



INSPECTION REPORT

ST JOSEPH and ST TERESA CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Lovers Walk, Wells BA5 2QL

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School No: 933 3361

Headteacher: Mrs Penny Stedman

Chair of Governors: Mr Roger Bird

Canonical Inspection under Canon 806 on behalf of the Diocese of Clifton and
Inspection of Denominational Education under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005

Date of inspection: 18th-19th September 2007

Reporting inspector: Mr Frank Toner

Description of the School

St Joseph's and St Teresa's is a smaller than average primary school in the centre of Wells. It serves the Catholic community from a wide catchment area including Shepton Mallet and Glastonbury. 89% of the 113 pupils are baptised Catholics. The proportion of pupils having special educational needs is below average. The majority of pupils are White British with a small number coming from minority ethnic backgrounds. Pupils' attainment on entry to the school is above average. The school has good links with the parish and local community.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1: Outstanding

Grade 2: Good

Grade 3: Satisfactory

Grade 4: Unsatisfactory

Overall effectiveness of the School

The overall effectiveness of the school is good. There have been many recent developments and changes introduced by the headteacher who demonstrates a clear commitment to the Catholic foundation of the school. The school has a strong Christian ethos and a caring, welcoming atmosphere. Standards of achievement are high and pupils make good progress across both key stages. The spiritual and moral development of the pupils is a particular strength and is evident in all areas of school life. The quality of teaching in RE is good but monitoring and evaluation of the subject is limited. Pupils, staff and members of the parish are proud of their school community.

Grade: 2

Improvement since the last inspection

Since the last inspection, the school faced a turbulent period over an eighteen month period, during which it had three part-time headteachers. A new headteacher was appointed in September 2006 and provided stability and a renewed focus for the school. The school has introduced a new scheme of work in RE and improvements have been made in liturgy and collective worship. The RE curriculum is good but occasionally the work set, despite differentiated tasks, does not always challenge the differing abilities of the mixed year classes. The school environment is bright and stimulating. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility in many areas of school life to which they respond well. The areas for development identified in the last inspection have been addressed.

Grade: 2

The capacity of the school to improve and develop

The school's mission and the systems for developing the Catholic life of the school are clear and well established. Priorities for continued improvement result from the school's thorough self-evaluation process involving staff and governors. Staff support each other well and share a strong sense of commitment and purpose. Together with the strong leadership and management, all indicators show that the school has a good capacity to improve.

Grade: 2

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that the monitoring and evaluation processes in religious education are as robust as those used in other subjects.
- Develop consistent marking of pupils' work in religious education to emulate the best practice used in the school.
- Match work in religious education to the needs of all learners, particularly the most able.

The Catholic Life of the School

Leadership and Management

Leadership of the Catholic life of the school is good. The headteacher has a clear vision of the nature of the Catholic school. The governors are committed to the mission of the school and provide both support and challenge to the headteacher in discharging her duties. Links between parents, parish and the school are excellent. Pupils and parents value the school and its Catholic commitment. The spiritual development of staff is now included in the schools INSET provision with plans for a retreat later in the academic year. The Catholic mission of the school is central to policies and decisions made by the school leaders and contribute to the positive attitudes and excellent behaviour of the children.

Grade: 2

The Prayer Life of the School

Provision for prayer is good and well integrated into the life of the school. In addition to daily class acts of worship, there are whole school assemblies twice a week linked to the “Here I Am” programme. Mass is celebrated in school at the beginning and end of each term and in the parish church on other occasions. Pupils respond with reverence to all acts of worship and actively participate in assemblies and services. The liturgical calendar is well planned and acts of collective worship for the whole school are thoughtfully prepared and are of a high quality. The community looks beyond the school in its involvement in CAFOD, harvest appeals and support for local charities. Year 5 pupils attend an annual retreat with pupils from other schools. The prayer life of the school makes a good contribution to the spiritual and moral development of pupils.

Grade: 2

Religious Education

Achievement and Standards

The level of attainment on entry to the school is above average. Pupils make good progress and by Year 6 standards are high. Pupils with special educational needs receive additional support through well qualified and experienced teaching assistants who are effectively deployed in all classes. Pupils have sound knowledge of bible stories and an understanding of the sacraments. The RE provision contributes to the positive attitudes and excellent behaviour of the children. Pupils acknowledge the benefits of being part of a community which lives then gospel values taught in RE. In lessons pupils are able to relate their own experiences to the life and teachings of Jesus.

Grade: 2

Teaching and Learning in Religious Education

The quality of teaching in RE is good. Lessons are well planned and engage the pupils. Questioning is effective and pupils feel confident sharing their ideas openly in class. Classroom management is a strength throughout the school resulting in excellent teacher-pupil relationships and a positive learning climate. Marking, though regular, does not always guide pupils on how to improve their work. However, there is evidence of exemplary marking where pupils respond to teachers’ written comments. Some tasks for more able pupils require more challenge. End of unit assessments of pupils’ work is good with careful records kept of progress pupils make. It is

not always clear however, how this information is used to inform future lessons.

Grade: 2

Quality of the Curriculum

The curriculum in RE follows the “Here I Am” scheme of work. The time allocation for the subject is in line with Diocesan guidelines. Topics are planned and prepared by staff at the start of each unit of work. Pupils would benefit from having the time to do more sustained and substantial pieces of work in some areas rather than several shorter pieces of writing. Enrichment opportunities outside the classroom enhance the work done in RE and links with other subjects are evident. Pupils are given opportunities to develop responsibility through having specific tasks in the day-to-day running of the school and through the school council. Both promote a sense of genuine partnership and contribution to the school community. The school has recently put into place schemes of work for teaching both relationship education and other faiths. The impact of these will need to be evaluated.

Grade: 2

Leadership and Management of Religious Education

All teachers have a commitment to the subject and recognise its contribution to the wider mission of the school. The department, like the school, is highly inclusive with its view that we are all made in the image of God. Teachers share the view that the subject is not just concerned with achievement but also with faith development. Although the school has a review structure in place, the monitoring and evaluation of RE across the school needs to be developed further as a means to ensure ongoing progression in pupils’ knowledge, skills and understanding. The school’s newsletter keeps parents informed of topics to be covered in RE as well as keeping them abreast of events on the liturgical calendar.

Grade: 3