

DIOCESE OF LEEDS



DIOCESAN BOARD FOR INSPECTIONS

SECTION 48 FINAL REPORT

THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL
AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

HOLY FAMILY & ST MICHAEL'S CATHOLIC
PRIMARY SCHOOL
Cobblers Lane
Pontefract
WF8 3HN

School URN	108267
School DfE Number	384 3336
E-mail address	headteacher@holyfamily-st-michaels.wakefield.sch.uk
Chair of Governors	Mrs. Anne Dyer
Headteacher	Mrs. Christine Weir
RE Subject Leader	Mrs. Ann Butler, Mrs. Angela Brook & Mrs. Christine Weir
Date of Inspection	27 th - 28 th June 2011
Section 48 Inspector	Mrs. Christine Rothwell

INTRODUCTION

The Inspection of Holy Family and St Michael'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 and the inspection schedule follows criteria set by the National Board of Advisers and Inspectors (2010).

The inspection was carried out by one inspector who observed four lessons taught by four teachers across the key stages. She also observed three Collective Worship and one circle time. Meetings were held with members of the Governing Body, the Parish Priest, staff, groups of pupils, parents and the Catholic Care representative linked with the school. She observed the day to day school life and looked at a wide range of documentation including minutes of meetings, assessment records, lesson observations, the school development plan, records of assemblies and special visitors plus a comprehensive photographic record of the life of the school. She also carried out a work scrutiny of all year groups.

The inspector reviewed many aspects of the school's work, looking in detail at the following:

- The effectiveness of the monitoring and evaluation strategies in RE
- The planning and provision for Collective Worship
- The attainment of pupils in each key stage
- Governors ability to challenge/ be critical friends

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Holy Family and St Michael's Catholic Primary is a smaller than average school catering for 108 pupils in four classes. The school draws from a wide catchment area with many pupils arriving on a school bus or by taxi. The school is popular and has had appeals for places for the last three years. There are 5.65 full time equivalent teachers, four of whom have the Catholic Certificate for Religious Education. Two teachers job share for the Y1/2 pupils. Fifty five% of the pupils are baptised Catholics with the number baptised varying in each year group. Three pupils have a statement of educational need, which is above the national average. The index for multiple deprivations is also above average at 50.5%. The majority of pupils transfer to St Wilfrid's Catholic High School in Wakefield at age 11.

The school has gained a number of awards including Activemark, Investors in People, and the National Association of Professional Teaching Assistants award as a Centre of Good Practice, Financial Management Standards in School, Advanced Inclusion Award and 'Healthy Schools' status.

INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection Grades: 1 is Outstanding, 2 is Good, 3 is Satisfactory, 4 is Inadequate

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

1

This is a summative judgement based on the 2 judgements below: Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils, provision for Catholic education (includes effectiveness of leaders and managers) and capacity for sustained improvement.

OUTCOMES FOR PUPILS, PROVISION FOR CATHOLIC EDUCATION

1

CAPACITY FOR SUSTAINED IMPROVEMENT

2

Main findings

At Holy Family and St Michael's Primary School, the Mission Statement:

'Our mission as a Catholic school is to create and develop a community centered upon the teaching of Jesus Christ where all individuals are enabled to reach their full potential,'

is key to everything that happens in the school. Every Child Matters is taken that step further by ensuring that every person within and connected with the school matters.

The whole community at Holy Family and St. Michael's lives out the Gospel in their everyday lives. It is distinctly Catholic in its nature, encouraging pupils to deepen and sustain their personal faith in order to see and serve Christ within the wider community. Their Mission statement, which is reviewed annually, truly drives every aspect of school life creating a loving, caring ethos where everybody is valued and nurtured. Pupils spoke about 'a big family' and always being encouraged to do their best and to be 'shining stars.' They proudly quoted, *"Good, better, best, never let it rest, till your good is better and your better best."*

Parents were equally as proud of the school stating that it was the best decision they could have made for their children when they chose to send them to Holy Family and St. Michael's Catholic School. *"The school is brilliant, you always know what they are being taught and it is so family-orientated."*

The leadership and management of the school are outstanding, inspiring and supporting the school community to live out their Mission Statement. The school has a clear idea of its own strengths and the areas it wishes to develop further, which are 'grounded' in rigorous and honest analysis.

