

# DIOCESE OF LEEDS



DIOCESAN BOARD FOR INSPECTION

## SECTION 48 INSPECTION REPORT

THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL  
AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

St Patrick's Catholic Primary School

Hullenedge Road

Elland

Halifax

HX5 0QX

School URN

107557

School DfE Number

381/3327

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Chair of Governors

Mr. M Bowden (acting)

Headteacher

Mr. A Parker

RE Subject Leader

Mr. A Parker

Date of Inspection

October 4<sup>th</sup> - 5<sup>th</sup> 2010

Section 48 Inspector/s

Mrs. B Ford

## INTRODUCTION

The Inspection of St Patrick's 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. The inspection reviews and evaluates how effective the school is in providing Catholic education. This process begins with the school's own self - evaluation.

The inspection schedule follows criteria set by the National Board of Advisers and Inspectors.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Patrick's Catholic Primary School is a small school with a strong Catholic tradition in the community and a tangible Catholic ethos, serving the parishes of St Patrick's, Elland and St Alban's, Halifax. Some pupils attend from a wider area and overall there is a wide variety of social circumstances. The large majority of pupils come from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is below average, but there is an above average proportion of pupils on the school's SEN register. The Early Years Foundation Stage was opened in 2008. All children are organised into mixed-age classes. There have been significant changes to the leadership of the school, culminating in the Headteacher's resignation in August 2010. An experienced Catholic Headteacher has taken interim responsibility from September 2010. There are 115 pupils on roll of whom 70% are Catholic and the rest of other Christian denominations. Two of the five teachers are Catholic and all teach Religious Education (RE). The school holds the 'Healthy Schools' status and Level 2 of the International Award and the Rotary Club Certificate of Appreciation Award for fund-raising and services to the community.

## OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

3
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## CAPACITY FOR SUSTAINED IMPROVEMENT

3
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## OUTCOMES FOR PUPILS

2
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## PROVISION FOR CATHOLIC EDUCATION

3
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## MAIN FINDINGS

St Patrick's school has a strong Catholic ethos and has good links with the parish, parents and the local community. Very positive relationships exist within and beyond the school. Parents and governors are proud of their small school and its strong Catholic tradition. Outcomes for pupils and the provision for Catholic Education are satisfactory with some good features.

Since the last RE Inspection, there has been little improvement towards establishing and maintaining rigorous and effective systems for monitoring and evaluating the impact of all initiatives relating to the school's Catholic life and RE arising from the School Improvement Plan

(SIP). Leadership by the experienced, interim, Catholic headteacher will give twelve months much needed stability and bring about improvements in whole school vision and practice. The Diocese will need to advise on future sustainable leadership of this small Catholic school.

Most pupils make expected progress in RE, given their starting points. Pupils behave very well and they are highly considerate of others. They make a very positive contribution to a cohesive community where all feel safe. Pupils and parents make huge contributions to the wider community, including Overgate Hospice and the local Rotary Club, as well as the international community, and have won awards for their fantastic efforts. Where the quality of teaching in Religious Education is good, pupils are challenged and benefit from a variety of teaching styles and very good use of technology. Due to insufficient collaboration, teaching is deemed satisfactory overall.

A whole school approach is needed, for teaching and assessing progress in RE, with work scrutiny carried out regularly and systematic evaluation shared with staff. School has worked hard to enhance collective worship over a period of time. The beautiful Chapel is well-managed and used regularly for informal prayer and reflection.

### **What the school needs to do to improve further:**

- Develop the setting and tracking of “child friendly” and “age appropriate” RE targets, based around the new Levels of Attainment in RE, using support materials already developed by the Diocese, so that all pupils know what they have to do next in order to improve their learning, utilising the already good AfL practice in other subjects, by fully implementing the marking and feedback policy, in RE, giving pupils time to review the teachers comments and understand the next steps in their learning.
- The school should develop the action plan for Religious Education giving a clear indication of when the subject is to be monitored, by whom, cost implications (time and money) and success criteria against which the action will be judged to fully inform the Governors and RE subject leader / headteacher, of pupil attainment and progress in the subject. This should provide the format of an ongoing and rigorous monitoring cycle for RE.
- Staff training should continue to be a priority for the school leadership, linking with other Catholic schools to share best practice when implementing the phased introduction of the new RE scheme recommended by the Diocese to improve consistency in the teaching, assessment and tracking of pupil progress in RE.

