

DIOCESE OF LEEDS DBI



SECTION 48 REPORT

THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL
AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

St Theresa's Catholic Primary School
Leeds

School URN

108039

Chair of Governors

John Cockshutt

Headteacher

John Hutchinson

RE Subject Leader

Catherine Crowley

Date of Inspection

21st & 22nd January 2009

s48 Inspectors

Mrs B Ford & Mrs K Spillane

INTRODUCTION

The Inspection of St Theresa's Catholic Primary School, Leeds 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

St Theresa's is one of the largest Catholic primary schools in the Diocese, with 531 pupils on roll including part-time Nursery. It has extensive grounds and is accommodated over three floors. The current headteacher has been in post since April 2007.

Recent closure of St Gregory's Catholic Primary School in September 2008 means that pupils now come from St Theresa's and St Gregory's parishes, which cover a wide geographic area with a varied social-economic mix. The school now has over 70 members of staff; 11 of whom joined the school in Sept 2008. The school has close links with St Theresa's parish and the desire to continue to develop those with St Gregory's parish. 10% of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds: a very small proportion speaks English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is below average.

The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is also below average but the number with a statement of SEN is average. The school has a large nursery and there is also an independent child-care facility on the same site. The school holds the Inclusion Charter Mark; IIP; ActiveMark; Healthy Schools Award and Advanced Healthy Schools status.

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?	2	Good
How good is the quality of Collective Worship?	2	Good
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION		
How well do pupils achieve in RE?	1	Outstanding
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?	2	Good

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL

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

The quality of Catholic education at St Theresa's is good with many outstanding aspects. The school's practical dedication to promoting the welfare of the pupils, based upon a clear and happy embracing of the Catholic faith is evidenced by governors, staff, parents and children alike.

A parent explained her reason for choosing St Theresa's Catholic school as, "*To help me teach my children in their faith... I have watched them mature in faith, knowledge and understanding of God and in their reverence to prayer...I thank everyone who has a part in that.*"

The effectiveness of steps taken to promote improvement since the last Inspection.

The school has put in place the SRE programme, 'In the beginning...' , purchased resources to support KS2 children in referencing and research, planned more consistent opportunities for pupils to develop their knowledge and understanding of other faiths and cultures, and improved display to reflect better the Catholicity of the school and ensured that RE has a high profile in school

In addition to this the school has, under the leadership and management of the new headteacher revised the school's Mission Statement and strap-line, "Walking in Theresa's Little Way"; revised the Strategic Aims for Continuous School Improvement, integrated 47 pupils and 11 new staff in September 2008 following the closure of St Gregory's Catholic School and introduced a weekly newsletter that has a religious content relevant to the particular season of the Church's year.

The capacity to make further improvements.

The School has outstanding capacity to improve even further and has indicated its intention to do so through its Single Integrated Development Plan. There is a shared positive commitment in the school with everyone wanting to accelerate the level of progress.

How might the school further improve the provision of Catholic education?

The school should:

- ensure that the plans for developing the school's worship space are implemented within the stated timescale, as an asset to the spiritual life of the school community, whilst providing more opportunities for pupils to be involved in planning and leading Collective worship
- continue to develop rigorous and effective systems of monitoring and evaluation of RE to ensure consistency of teaching and learning throughout the school.

THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

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

Governors fulfil their key responsibilities in supporting school life and have increased their oversight through their regular meetings, (particularly the chair and RE governor). They have booked a training session led by a previous diocesan officer to assist them in their monitoring role. The headteacher, a dynamic leader, is clearly focused on the school's Catholic mission, and his leadership is outstanding. A parent was pleased to note '*The changes and initiatives have been a breath of fresh air and have certainly had a positive influence on my children*'.

The head teacher is very well supported by the Senior Leadership Team, RE leader and all staff, who, through their vocation, actively endorse the mission statement *'To deliver an outstanding and distinctive Catholic education with Christ at the heart of our community.....by Walking in Theresa's Little Way'*

The highly successful integration of St Gregory's pupils is an excellent example of Social Cohesion and was nurtured by the dedicated Deputy who made himself readily available and consulted parents, governors and pupils. A parent commented *'The inclusive nature of the school promotes an extended family feeling, and the open-door ethos provides reassurance for the resolution of any issues'*

Monsignor Holroyd is regularly in school, visiting each class over a term. He is closely involved with planning for the school liturgies/Masses and is the school governor for RE. Since there are 2 parishes, Fr Kelly's involvement and the use of St Gregory's church is now being developed and Monsignor Holroyd and Fr Kelly have agreed that they will share chaplaincy support to the school.

