

# DIOCESE OF LEEDS



## DIOCESAN BOARD FOR INSPECTIONS **CANON LAW 806** **FINAL INSPECTION REPORT** **INCORPORATING** **SECTION 48**

THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL  
AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION  
OUR LADY AND ST. BRENDAN'S  
CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL  
The Bank, Idle Bradford BD100QA

School URN

107334

Date of Inspection and OE  
grade

22<sup>nd</sup>/23<sup>rd</sup> June 2016  
Grade 2: Good

E-mail address

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Chair of Governors

Mr. Mark Malewski

Headteacher

Mr. Simon Stockdale

RE Subject Leader

Mrs. Carmel Utting

Date and grade of last S48  
inspection

13<sup>th</sup> / 17<sup>th</sup> June 2011  
Grade 1: Outstanding

Section 48 Inspector/s

Mr. David Gott & Mrs. Roxanna Drake

# INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection Grades: 1 is Outstanding, 2 is Good, 3 requires improvement in order to be good, 4 is Inadequate

**OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS:** how effective the school is in providing Catholic Education.

2

*The above judgement on overall effectiveness is based on all the available evidence following the evaluation of:*

- *Outcomes for pupils,*
- *The provision for Catholic Education*
- *Leaders and Managers*

**OUTCOMES FOR PUPILS**

2

**THE PROVISION FOR CATHOLIC EDUCATION**

2

**LEADERS AND MANAGERS**

2

**Summary of key findings:**

## **This is a good Catholic Primary School**

- Leaders, governors and managers lead by example. They clearly demonstrate their firm commitment to the Church's mission in education.
- Under the strong leadership of the headteacher and the Religious Education (RE) subject leader, the school's current RE monitoring and self-evaluation systems are largely very accurate. Clear plans for further school improvements in RE, Worship and Catholic Life of the School are in place.
- The parish priest is very attentive to the spiritual and pastoral needs of the school. He is instrumental in promoting strong home, school, parish links.
- Pupil behaviour is extremely good both inside and outside classrooms. There is a very calm, purposeful, working atmosphere throughout the school.
- RE teaching is mainly good, some is outstanding but none is inadequate. The school should share its existing outstanding classroom practice more widely across the school.
- Standards pupils achieve in RE by the end of Year 6 are mostly above average. Most groups of pupils make at least good progress and some make outstanding progress, with nothing that is inadequate.
- Pupils prepare and lead worship with increasing confidence and enthusiasm. The school should share its existing best practice in Collective Worship (CW) more widely across the school.
- The school's RE pupil progress tracking system does not currently include an RE baseline assessment when children join the school in the reception class.
- The school's Performance Management System should be revised to incorporate aspects of RE and Catholic Life of the School.

- The provision of a Catholic Care Social Worker and a Home School Parental Involvement Officer greatly contributes to the care and well being of the more vulnerable pupils at the school.
- Support staff significantly contribute to the RE progress of those pupils with special educational needs.
- The school works in active partnership with the Diocese of Leeds, Bradford Local Authority, and the Bradford and Keighley Catholic School's Partnership. Good sporting and transition links are also established with St. Bede's and St. Joseph's Catholic College Bradford.
- Key issues raised in the last Section 48 (s48) RE inspection have been addressed.
- The school's RE curriculum meets Bishops' Conference requirements. All canonical and statutory duties are fulfilled.

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

- Further improve the quality of RE teaching and CW across the school by sharing existing outstanding classroom practice.
- Further improve the monitoring of pupils' progress in RE by introducing an RE baseline assessment when children first join the school in the reception class.
- Further improve teacher understanding in the use of the school's RE pupil progress tracking system by ensuring that all class teachers are appropriately trained to input and analyse their own class RE assessment data. Further improve standards of RE across the school by incorporating aspects of RE into the school's Performance Management System.

