

DIOCESE OF LEEDS DBI



SECTION 48 INSPECTION REPORT

THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL
AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

HOLY FAMILY CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL
Parliament Road
Armley
Leeds
LS12 2LH

School URN	108026
School DfCSF Number	383 / 3372
Chair of Governors	Mr Dean Davidson
Headteacher	Mr Peter McQuillen Strong
RE Subject Leader	Miss Jennifer Wolfe
Date of Inspection	28 th /29 th June 2010
Section 48 Inspector	Mrs Kath Spillane

INTRODUCTION

The Inspection of Holy Family Catholic Primary School 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.

Description of the school

Holy Family is a one form entry school with seven single age group classes and a part time nursery. The school serves the parishes of Holy Family and St Wilfred's Leeds with children transferring after year 6 to several schools in the Leeds area. The school motto, 'To work, to pray, to play, in the light of the Lord' is central to all relationships and aspects of school life.

There are 201 pupils on roll of whom 61% are Catholic and 17% other Christian denominations. The pupils behave well in and out of class and are polite, courteous and considerate. The proportion of children receiving Free School meals is above average and 43% of children live in an area in the lowest 10% of most deprived areas in the country. The percentage of children with special educational needs is slightly above average, the school has a number of traveler children, and there are an increasing number of children with EAL entering the school.

There have been significant changes to the staff in the past year including the appointment of a new Headteacher and RE coordinator. 7.6 of the 8.6 teachers are Catholic and three have the CCRS, all teach Religious Education.

Holy Family is a warm, welcoming school where strong partnership links exist with parents, parish and the local community, and the very active parents association, provides financial support for a variety of projects. The school is inclusive by nature and the needs of individual pupils and their families are given great consideration. There is additional childcare available before school provided by a private organization.

The school has the Healthy Schools and Activemark Awards and holds the Inclusion Chartermark and Artsmark. Holy Name works closely with the Armley Cluster Extended Services and is working with the network towards the Stephen Lawrence Award.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL

The overall effectiveness of the provision for the Catholic life of the school, of curriculum RE, and the school's main strengths and areas for development.

The provision of Catholic education at Holy Family is good with some outstanding qualities. The school has an accurate view of its own strengths and development needs and has an outstanding capacity to improve. There is a shared positive commitment in the school with everyone wanting to accelerate the level of progress.

It is a happy and caring community, where pupils feel safe and enjoy coming to school and parents and visitors are welcomed into the community. The children are valued, affirmed and supported. The standards in Religious Education are good overall and during their time at Holy Family most pupils make good progress.

The areas of the RE curriculum that need development are notably, setting clear and challenging targets for all pupils, and the use of effective assessment to ensure that progress can be effectively monitored and pupils know what they need to do to improve

Assessment is an issue that the school will address after the new RE scheme has been implemented in the new school year, so that standards of attainment throughout the school can be monitored and areas for development in teaching and learning addressed.

The effectiveness of any steps taken to promote improvement since the last inspection

Since they came to the school in September the Headteacher and RE coordinator have shown drive and commitment to ensure that RE is prioritised as an area for focused development. The coordinator has effectively identified areas for development, producing a very clear three year action plan for Religious Education which is reflected in the School Development Plan, enabling all staff and governors to identify and concentrate on priorities for improvement.

The RE coordinator, together with the Headteacher has initiated monitoring and evaluation of the quality of teaching in RE and RE curriculum provision. With improved assessment practices and the introduction of the new diocesan scheme, 'The Way, the Truth and the Life', standards achieved in other subjects should also be achieved in RE.

The Stephen Lawrence Award is being worked towards in conjunction with the family of schools and this is enabling staff to identify good practice in social and community cohesion within the school and in the local area. The children study Judaism as part of the annual calendar of RE topics, however the children lack any significant depth or knowledge of other faiths and this should be regarded as an area for development in order to reflect the changing population of Leeds.

The capacity to make further improvements

The school has an accurate view of its strengths and development needs and has a strong capacity to make further improvements and has indicated its firm intention to do so through its School Improvement Plan and detailed RE Action Plan.