Pupils play an active part in fundraising initiatives and are generous in their support of those in need, locally and around the world. The pupils behave extremely well in and out of class, and are polite, courteous and considerate.

A proud parent who witnessed the exemplary behaviour of St Theresa's pupils at the Sports Centre, (whilst working on a re-fit) which was in direct contrast to the unruly behaviour of other schools, felt compelled to email the headteacher and congratulate the pupils and staff *" I am so proud that's the school I send my children to...a massive well done to all staff and pupils"*

The spiritual development and prayer life of the staff includes regular sessions led by the RE subject leader, the participation in a major ethos and mission statement day, and recently in a training day related to the forthcoming RE inspection. The RE governor has discussed with the subject leader the possibility of some future involvement in ongoing spiritual support to the teaching staff for their preparation and presentation of RE in the school.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

How good is the quality of Collective Worship?

The quality of Collective Worship is good with some outstanding elements. Collective Worship contributes significantly to the Spiritual and Moral development of the children and is linked to the current Here I Am theme and the liturgical year. Children enter into, and contribute to, the prayer and liturgical life of the school in a very reverent manner.

An excellent Phase Collective Worship was observed which had been planned and delivered by the pupils and was celebrated in a prayerful and respectful atmosphere, following the diocesan guidelines. Quiet reflection during Collective Worship is a strength throughout school and pupils are also encouraged to see the link between Gospel values and the relevance to their own lives.

Daily Collective Worship should be monitored by the RE subject leader, to ensure that the high quality of worship observed in some classes is consistent throughout the school, and that pupils are instrumental in planning and leading liturgy, on a regular basis. Last summer, the year 5 class worship was prepared by the pupils and involved their skills of music, singing, reading, dramatisation and reflection. They commented *"It's really good fun doing it yourself"*

The pupils' singing is excellent and music at Mass is a real strength. Another excellent Phase Collective Worship, highlighted this wonderful singing and use of music in liturgy. The 'signed' hymn 'God Hears Me' demonstrated the pupils' enthusiasm for active spiritual involvement. The 'Big Sing, Liturgy Thing' led by CJM was introduced at (and by) St Theresa's in 2008 for Y6 and will now be an annual event in the Autumn Term for all the Catholic feeder schools into Corpus

Christi Catholic College. The impact of the BSLT was tremendous; the Y6s from all the schools involved had an inspirational, spiritual experience that they will never forget.

The servers are pleased to set up for Mass in school which is a very joyous occasion and hugely popular with parents and members of the parish communities. This is a very visible sign of the presence of God in the school/parish communities. Masses and celebrations have been held in St Theresa's church throughout the year, and there are plans to worship at St Gregory's church and to build stronger links with the parish. Both parishes invite the children to receive the first sacraments and are pleased that school collaborates in their preparation.

The school hall has no permanent focal point of worship (due to community use of the hall in the evenings) and staff have to devise a new one for each Phase Worship.

When asked what could be improved about worship, pupils said they would like to use the Chapel again, when it is ready. The leadership and governors give unreserved support to a project to refurbish and develop the chapel as an asset to the spiritual life of the school community.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

How well do pupils achieve in RE?

The school's very thorough system of assessment shows that children enter the school at a level below average and leave in Year 6, achieving above average levels of attainment.

There is strong commitment to inclusion in all areas of school life and this is also evident in RE. Children in the school, including those with special needs, benefit from very well planned, good teaching and take an active part in their learning. Behaviour of all children in the RE lessons observed was exemplary; they are confident and readily contribute to discussions. Pupils are challenged to think spiritually, ethically and theologically, and to become aware of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life

Children in the Foundation Stage are enabled to develop cross-curricular links with other subjects to enhance their understanding and enjoyment of Religious Education. For example, children, after discussing a journey to church, were able to enact a visit to church and name the signs and symbols seen in the church, the learning intention was supported by a variety of well planned and appropriate Art, literacy and drama activities.