### **Information about this inspection**

The Inspection of Our Lady and St. Brendan's Catholic Primary School, Bradford 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 Diocesan Administrator 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 the criteria set by the National Board of Religious Inspectors and Advisers (NBRIA 2012).

The inspector reviewed in detail the following aspects:

- The extent to which key issues identified for action in the school's previous s48 RE inspection have been addressed.
- The extent to which pupils, contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the School.
- How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in RE.
- The quality of teaching and how purposeful pupil learning is in RE.
- The extent to which the RE curriculum promotes pupils' learning.
- The quality of CW provided at the school and pupils' active participation, preparation and leadership of it.
- The extent to which the leaders, governor and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Catholic Education and plan further improvements to outcomes for pupils.

The inspection was carried out by 1 s48 inspector who was “shadowed” by a trainee s48 inspector for the Diocese of Leeds. The inspection took place over a one and a half day period. All teaching areas were visited. A sample of 4 RE lessons and 6 CW’s were observed in full, covering all key stages. In addition one whole school assembly and one KS1 class assembly were observed. Meetings were held with the headteacher, RE subject leader, staff, social worker, RE governor (vice chair), parish priest, parents and pupils. A comprehensive suite of school RE documentation was scrutinized including the School Improvement Plan; RE policies; the RE Subject Leader’s, Monitoring, and Evaluation File (including monitoring visit reports); pupil tracking/RE progress data; governors committee structure and class links; RE moderated portfolio and pupils RE workbooks. The school’s RE displays, website, newsletters and parental satisfaction survey results were also sampled.

### **Information about this school**

- Our Lady and St. Brendan’s Voluntary Aided Catholic Primary Schools, Idle, Bradford is a one form entry, smaller than average size primary school. It is one of the two Catholic Primary Schools serving the needs of the families of the parish of St. Clare’s, Fagley, Bradford.
- The School has a published admission number (PAN) of 30 pupils. Currently there are 207 pupils on roll (age 4 to 11 years of age). Of these, 52% are baptised Catholics (38% 2011). There has been a rise of Catholic children with Polish backgrounds joining the school since the last RE inspection (2011).
- Pupils are taught in 7 single age classes.
- The number of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below average. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is below average. The proportion of pupils eligible for pupil premium is above average.
- There are 8.8 full time equivalent (fte) teachers, of whom 4.2 fte are Catholic. (This number will rise to 7.2 fte in September 2016). Currently 7 teachers teach RE. Two teachers hold the Catholic Certificate of Religious Studies.(CCRS) or equivalent.
- The school employs a Catholic Care Social Worker and a Parental Involvement Officer.
- The school works in partnership with the Diocese of Leeds and Bradford Local Authority. It is an active member of the Catholic Schools Partnership of Bradford and Keighley and also has links with the Bradford East One Partnership of Schools. The school also has close links with Leeds Trinity University.
- Since the last s48 RE inspection (2011) a number of significant changes have taken place at the school. A new chair of governors has been elected (2013); a new headteacher appointed (Sept. 2013) and a new deputy headteacher appointed (Sept 2015). The deputy head also recently took on responsibility for RE subject leadership (Feb. 2016). A new parish priest and a number of new foundation governors, teachers and support staff have also been appointed since the last inspection.

## Full report - inspection judgements

### Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils are good

The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school.	2
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education.	2
How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship.	2

- Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils at Our Lady and St. Brendan's are good. Pupils increasingly take on responsibilities and participate constructively in the Catholic Life of the School. They understand the importance of key celebrations throughout the Church's Liturgical Year in school and in the wider parish community.
- Pupils are proud of their school and of its Catholic heritage. Parents, carers grandparents, pupils and staff say how much they enjoy the school's celebrations of St. Brendan's Day. All were invited to a whole school mass at which pupils were actively involved. This was followed by a lunchtime picnic in the school grounds for families.
- Pupils are considerate towards others and caring to anyone in apparent need. They are particularly enthusiastic about participating in the school's "Mini Vinnies" (St. Vincent de Paul) group which organises many charitable outreach activities. Currently pupils are making up care packs for distribution to the homeless.
- Pupils are confident in and ready to express their own views and beliefs. They are interested in and respectful of the religious life of others. They show care and respect for religious artefacts displayed in classrooms and elsewhere in the school.
- Pupils show an understanding of the need to forgive and be forgiven. They have a good understanding of right and wrong.
- Pupils achieve well and enjoy their learning in RE. By the time they reach the end of year 6, standards of achievement in RE are mostly above average in knowledge and understanding of religion (Attainment Target 1) and the ability to reflect on meaning (AT2). Most groups of pupils make at least good progress and some may make outstanding progress, with nothing that is inadequate.
- Pupils are keen to do well, generally apply themselves diligently in RE lessons and work at a good pace. Most pupils seek to produce their best work and are interested in, and enthusiastic about their learning in RE. Pupils say they enjoy being at Our Lady and St. Brendan's Catholic Primary School. Typical comments to the inspector included: "teachers support us and care for us"; "I like the questions they ask", "I like going to Mass at St. Clare's Church and afterwards going into St. Clare's Primary School to share activities with their children".
- Collective Worship is central to the daily life of Our Lady and St. Brendan's School. Pupils act with reverence and are very willing to participate. Relative to their age and ability pupils are becoming skilled in preparing and leading worship with increasing confidence and enthusiasm, using scripture and religious symbols to support their prayer. The school uses CW pupil planning sheets which are in line with diocesan guidance.
- Pupils are at ease when praying with their school community. They display reverent behaviour and respect for one another- particularly during times of silent meditation.

### The provision for Catholic Education is good

The quality of teaching and how purposeful learning is in Religious Education.	2
The extent to which the Religious Education curriculum promotes pupils' learning.	2
The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school.	2

- The provision for Catholic education at Our Lady and St. Brendan's School is good. Our Lady and St. Brendan's is a very welcoming Catholic Primary School with a strong family feeling of "belonging". It proudly proclaims its Mission Statement and rich Catholic heritage to all who enter the building. The main reception area contains a beautiful stained glass window featuring St. Brendan. It was salvaged from the chapel of the old, now demolished, St George Middle School. A sculpture of the school's patron saint, together with attractive displays of pupils' art work adds to the Catholic ethos of the school.
- Teaching is mainly good, some is outstanding but none is inadequate. The majority of teaching enables pupils to make good progress as learners. In most RE lessons observed pupils are keen to learn, concentrate well, enjoy their RE work and achieve highly.
- In a KS1 RE lesson on the theme: "The Birth of the Church" talk partner discussions centred around the notion of helping someone by giving them a gift in a way that doesn't require any money. One pupil said: "I could show love and kindness to someone who makes me cross". Another pupil replied: "That's the gift of peace when you don't get angry back to someone who upsets you".
- An enjoyable Early Years RE lesson was evidenced where the pupils were reflecting upon pictures of their visit to St. Clare's Catholic Church and making model churches out of boxes and junk materials. In conversation with the inspector one child said "A church is a holy place". Another group held up the stained glass windows they were making out of coloured tissue paper. One boy said his church was "cuboid shaped".
- Where pupil learning is at its most purposeful, the teacher has a strong RE subject knowledge, lessons are well planned and differentiated, a brisk pace is maintained, learning objectives are clear and progress and effort are positively affirmed. To further raise standards of RE teaching across the school should share existing outstanding expertise and classroom practice more widely.
- RE "driver words" relating to the RE topic are prominently displayed in most classrooms and are frequently referred to in RE lessons. Appropriate RE resources (including ICT) are readily accessible to pupils in their classrooms.
- Pupils are provided with oral and written feedback on their RE work. Scrutiny of RE work books confirms that teachers' marking provided pupils with "prompts" to next steps in their learning journey. It was further evident from scrutiny of the pupils RE books that learners' knowledge and understanding of RE is being deepened and that a range of teaching strategies are being used in RE lessons.
- All classrooms have an RE focal area with appropriate RE artefacts and displays of pupil work linked to the RE topic. Some classes have compiled their own class prayer books. Several have prayer trees upon which pupils have hung their own prayers.
- Learning support staff are very experienced and skilled in using their own initiative to engage pupils in active learning in line with the lesson's learning objectives.