Liturgical and spiritual participation are vital in the Catholic life of the school. The parish community actively supports life in the school, attending Masses, enjoying the luncheon group and working with the school on fundraising events. The Parish Priest is a much loved visitor, saying whole school and class Masses and being a spiritual support to the school community.

WHAT THE SCHOOL NEEDS TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER

- Raise attainment by marking work effectively, giving 'next step' targets, ensuring that pupils are aware of ways to improve their work and make progress.
- Continue to monitor and evaluate teaching to ensure that good practice is throughout the school through existing quality assurance procedures.
- Differentiate tasks to meet the needs of all pupils.

PUPILS

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

1

The majority of the pupils enjoy religious lessons and are proud to be attending Holy Family and St Michael's school where they affirm the mission statement.

The social, moral and spiritual development is a strength of the school and is as a direct result of the wholehearted dedication and commitment of each person to the Mission of the school.

Most teaching is good to outstanding. Where it was outstanding, the lesson was stimulating and met the needs of all pupils with clearly differentiated activities. Whilst discussing their work most pupils demonstrated an understanding of the Catholic Faith and their religious education (RE) curriculum but few were aware of their individual level of attainment. Identifying the 'next step' when marking would ensure pupil ownership in their progress and further accelerate their learning.

Pupils' work is presented in attractive and stimulating displays around the school and the pupils confidently spoke about them. The pupils are knowledgeable about other religions. They have benefited from visitors to the school sharing their beliefs and customs as well as visiting other places of worship. They enjoy the new scheme of work, which they believe links better to real life and enables RE to be taught through other curriculum areas especially literacy.

The quality and progress of learning for pupils with particular learning needs is very good. This is due to in depth knowledge of the pupil and the nurturing support programme that is in place.

From a starting point of well below average on entry the pupils make outstanding progress in RE during Foundation Stage which is built on through Key Stages 1 and 2 resulting in pupils leaving Year 6 attaining at least in line with the expectations and some exceeding this.

The Catholic life of the school is tangible and enhanced through the many activities and involvement locally, nationally and internationally. Respect and care of others is a strength of the school as is demonstrated by older pupils being buddies to younger pupils. Pupils are encouraged to take care of the school and the grounds, both of which are immaculate. The school gardening club gives pupils the opportunity to plant seeds, tend them through their growth and enjoy the result. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility through a variety of activities such as Samaritan's purse, shoe box appeal, singing for the elderly,

Pontefract heritage banners, which were displayed in the town, science lunch day, children's Global challenge, Good Shepherd appeal and the international links with France and China.

Collective Worship at Holy Family and St Michael's is outstanding. The pupils are eager to share their experiences of Collective Worship contributing or planning whole school Collective Worship and assemblies. During Collective Worship, the pupils reflect quietly and spiritually on the theme of the worship in an appropriate setting. They demonstrate a deep understanding of and a responsive attitude to the readings and prayers and singing beautifully. The use of ICT, dance and role-play enhance the quality of Collective Worship and further increases pupil participation.

Pupils' comments include, *"I enjoy writing my own prayers because it makes them mean more to me,"* and *"When we act or dance it we remember it better,"* and *"At this school we are all special stars and we talk about Jesus all the time."*

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education.	2
Taking into account:	
• the quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
• the quality of learning for pupils with particular learning needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
• pupils' attainment in Religious Education	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life of the school.	1
How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship.	1

PROVISION

How effective the provision is for Catholic education.