The school's tracking system indicates that by the end of Key stage 2, 95.5% of children have achieved level 4 and above. Children generally find RE topics exciting, especially when supported by effective use of ICT, such as the use of the electronic voting system to measure the children's personal evaluation of their learning at the end of the lesson. They are given structured opportunities to discuss and formulate opinions on religious themes and topics and this is evident in the high quality work produced in the children's RE books and in displays around the school. School has identified the need to ensure that more able children are given higher order tasks.

Targets have recently been introduced in RE based on the diocesan levels of attainment. Although some children are aware of their targets, it is too early to evaluate their impact on learning.

How effective are teaching and learning in RE?

Observations undertaken during this Inspection, indicate that the teaching of RE is good with some outstanding features. The 'Here I Am' programme is used well to meet the needs of the pupils at St Theresa's, and staff are encouraged to attend appropriate diocesan training to support their own professional and personal development. The inclusive ethos of the school and the commitment, patience and hard work of the support staff, working in partnership with class teachers, ensures that children, including those with special needs, make good progress in RE.

The quality of teaching and learning observed ranged from satisfactory to good with outstanding features. In all lessons observed, reference was made to prior learning and children responded well. Learning intentions are referred to and shared with all children and there are a variety of teaching methods and strategies used to encourage and engage pupils. In the most effective lessons, the work was appropriately differentiated to meet the wide variety of needs of the children and questioning is varied and challenges all children to respond and engage in the lesson.

Throughout the school the children have a very mature approach to their Religious Education lessons and are willing to answer questions and discuss their feelings and beliefs. This was very evident in an outstanding Circle Time in Key Stage 1 where the children were respectful, engaged and willing to take an active part in the session. The focus of the Circle Time was based on the weekly Ethos statement which is introduced at the Monday morning whole school assembly, and is displayed in each classroom and around the school. Opportunity for prayer and reflection during lessons makes a very good contribution to the Spiritual and Moral development of the pupils.

Monitoring of the teaching and learning of RE has been prioritised in the very detailed Single Integrated Development Plan (SIDP) for the Spring term. Staff use the diocesan medium term planning format for Here I Am, but as there is no common short term planning format, there is a variability in the quality of short term planning so it is important that the evaluation is shared, and that support is given to all staff to ensure standards of teaching, planning and presentation are consistent throughout the school.

Parents are informed about special events through the excellent, popular weekly newsletters and responses to the schools' questionnaire are very positive. They feel they are kept informed and encouraged to support their children's learning in RE. A parent commented " *The teaching staff are excellent at providing varying challenges and capturing positives in all they do.*"

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

The RE curriculum is organised around the teaching of Jesus and the Church, and the beliefs, celebrations and way of life of Catholics who follow that teaching. It makes an excellent contribution to the Spiritual and Moral development of pupils. There is a strong atmosphere of love and culture of care in school and pupils readily engage in prayer sessions in school.

The school follows the diocesan guidelines for studying other faiths and cultures, and there is also evidence of their annual, progressive work on Judaism, pupils particularly remember what they learned from visiting a synagogue and listening to a speaker, and have a sound understanding of this Faith, however the pupils lack any significant depth or knowledge of other faiths, and this should be regarded as an area for continuing development in order to reflect the changing population of Leeds.

The school's contribution to social cohesion is outstanding in the aspect of the integration of St Gregory's pupils and parents. The school is currently working towards level 1 of the Stephen Lawrence award. The children take part in sporting events organised through the local cluster of catholic schools, and intend to work with schools in the wider community.

The children enjoy taking part in fundraising for many local and national charities, including CAFOD and the Good Shepherd appeal during Lent.

The school has a programme in place to provide appropriate sex and relationships and the programme is shared with parents. There are plans to evaluate its effectiveness.