- The school's RE curriculum uses the diocesan approved "The Way, The Truth & The Life" (WTL) as a core RE scheme. The school also further enriches the scheme with a variety of additional RE resources such as inviting CAFOD representatives to visit the school. The school works closely with other Catholic Partnership schools –particularly the other Catholic Primary School in the parish, with which many joint masses and other liturgical events are held.
- The school employs a Catholic Care Social Worker and a Home School Parental Involvement Officer to support the particular needs of some more vulnerable pupils. Parents say how much they value this additional school provision –especially at times of pupil transition from primary to secondary education.
- The school RE curriculum benefits from the input of the Diocesan Music School. A choral director from "The Schools Singing Programme" visits the school on a timetabled basis to work with class groups of pupils. The positive impact of this additional provision is notable within the school.
- The school's RE curriculum is also enriched by the school's "Other Faiths Week" which draws on expertise and resources of Bradford's Inter Faith Centre. Year groups make out of school visits to places of worship of other faith communities. Visitors from other faiths are also invited into school to share their experiences so that over their time at St. Brendan's, pupils can develop their knowledge and understanding of a wider variety of world faiths.
- Year 6 pupils have visited St. Anne's Cathedral as part of their RE "Year of Mercy" studies. Pupil representatives of the school have also visited "The Good Shepherd Service" at the Cathedral to present the charitable funds raised by the school during Lent in support of the "Catholic Care".
- The parish sister (catechist) co-ordinates preparations for First Sacraments in the school. Joint school celebrations take place in the parish for all children in both parish primary schools and others, making their First Holy Communion.
- Continuous Professional Development (CPD) resources have been deployed to enable and support class teachers to attend diocesan RE training courses on "The Creative RE Curriculum" and "The Way, The Truth & The Life" topic days. This CPD is having a very positive impact on raising RE teaching and learning standards in the classroom context.
- The school's RE curriculum provides good opportunities for spiritual, moral development and vocational understanding. The parish priest is a frequent and very popular visitor to the school. His explanations when pupils visit the church have increased their understanding of the liturgical symbols that are used in the Mass.
- The quality of CW provided by the school is good. Acts of worship are given high profile in the life of the school. Leadership and management ensure that CW is well resourced. Staff and pupils pray together regularly and in a variety of different settings. Pupils know and say the school's prayers with enthusiasm and respect. They also enjoy singing school hymns.
- The inspector attended a full staff meeting which commenced with a short CW which included the school prayer and a moment for quiet reflection. Staff seek to ensure that pupils are appropriately skilled in and equipped to lead worship.
- Teachers and pupils follow diocesan guidelines on the planning and delivery of CW. The themes of the CW evidenced were fully consistent with the Catholic character of the school
- Since the last inspection some good progress, has been made in this aspect and higher key stage pupils would now benefit from sharing their existing expertise wider across the school with pupils in lower key stages- particularly before year 6 move on to their secondary education. In talking to pupils after they had delivered a particularly effective CW, the inspector was impressed by the lengths the pupils had gone to in

selecting an appropriately quiet piece of instrumental music for the gathering aspect of their CW and then a choral version of the same music for the class to join in and sing at the closing of the CW.

- In conjunction with the parish priest, the headteacher and the school’s RE subject leader plan the annual liturgical calendar for the school. This is circulated to parents and parishioners throughout the year via school/parish newsletters and the school/parish websites- each of which provide links to the other.
- Parents regularly attend class assemblies and were evidenced to do so in exceptionally pleasing numbers. Such assemblies always include CW. Pupils, parents, carers and grandparents say how much they look forward to and enjoy being part of such events.
- The school runs a before school “Breakfast Club”. Various after school extra curricular activities are provided by the school. They have a high take up and are much enjoyed by pupils.

