured here at St Joseph's
- The Catholic Life of the School is outstanding.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Religious Education is good

2

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

- Most children make good progress from their varied starting points, and this is particularly so with children with specific learning and emotional needs. Nurturing and therapeutic approaches are particularly effective and skillfully used to support all with specific needs
- Pupils are enthusiastic about their work in Religious Education lessons, showing good recall skills and using appropriate religious literacy. They think carefully and spiritually in their lessons. This leads them to having a good awareness of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life
- The pupils show great empathy for the needs of each other and their wider community. This was witnessed in all the discussion with the children in lessons and in the discussion held with members of the School Disciples Group
- Teaching and learning reflected the good and outstanding progress being made as identified in the Diocesan Self Evaluation Form. Pupils clearly enjoyed the work they were doing in Religious Education. They settled quickly to their tasks in the majority of lessons observed. Recall of prior learning was good and clear objectives shared with the pupils.
- Good questioning techniques are used to challenge pupils' thinking and consolidate learning
- Very good and outstanding teaching and learning was observed where children explored aspects of sacrifice and reconciliation and when older pupils were asked to debate actions that have consequences
- Good reference is made to scripture and the use of appropriate religious language
- An atmosphere of positive affirmation allows the pupils to feel secure in sharing their thoughts and the support offered to pupils with particular needs, ably supported by teaching assistants, ensures that all are able to make good and outstanding progress
- Work scrutiny reflects the pride pupils take in their work and the emphasis placed on Religious Education as having equal status in the curriculum. The creative curriculum and the use of Religious Education in extended writing opportunities help to emphasise the central role the Mission of the Church plays in the Catholic Life of the school
- The pupils' voice plays a central role in the school, and this was reflected in all discussions with the pupils but especially through the School Disciples team
- The Senior Leadership Team have worked hard in the last few years, and particularly during the recent pandemic, to accurately track and assess progress in Religious Education and providing outstanding support during the last challenging months of the pandemic
- Resources in Religious Education are good and very effectively used to support learning and the displays and prayer focuses and quiet areas reflect the schools Mission and ethos

- All staff are very effective role models and pupils spoke of how well they feel supported and take their lead from the examples around them
- Senior leaders and governors have worked hard to keep the School's Mission at the heart of all they do. They are supportive of each other and keen to improve their own skills, making good use of outside support and neighbouring Catholic schools to enhance their mission. Monitoring and assessment are good and lead to a good understanding of the school's needs and how they can enhance future improvements through continuing to develop their own skills
- The Parish Priest, Curate and parish community place the school at the heart of all they do. They spoke of how this has been particularly so during lockdown and the support offered to all in need. They are rightly proud of St Joseph's.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

Collective Worship is good

2

How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship	1
The quality of provision for Collective Worship	2
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship	2

- Prayer and liturgy are central to the life of the school and approached in a very thoughtful, reverent, and spiritual way. The use of meditation was particularly moving
- Pupils are fully engaged in all aspects of leading prayer and liturgy. They value their role and were very skillful in planning and leading the younger children in prayer, meditation, and reflection
- A Collective Act of Worship was a powerful expression of their enthusiasm and leadership skills. It was very spiritual, reflective, and joyful, especial shown in their "mission dance!"
- Good reference is made to the Church's Liturgical Year and gives a clear purpose to all opportunities for prayer and liturgy, making good use of resources and always reflecting the Mission Statement
- Work on other faiths accurately reflects Diocesan guidelines and enables pupils to grow in understanding their faith and that of others
- All classes keep their own Prayer and Liturgy books and how they celebrate together as a class
- The School Disciples lead Rosary and prayers for the parish and are keen to return to more of their involvement in the local community. They are at present preparing to lead pray and reflection in a joint church service with other Christian denominations in Stockport
- Senior leaders are skilled in developing approaches to prayer and liturgy. They are well placed to develop the roles of all in leading prayer and liturgy in its fullness through the school
- Senior leaders accurately monitor and evaluate progress in Religious Education and approaches to Prayer and Liturgy. This helps them to accurately identify areas for future development
- The Parish Priest and Curate offer tremendous support to the school community and play a very supportive role in the formation of staff and pupils
- Parents speak of how supported they feel and the impact this worshipping community has on them. There has been an increase in the number of adults who have returned or sought out membership of this faith community
- St Joseph's is rooted in its Catholic tradition, in which prayer, worship and celebration is at the heart of all they do.