## PUPILS

### How good outcomes are for pupils, taking particular account of variations between different groups

2

Most pupils make expected progress in RE, given their starting points. Self-assessment is encouraged and at the end of the 'Babies' topic, pupils observed, "I appreciate how difficult it is being a parent" and "As the Eagle feeds its young, so God feeds us with His Word." Pupils with SEN receive differentiated teaching and support and make good progress. At the end of KS2 standards achieved in Religious Education, do not match those of other core subjects, since several pupils could have achieved level 5 in RE.

The stunning Centenary crucifix illustrates (with pupils' artwork) the Catholic tradition in Elland, with Christ at the centre, and could be re-sited in a more prominent position. Pupils behave very well and they are highly considerate of others. They make a very positive contribution to a cohesive community where all feel safe and parents and governors note how older pupils nurture the younger ones, "This is a family, with a long history. The older children look out for the younger ones in the playground and coming back from church."

Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is also good. All live out the Catholic mission, 'St Patrick's is a Catholic community in which everyone is valued as a member of God's family', by making huge contributions to the wider community (Katolicka wspólnota), including Overgate Hospice and the local Rotary Club, as well as the international community, and have won awards for their fantastic efforts. The local community is welcomed to school performances and special events. Senior parishioners are invited to have 'Golden Link' lunch at the school each week. Pupils show an understanding of the need to forgive, be forgiven and have a good understanding of right and wrong. In Circle Time a pupil said, "My friend's best quality is being a peacemaker."

The 'What Would Jesus Do?' house badges are an excellent reminder to live as a Christian. "When someone hurt me and I wanted to hurt them back, I looked at the WWJD badge and did not retaliate." Parents use this at home to remind children how to behave. Pupils benefit from the well-organised school and parish Masses and services throughout the liturgical year. The tiny, but beautiful, school chapel is a focus for developing pupils' understanding of the nature of prayer and why this is a Catholic school.

A young child wrote, "Father in Heaven, thank you for giving us food to make us grow big." Another prayed, "Dear God, thank you for when I am upset You pick me back up." Pupils are given opportunities to take a full part in Collective Worship in school, where they act with reverence. They sing joyfully, reflect in silence and join in community prayers appropriately and with confidence. Choir members were auditioning enthusiastically for solos and descants for the forthcoming Harvest Service. Older pupils welcome the opportunity to plan and lead Class Worship with either a personal or worldwide focus. One focused on a sick grandmother, another, the suffering on both sides in Afghanistan. These sessions impacted strongly on the other pupils. "The class was very quiet. They listened with 'open ears'."

# PROVISION

## How effective the provision is for Catholic education

3

Where the quality of teaching in Religious Education is good, pupils are challenged and benefit from a variety of teaching styles and very good use of technology. However, where more than one teacher is leading learning in RE, there needs to be better communication and collaboration in planning and assessment, to ensure consistently good teaching and learning.

The Catholic ethos is integral to the very good Early Years provision in Foundation Stage, where children thrive on praise and high expectations. Support provided by other adults, in school, is well focused and makes a significant contribution to the quality of learning and all staff are dedicated and part of St Patrick's family.

A good lesson for older pupils on 'Initiation' included relevant, integrated prayer writing, which enhanced learning, 'I thank you Lord for giving me the strength and courage to take my first steps in this school. I love you Lord and offer this prayer in Your honour.'

In another lesson, explicit links with Literacy maximised learning, but overshadowed the religious focus.

Marking and feedback is inconsistent. A whole school approach is needed, with work scrutiny carried out regularly and the evaluation shared with staff. School completes the assessments from 'Here I Am', but the use of this data is inconsistent in tracking progress. No Level 5s were recorded in 2010, nor targeted for 2011. Foundation Stage need to use RE baseline assessments as soon as possible to enable progress to be demonstrated.

Circle time makes an important contribution to meeting pupils' needs through the Religious Education curriculum. The use of 'Statements to Live By' could be 'whole school' and an integral part of Collective Worship. There are good resources available for teaching other faiths, but pupils' knowledge and understanding is superficial and confused. Previous visitors of other faiths had an impact on learning at the time.

School has worked hard to enhance Collective Worship over a period of time.

The Chapel is well managed and used regularly for informal prayer and reflection. Attendance by parents and others associated with the school is facilitated and encouraged.

The parish organist is the school pianist and staff who are also parishioners forge strong links and encourage pupil participation at weekend Mass and special celebrations, for example the forthcoming Harvest Service.

One Class Collective Worship, celebrating 'Babies' which was well attended by parents and carers, gave the message 'What a baby needs most is love and care.' Pupils sang, "He's got the whole World in His hands" very enthusiastically.