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

The leadership and management of RE is good. The enthusiastic RE subject leader attends diocesan training and encourages all teachers to attend relevant training courses. She works very

hard and is a good role model and support for her colleagues. She has a clear focus on raising standards and promoting the faith development of pupils. Both she and the headteacher are skilful musicians and everyone endorses this parent's opinion..."*Children singing praise to God can't be bettered here, they always manage to source new and inspirational hymns and keep the music fresh and alive... God bless them*"

The diocesan system of assessment of RE has been introduced into the school and the subject leader has established a portfolio of levelled pieces of work. RE targets have recently been introduced, but need time to become embedded and to make a measurable impact on standards. A clear priority on the subject leader's action plan and in the school's Single Integrated Development Plan (SIDP) is to monitor the quality of teaching and learning in RE throughout the school, and this has begun this term. Regular staff meeting time committed to RE and moderation of work will ensure the high standard of work observed in some lessons, and in many of the books which were scrutinised, will be consistent throughout the whole school.

There is a range of resources available and governors ensure that adequate funding is available for RE. Here I Am is fully implemented and supported by the weekly ethos statements, which provide a focus for assemblies and circle times.

There is much good work in the school, however there needs to be a clear commitment to sharing good practice in all aspects of teaching and learning in RE and moderating judgments. Unusually, the RE subject leader is not a member of the school's leadership team and there are limitations on the time she has available for the important task of monitoring and evaluating of the subject, which is necessary to ensure that standards in teaching and learning of RE and Collective Worship in St Theresa's continue to improve.

INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS ANNEX

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

How effective and efficient is the provision of Catholic education in meeting the needs of pupils and why?	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the effectiveness of steps taken to promote improvement since the last inspection 	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the capacity to make further improvements 	1

THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

How effective are leadership and management in developing the Catholic life of the school?	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> how well the governing body fulfils its role in relation to the school's Catholic foundation 	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> how effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality care and education 	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the quality of the leadership of the headteacher and senior staff in leading and developing the Catholic life of the school 	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> how effectively the Catholic life of the school is monitored and evaluated 	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> how effectively leadership at all levels in the school promotes pupils' spiritual and moral development 	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> how effectively leadership at all levels in the school promotes and provides opportunities for the spiritual development and prayer life of the staff 	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the impact of the involvement of the clergy and/or chaplaincy team on the work of the school 	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> how effectively leadership at all levels promotes the school's contribution to social cohesion 	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> how effectively leadership at all levels encourages the positive behaviour of pupils 	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the extent to which pupils' contribute to the school and broader community 	1

How good is the quality of Collective Worship?	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the frequency and quality of the provision for prayer, Collective Worship and liturgical life of the school 	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> pupils' response to the school's provision for prayer and worship 	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> how well Collective Worship contributes to the spiritual and moral development of the pupils 	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the inclusive nature of the provision for prayer, Collective Worship and liturgical life of the school 	1

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

How well do pupils achieve in RE?	1
• <i>the standards reached by pupils in RE</i>	1
• <i>how well pupils make progress in RE, taking account of any significant variations between groups of pupils</i>	1
• <i>how well pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress in RE</i>	1

How effective are teaching and learning in RE?	2
• <i>the adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that pupils are well taught in RE</i>	1
• <i>how well teaching is used to meet the full range of pupils' needs in RE</i>	2
• <i>the effectiveness of planning, monitoring and assessment in RE</i>	3
• <i>the extent to which pupils enjoy their work in RE</i>	1
• <i>the involvement of parents and carers in their children's learning in RE</i>	2

How well does the RE curriculum meet the needs and interests of pupils?	2
• <i>how far the RE curriculum meets external requirements</i>	1
• <i>the extent to which pupils are gaining a knowledge and developing an understanding of the teachings, beliefs, values and way of life of other world faiths</i>	3
• <i>the suitability of family life and sex education, education in personal relationships and citizenship education</i>	2
• <i>the extent to which the curriculum in RE contributes to the spiritual and moral development of the pupils</i>	1
• <i>how far the RE curriculum promotes social cohesion</i>	2

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all pupils in RE?	2
• <i>how effectively subject leaders in RE set clear direction and provide support leading to improvement</i>	2
• <i>how effectively performance in RE is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets</i>	3
• <i>how well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all pupils achieve as well as they can in RE</i>	1
• <i>how effectively and efficiently RE resources are deployed</i>	2
• <i>the extent to which governors discharge their responsibilities in RE</i>	2