



Inspection carried out Under Canon 804 and 806  
and in accordance with Section 48 of the Education  
Acts 2005 and 2011

DIOCESE OF SALFORD

Name of School St. Joseph's RC Primary School  
Queen Street, Ramsbottom, Bury, BL0 9JJ  
Inspection date 26<sup>th</sup> November 2019  
Reporting Inspectors Anne Heard, Damian Harrison, Sue Molloy

---

Type of school	Primary
URN	105343
Age range of pupils	3-11
Number on roll	216
Appropriate authority	The Governing Board
Chair of Governors	William McSorley
Headteacher	Emma Moncado
Religious Education Subject Leader	Amy Ardill
Date of previous inspection	17 <sup>th</sup> November 2014
Grade of previous inspection	Outstanding

Explanation of the Grades - 1 = Outstanding, 2 = Good, 3=Requires Improvement, 4 = Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of St Joseph's, Ramsbottom	Overall grade	2
The Catholic Life of the school (incorporating Welcome, Welfare and Witness)	Grade	2
Religious Education (incorporating Word)	Grade	2
Collective Worship	Grade	2

## CHARACTERISTICS AND CONTEXT OF THE SCHOOL

St. Joseph's primary school is part of the Roman Catholic community of the parish of St. Joseph's, Ramsbottom. There are 216 pupils on roll. 69% of pupils and 72% of the staff team are baptised Catholics. There are a small number of pupils with English as an additional language - 5 pupils (2.3%). There are 16 children (7.4%) who are eligible for pupil premium funding, with 9 pupils (4.2%) accessing free school meals. There are 19 children (8.8% of pupils) with Special Educational Needs - 6 of the children have Education Health and Care Plans and 13 are receiving SEN support. The headteacher has been in post for 3 years and has established a new senior leadership team during this time. The school is an active member of the North Bury district cluster of schools, Bury Catholic cluster and SEMH Bury North partnership. The headteacher is a specialist leader of education and has supported other schools through this role. Senior leaders have completed the Catholic Leadership programme.

## OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

St Joseph's is a good school. Parents speak very positively about the school - they appreciate the care, support and nurture shown to their children. The behaviour of the children is excellent, they are able to develop good relationships with each other in a safe and supportive environment. Staff and older children act as role models. There is a real sense of the staff team working together to support the needs of the pupils and their families. Religious Education is the foundation for all other subjects. Leaders at all levels ensure that the teaching of Religious Education covers at least 10% of curriculum time. Worship in many forms - both traditional and contemporary - are successfully introduced to the pupils from an early age.

## THE KEY STRENGTHS OF THE SCHOOL INCLUDE:

- Prayer buddies across the school.
- Relationships between all staff and pupils showing respect, dignity and belonging.
- Teamwork - a strong supportive team who share a common mission and vision.
- Staff team and governors show a strong commitment to the school.

## AGREED AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT:

- To continue to develop positive and purposeful relationships between the parish and the community.
- To allow pupils to be more proactive in developing their responsibility and commitment to the pursuit of the common good at local, national and global levels.
- For children to be more creative and resourceful in their planning of liturgy in order to create powerful experiences which are highly relevant to them.
- To ensure that the children are given greater opportunity to engage in deeper learning in order to secure higher expectations for all learners.

## THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL (incorporating Welcome, Welfare and Witness)

The Catholic Life of the school (incorporating Welcome, Welfare and Witness)	Overall grade	2
Outcomes - The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the School		2
Provision - The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school		2
Leadership - How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school		2

St Joseph's is a good school. Staff at all levels ensure that pupils are supported in developing their roles as missionaries of Christ. From an early age, children are guided in following the teachings of Christ and this continues throughout their school life. One parent referred to the Catholic ethos of the school as "a golden thread that runs through everything". Positive relationships between children are fostered through buddy systems where older children act as role models for younger pupils. There is a very strong sense of community where the welfare and care for children and their families is given the highest priority. Similarly, children are encouraged to support others and are actively involved in both fundraising and providing practical support in the locality to different community groups. Pupil groups, including the eco warriors and school chaplains, have many ideas for projects they would like to get involved in for the future. St Joseph's prides itself on providing a warm welcome to all. Senior leaders have created a staff team who all share the same commitment to creating a safe environment where children are cared for and nurtured, resulting in a truly inclusive environment. The mission statement is known and lived, it is included in all aspects of school documentation and policies and is referred to on a daily basis. Pupils are happy and confident, they demonstrate good behaviour and attitudes to learning. Displays reflect the mission of the school and in all classrooms there are explicit signs of the school's Catholic character. All levels of leadership, including governors, share a common goal to ensure all pupils including the most vulnerable reach their full potential through following Christ's teaching. Nurture groups and Rainbow groups are just some of the ways in which children's individual needs are met. The committed and knowledgeable governors have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities and are fully involved in the self-evaluation of the school. They support and challenge senior leaders and are aware of strengths and weaknesses in different Key stages of the school. They ensure staff are held to account for the Religious Education of pupils and equally hold the leadership team to account for the well-being and pastoral care of pupils and staff. The school listens to parental views and it is clear that positive and effective relationships exist in sharing a common goal to provide pupils with knowledge and skills to be active participants in the Catholic life of the school. Whilst pupils did not refer to the 'common home' or 'common good', it was clear through conversations with pupils and evidence of fundraising and acts of kindness that children from an early age are directed to follow the church's mission. Leaders ensure staff are given a variety of continued professional development opportunities to enable them to develop their knowledge and skills to enhance learning.

#### RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (incorporating Word)

Religious Education (incorporating Word)	Overall grade	2
Outcomes - How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education		2
Provision - The Quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education		2
Leadership - How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education		2

Religious Education is clearly at the centre of all teaching at St. Joseph's. From an early age, children develop their religious literacy and this continues to develop as they progress through the school. The "Come and See" Religious Education scheme is used to guide teachers in delivering the requirements of the Religious Education Curriculum Directory. Pupils' behaviour for learning is good and in the best lessons observed the children concentrated well and showed enthusiasm and engagement in their learning. Children are familiar with quotes from Sacred Scripture and these are used across all subject areas. Children know and adhere to the Mission and Culture statements. Displays in and around the school show evidence of a range of pupils' work produced in lessons. Children are proud of their school and are keen to show off the work they have undertaken in their workbooks and through other media e.g. photographs, floor books and displays. All staff share a commitment to providing a variety of experiences for children to grow in their understanding of the teachings of Christ. Teachers regularly attend training in Religious Education and the social teachings of the church to develop confidence in subject knowledge. In the best lessons seen, pupils were encouraged to ask

questions and to explore the theme of the lessons. Assessments are used to ensure progress is being made in Religious Education. Children enjoy their lessons because they are generally age appropriate and match the needs and interests of the pupils. The acquisition of pupils' religious literacy skills and specific vocabulary helps to promote a deeper understanding of God's creation and their part in it. Big questions are used on a regular basis to develop the children's thinking. Leaders show a strong commitment and enthusiasm for Religious Education and at least 10% of curriculum time is dedicated to its teaching. The Religious Education subject leader is enthusiastic and conscientious in fulfilling her role. With the support of the headteacher, she has put in place an appropriate assessment tool to measure the progress of all pupils. She is keen to develop all aspects of the curriculum and inspire the children in Christian stewardship. The headteacher and governors have shown a commitment to Religious Education by ensuring resources and artefacts are purchased to enhance the provision of the Catholic life of the school and Religious Education curriculum. Pupil chaplains fulfil their role in supporting other children on their faith journey. By developing their role further, they could be allowed to have a deeper impact on the school's mission.

## COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

<b>Collective Worship</b>	<b>Overall grade</b>	<b>2</b>
Outcomes - How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship		2
Provision - The quality of Collective Worship provided by the School		2
Leadership - How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship		2

St. Joseph's staff are committed to developing the prayer life of the school. Children are encouraged to develop their spiritual relationship with God through a variety of prayerful experiences. Children in the early years speak confidently about the different forms of prayer. These early experiences of speaking and listening to God are built on as children progress through the school. Opportunities for Lectio Divina and prayer stations for children and parents emphasise the school's commitment to its mission to bring the children and their families closer to God. Whilst observing an act of Collective Worship children were fully engaged with some pupils leading part of the session. Older pupils are supported in preparing and leading sessions and evidence was seen of some child-initiated acts of Collective Worship. The liturgical year is known by pupils and classroom altars reflect the different times of the year. Prayer buddies are also used effectively for children to act as role models in prayer and worship sessions. Prayer is part of the life of the school and is clearly evident in all areas of the school. Quotes from Sacred Scripture are used effectively to develop the children's knowledge and awareness of the teachings of Christ. Class Masses and the celebration of holy days of obligation are prioritised and the children attend the parish church for these celebrations. Parents spoke positively about the opportunities to attend assemblies, Masses and participate in the sacramental programme with their children. The school has established a 'Stay and Pray' session for parents led by the chaplains. Links with the parish are well established, but both would like to see more opportunities to come together. The community link leader is trying to develop these closer links. The whole school team are committed to supporting the children through the sacramental programme and regularly attend the celebrations throughout the year. The leadership of the school, including the Religious Education subject leader and the community link leader, have created opportunities for both traditional and modern forms of prayer to be available. They are keen to ensure that acts of prayer and worship are inclusive and appropriate for the age and developmental stages of the children. Each year group have a dedicated traditional prayer assigned to their class. Pupil chaplains take an active role in planning and facilitating acts of collective worship. The next steps are to encourage pupils in their creativity and independence in taking on further opportunities to develop worship across the school. Senior leaders provide opportunities for professional development through training courses and visiting other schools to keep up to date with contemporary ideas for prayer and worship. The leaders at all levels are committed to providing the best opportunities for children to develop their relationship with God.