What steps need to be taken in order to further improve the provision of Catholic education?

- The Headteacher and RE Co-ordinator should continue to carry out rigorous monitoring to ensure that agreed systems and procedures are used consistently in all classes.
- Assessment of RE and tracking of pupils' attainment and achievement must be a priority development for the school. This will allow for more informative, strategic decision making by Governors and leaders of the school and ensure that the needs of all children are met.
- Opportunities for children to develop their knowledge of other World faiths should be included in the review and development of the RE curriculum.

THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

How effective are Leadership and Management in developing the Catholic life of the school?

The leadership and management of the Catholic life of Holy Family is outstanding. Development needs have been accurately and quickly identified and the leadership of the school has proceeded to tackle the areas for development with enthusiasm and vigor.

Very good links have developed with parents, parish and external agencies to reinforce the high standard of care, guidance and support which the school provides to ensure its pupils' safety and general well-being. Parents suggest that the approachability and availability of the headteacher and all the staff has encouraged them to be more actively involved in the life of the school.

The inclusion of all pupils is central to the school's mission and those with special needs are well supported during lessons. Two members of staff have been trained to facilitate the 'Rainbows' programme for children requiring additional support through bereavement or changes in home circumstances, and a learning mentor is actively involved in developing home and family support.

The governing body supports the school by always seeking to appoint well qualified staff to the school who are supportive of the school's Catholic ethos. The governor's role in monitoring and evaluating RE and the catholic life of the school is continuing to develop. The named RE governor, who is the Parish Priest, is now a frequent visitor to the school and his influence is appreciated by all members of the community. He actively works towards links between parish, school and community and supports the pastoral care and sacramental preparation of the pupils.

The school has strong partnerships with other local schools and agencies within the LA and Diocese.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

How good is the quality of Collective Worship?

The Eucharist and prayer are central to the life of the school. There is now a range of formal and informal opportunities for prayer and the children act with reverence and are keen to participate. Children prepare and read prayers and scripture and they now take an active part in the Collective Worship, leading and participating in assemblies, liturgies and masses. A whole school Mass during the inspection, for the Feast of St Peter and St Paul, was celebrated in Church and was led by children from Years 1 and 2, with the choir leading the singing.

All classes have a focal point based on the current 'Here I Am' theme, and this is used as a focus for class worship and prayer.

Parents are encouraged to attend the masses and liturgies which the children celebrate in school and church and they are also encouraged to reflect on the Gospel through the use of the 'Wednesday Word' each week. During Advent the 'Travelling Crib' was introduced as a further opportunity to support family prayer. Parents are very positive about the development of RE throughout the school, and spoke of 'the seeds of faith being planted in the nursery'. An observed carpet time in nursery confirmed this, with the youngest children in the school reading their own prayers, listening with reverence and singing with enthusiasm!

Collective Worship is now having a significant contribution to the spiritual and moral development of the children.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

ACHIEVEMENT AND STANDARDS IN RE

How well do pupils achieve in RE?

The school meets the Diocesan guidelines for recommended times of teaching RE. The content of RE is provided by the 'Here I Am' scheme although in September the new scheme, 'The Way ,the Truth and the Life' is to be introduced into the school following staff training. The school will then need to develop its RE assessment procedures in order to ensure a better understanding of pupil achievement in RE and determine standards of attainment for all pupils.

The school maintains evidence, which confirms that standards in RE are good. Pupils gain knowledge, skills and understanding across all key stages and there is no evidence to suggest that any pupils under-perform. The school's strong commitment to inclusion means that pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are well supported in RE. Planning shows appropriately differentiated activities which ensure all children have access to the RE curriculum and support staff give good support to the children in their care.

THE QUALITY OF PROVISION IN RE

How effective are Teaching and learning in RE?