## Leadership and Management are good.

<b>How well leaders, governors and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Catholic Education and plan and implement improvement to outcomes for pupils.</b>	<b>2</b>
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- Leadership and management of Catholic education at Our Lady’s and St. Brendan’s Catholic Primary School is good. Leaders, governors and managers lead by example. They demonstrate a clear vision for the future of the school and a strong commitment to the church’s mission in education, with spiritual and moral development a priority.
- The school is fortunate in having a full complement of governors with a very wide skills set including some very experienced governors. Foundation governors continue to provide faithful stewardship of the Catholic teachings and Gospel values of Our Lady and St. Brendan’s School. Governors also readily avail themselves of appropriate training and development courses.
- The chair of governors has established an effective committee structure and ensured that there is a designated governor with responsibility for RE (vice chair). Similarly governor links have been established to individual year group classes.
- The school’s mission statement was last reviewed in 2014 and involved pupils, staff, parents and governors. It proudly proclaims that the school puts “Christ at the Centre” and that it “*witnesses to the Gospel message so that each individual is treated with mutual respect, caring, understanding, dignity and reverence*”.
- The school’s active partnership activities and the resulting improvements in the school’s provision and leadership and management, make a strong contribution to what is generally good achievement and well being of pupils.
- The RE subject leader keeps staff and governors well informed of current developments in RE as a result of attending regular Catholic Schools Partnership of Bradford and Keighley leader training sessions. These include joint peer-to-peer evaluations of RE standards in each other’s schools. Findings are always shared with staff and governors.
- The school’s RE self evaluation document is very detailed up to date and largely very accurate. It is based upon a comprehensive range of direct classroom monitoring of RE classroom practice covering all key stages, carried out by the RE subject leader and headteacher. An RE action plan is in place and is being diligently worked through. The RE governor meets regularly with the RE subject leader and headteacher. The



governing body receive regular reports on RE and the Catholic Life of the school. Governors regularly attend school liturgies and meet with staff and parents.

- Governors have approved an Education for Personal Relationships (EPR) Policy and Programme of study, in line with diocesan guidelines. Parents confirm that they are consulted over the teaching materials and that they are able to view them in advance if they wish.
- The governing body have approved an appropriate RE budget, in line with other core curriculum subjects, to ensure that the RE, Worship and Catholic Life of the School is appropriately resourced. The recently purchased text books to support the school's RE scheme are particularly appreciated by staff and pupils.
- A "Catholic Life Review Group" involving the headteacher, RE subject leader and the RE governor also meet to review evidence of progress and impact of recent RE initiatives within the school.
- The school's Parental Satisfaction Survey results suggest that 99% of parents would recommend Our Lady and St. Brendan's School to other parents. Similarly 99% of parents feel that the school helps their child to understand the Catholic Faith.
- The Catholic Life of the school is highlighted on the school website and through regular school newsletters. The governing body also approve the purchase and distribution of "The Wednesday Word". Parents and pupils comment positively on the value of this publication and confirm their interest and enjoyment in reading it. Parents also comment that it helps them to share in conversations about what their children are learning in RE at school.
- School governors have successfully ensured that all canonical and statutory responsibilities are fulfilled by the school.
- Key issues for action identified in the previous s48 RE inspection have been successfully addressed.
- Class teachers would benefit more from the current pupil RE progress tracking system by inputting and analysing their own class RE data rather than, as at present, by the headteacher undertaking this task. Similarly the system would further benefit by introducing an RE baseline assessment upon a child's initial entry into the reception class from which future progress can be measured. Currently the school's reception class draws pupils from 15 different nursery settings.
- Governors ensure that pupils and staff work in a safe, secure, attractive and clean learning environment. They are assisted in this task by the site manager and his cleaning staff who take a pride in their work.