Where pupils are allowed to plan and lead Class Worship this impacts highly on spiritual development, however where pupils have a passive role, little spiritual response was noted.

# LEADERS AND MANAGERS

**How effective leaders and managers are in developing the Catholic life of the School**

**3**

The interim headteachers have been very effective in supporting staff, parents, carers, pupils and governors, ensuring that effective evaluation of the school has produced a clear vision to steer the school forward. This school development plan also needs to address the Catholic Life and RE priorities for the school.

Planning in RE is good individually, but there needs to be a whole school, collaborative approach with systematic evaluation and formalised monitoring.

Due to illness, chaplaincy has not been as regular, as in the past. Fr. Leonard is passionate about the Catholicity of the school and is working closely to guide the new head, as RE governor to the school and as the Parish Priest. Other governors need to share this responsibility for RE and Catholic Life. The re-constituted governing body are keen for their small Catholic school to improve and express their support for the Church's mission in education and rely heavily on guidance from Church agencies to give it direction.

Governors discharge their statutory and canonical responsibilities. Several are visible in the school community, to support staff and pupils. Some governors know the strengths and areas for development of the school and understand the challenges it faces and are directly involved in setting appropriate priorities for improvement. They regularly consult parents and carers, who feel school is approachable and will resolve any issues. They appreciate the home/school/parish link that comes with the 'Wednesday Word' and are proud of the Centenary Crucifix and the strong Catholic tradition at St Patrick's. They would like to see RE being discussed on parents' evening as well as core subjects.

Activities to promote partnership are effectively planned and relate well to global links as well as local community and national interests. The Advent Service is celebrated jointly with local Catholic Schools. INSET for High School feeder schools has provided opportunities to share in good practise and the planned October session will focus on utilising the new scheme 'The Way, The Truth, and The Life.'

In the context of the distinctive identity of the Catholic school, the inclusion of all is a central goal and a shared vision. The school actively promotes pupils' initiative in learning about and supporting charities at local, national and global levels. For example, CAFOD, Shelter Boxes, The Long Walk (sponsoring a child in school raising money for 'Candlelighters' and 'Totally Locally' have benefitted from pupils' efforts and an astounding £2,272.49 was raised for Haiti. A grateful recipient wrote, "I think the amount raised by 100 children is magnificent. This will help people who have lost virtually everything."

## INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS SUMMARY

	Grade <sup>1</sup>
<b>Overall effectiveness</b> -How effective the school is in providing Catholic education.	<b>3</b>
<b>The school's capacity for sustained improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>How good outcomes are for individuals and groups of pupils, taking particular account of variations between different groups</b>	<b>2</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education</b></li> </ul>	<b>3</b>
<i>Taking into account:</i>	<b>3</b>
❖ the quality of pupils' learning and their progress	<b>2</b>
❖ the quality of learning for pupils with particular learning needs and/or disabilities and their progress	<b>3</b>
❖ pupils' attainment in Religious Education	<b>2</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life of the school</b></li> </ul>	<b>2</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship</b></li> </ul>	<b>2</b>
<b>How effective the provision is for Catholic education</b>	<b>3</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>The quality of teaching in Religious Education</b></li> </ul>	<b>3</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>The use of assessment to support learning in Religious Education</b></li> </ul>	<b>3</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>The extent to which the Religious Education curriculum meets pupils' needs</b></li> </ul>	<b>3</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>The quality of collective worship provided by the school</b></li> </ul>	<b>2</b>
<b>How effective leaders and managers are in developing the Catholic life of the School</b>	<b>3</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic life of the school and plan and implement improvement to outcomes for pupils</b></li> </ul>	<b>3</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>How well leaders and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education and plan and implement improvement to outcomes for pupils</b></li> </ul>	<b>3</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>The extent to which the governing body provides effective challenge and support for the Catholic dimension of the school so areas needing development are tackled decisively and statutory and canonical responsibilities met</b></li> </ul>	<b>2</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>How well leaders and managers develop partnerships with other providers, organisations and services in order to promote Catholic learning and pupil well-being</b></li> </ul>	<b>1</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>How effectively leaders and managers promote Community Cohesion</b></li> </ul>	<b>1</b>

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1: Outstanding/Excellent in all or most respects; Grade 2: Very Good/Good overall; may have some excellent features or some which are only satisfactory; Grade 3: Satisfactory; may have some good or some less than satisfactory features; Grade 4: Inadequate