Teaching and learning is good overall. Teachers have good subject knowledge of RE and a commitment to teaching the faith. Work is differentiated and children with specific learning needs are supported well during lessons. Teachers use a variety of teaching strategies, including ICT, to ensure that children remain focused and engaged during the lessons. The youngest children were captivated and excellent use was made of 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar' as a focus for exploring one of God's treasures, which was relevant and linked directly to the EYFS planning for 'God's lovely world'. In Key stage 2 children used a variety of techniques to help them explore and understand the treasures of God's kingdom, including 'hot seating', photography and an activity using the character 'Where's Wally?!'

RE is now part of the annual schedule of monitoring and evaluation and children are encouraged to develop independent learning skills. Work is leveled and submitted to the RE coordinator but the planned development of assessment procedures will ensure that the progress of all the children is closely monitored and teachers will be able to tailor work more effectively to plan their lessons.

How well does the RE curriculum meet the needs and interests of pupils?

The school effectively meets the Religious curriculum needs and interests of learners. An average of 10% of curriculum time is allocated to RE, which fulfills the requirements of the Bishops of England and Wales.

The content of the RE curriculum currently follows the 'Here I Am' programme. At the time of the inspection the topic, 'Treasures' was evidenced throughout the school. Most children are able to make progress in their knowledge, skills and understanding and are aware of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life. Monitoring of RE is undertaken as part of the school's Monitoring and Evaluation calendar by the Headteacher and the RE coordinator and results of this monitoring are shared with staff. Samples of levelled work are used to monitor standards and these will form the basis of a portfolio in the future.

The entrance to the school has a warm welcoming atmosphere clearly celebrating the mission of the school. A well planned display here is focused on the work of the cluster of schools for the Stephen Lawrence Award. This helps both adults and children to develop a sound knowledge and appreciation of their own and other faiths and contributes to the children's spiritual and moral development. Other faith teaching could be further enhanced by visits to places of worship and the inclusion into the curriculum of other faith visitors.

The provision for education in personal relationships is good and the school ensures that all pupils receive a suitable and age related programme of sex education. Through the RE and PSHCE curriculum the school provides pupils with regular opportunities to explore social issues. Children are encouraged to show empathy with those less fortunate than themselves by planning fundraising activities, for example, shoe boxes for Afghanistan, bun sales for the Haiti Appeal and for NSPCC. These initiatives make a positive contribution to the children's cultural, moral and spiritual development.

The School Council meets regularly and are beginning to understand their role as a pupil voice for other children. The children were excited by the establishment of houses which have encouraged children to work as teams and support each other throughout the school. Children support each other and older children buddy with the younger children in the school.

Parents are kept informed of opportunities to support their children both at home and at school and they have welcomed a third opportunity to discuss their child's progress at the end of the school year. They report that their children enjoy coming to school because, 'They feel that they belong.'

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF RE

How effective are Leadership and Management in raising achievement and supporting all pupils in RE?

The RE coordinator has a strong sense of the educational mission of the Church and supports all staff in their commitment to developing the subject's aims and values. She has quickly identified development needs and is committed to ensuring the continued raising of standards and also continuing to develop the home parish school links. Resources are well used to support teaching and learning and sufficient funds are available to ensure development.

All children have equal access to all opportunities provided by the school. The inclusion of all children is central to the school's vision that all are created in the image of God, and the school is very effective in this.

Very good links have developed between the school and parents and they value this new openness and commitment to working together, the impact is seen in attendance at assemblies, liturgies and school events.

The RE governor/Parish Priest is committed to developing his role as a ‘critical friend’ to the staff of the school and the governing body is kept informed of all aspects of the RE curriculum and the Catholic life of the school.

INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS SUMMARY

ASPECT	GRADE	DESCRIPTOR
OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS	2	Good
THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL		
How effective are Leadership and Management in developing the Catholic life of the school?	1	Outstanding
How good is the quality of Collective Worship?	1	Outstanding
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION		
How well do pupils achieve in RE?	2	Good
How effective are Teaching and learning in RE?	2	Good
How well does the RE curriculum meet the needs and interests of pupils?	2	Good
How effective are Leadership and Management in raising achievement and supporting all pupils in RE?	1	Outstanding