2

The teaching is generally effective in ensuring that pupils are motivated and engaged. The teachers mainly have good subject knowledge, which inspires and challenges most pupils and contributes to their good progress. As a result, most pupils show interest in their work and make progress in line with their capabilities with some making very good progress. Good and imaginative use is made of resources, including technology to maximize learning. In Foundation Stage, the role-play area became a Church with a tabernacle, baptismal font and a lectern with a Bible. The children were at ease saying Masses, distributing communion, baptising 'babies' and singing 'Alleluia'. In other year groups dramatization of RE deepened the pupils' understanding whilst the older pupils turned into reporters to record the events at Fatima.

Support provided by other adults is focused and makes a significant contribution to the quality of learning and ensures that those pupils who have specific needs can actively take part in the tasks set. Though teachers monitor pupils' work during lessons, noticing general misconceptions and adjusting their plans accordingly, more emphasis needs to be on marking pupils' work, giving constructive feedback and recording next steps to learning which will ensure that pupils are aware of the means to make further progress.

The RE curriculum is enriched through imaginative and well-planned strategies to capitalise on the expertise within and beyond the school, which leads to learning that, is often stimulating and memorable. It provides good opportunities for spiritual and moral development and raises pupils' awareness of other faiths. The wide range of extra curricular activities is well supported and enjoyed.

Collective Worship is central to the life of the school and a key part to every school celebration or meeting. Prayer opportunities for staff and pupils are planned in a manner that attracts and facilitates attendance including adults associated with the pupils and the school. Evidence of this is in the prayer areas in each classroom, on the corridor and in a quiet garden area plus staff and pupils coming together with the Wakefield Catholic Schools Partnership in many activities such as retreats, year group discussions and activities and staff development. The school ensures pupils are skilled and equipped in leading prayer with themes that are consistent with the Catholic character of the school and responsive to the religious diversity among the pupils.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching in Religious Education.	2
The use of assessment to support learning in Religious Education.	2
The extent to which the Religious Education curriculum meets pupils' needs.	2
The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school.	1

LEADERS AND MANAGERS

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

1

The school's leadership is committed to the Church's mission and the spiritual and moral development in education. The headteacher is supported by very committed and happy members of staff who have a high regard for the Catholic life of the school and together are dedicated and determined to further improve the school. The school improvement plan clearly identifies areas for further development and actions to achieve this because leaders and managers conduct a range of monitoring activities relating to provision and outcomes and their analysis provides a firm basis for diagnosis of the school's strengths and areas for development. Planning is founded on sound evidence and data, tackling key areas of weakness systematically and building on areas of strength. Consequently, outcomes are generally good and there is evidence that pupils are improving.

Governors, who are committed to the work of the school and in discharging their statutory and canonical responsibilities, have robust systems for evaluating their effectiveness, keeping the work of the school under review and acting upon their findings. Governors are confident in providing the challenge necessary to hold the school to account.

Governors, who have a good rapport with parents, pupils and the staff as a whole, are well-informed about users' views of the school. Governors are welcome faces in the school supporting many events. One Governor who regularly shares in Collective Worship

stated, *“The hairs on the back of my neck were tingling”*, when commenting about a particular Collective Worship.

The school participates fully and actively in developing and implementing a variety of partnership activities locally, nationally and internationally. These activities and links provide an excellent contribution to pupils’ good and often outstanding achievement and well-being.

At the Holy Family and St Michael’s Catholic school, thinking about others is second nature. The school actively promotes pupils’ initiative in learning about and supporting charities. A link with China started with helping a young girl with a burnt foot and it escalated into involvement of the local community and exceptional links with the village in China.

Pupils’ friendship bonds cross cultural, faith, social and economic boundaries. Every child matters and is treated with concern and respect throughout the school. The Catholic life of the school and the RE curriculum results in an attitude of respect for all faiths, a mutual understanding of each other and an integrity that enables pupils to accept differences and celebrate similarities.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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.	1
How well leaders and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education and plan and implement improvement to outcomes for pupils.	2
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.	1
How well leaders and managers develop partnerships with other providers, organisations and services in order to promote Catholic learning and pupil well-being.	1
How effectively leaders and managers promote Community Cohesion.	1