

# 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

SACRED HEART CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL  
Valley Drive, Ilkley, West Yorkshire LS29 8NL

School URN

139353

Date of S48 inspection and  
OE grade

28<sup>th</sup> & 29<sup>th</sup> March 2018  
1: OUTSTANDING

E-mail address

admin@sacredheart.bradford.sch.uk

Chair of Governors

Mr Edmund Jones

Headteacher

Mrs Alixena Lubomski

RE Subject Leader

Mr John Snelson

Date and grade of last S48  
Inspection

2: GOOD

Section 48 Inspector

Alan Dewhurst

## 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 is the school in providing Catholic Education.

1

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

**CATHOLIC LIFE**

1

**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

1

**COLLECTIVE WORSHIP**

1

**Summary of key findings:**

### **This is an outstanding Catholic school**

- Sacred Heart Catholic Primary is an outstanding Voluntary Academy. It is a deeply committed and caring community, characterised by outstanding leadership and dedicated staff, united in wholeheartedly promoting the Catholic mission of the school.
- The mission statement, motto and values of the school have been successfully promoted and understood, thus enabling the whole community to live out the Gospel message in their daily lives.
- The Catholic Life (CL) of the school is deeply embedded, ensuring that all pupils can contribute to and benefit from the excellent provision. They know that the school is made special by its Catholic ethos and they have a tremendous sense of belonging, shared by their parents and carers.
- Religious Education (RE) is outstanding. Skilled teaching builds pupils' understanding from an early age so that they become religiously literate young people as they move through the school who can then consider, question, reflect on and apply Catholic teaching in their daily lives.
- Teaching is engaging and motivating, with a wide range of strategies employed to sustain pupils' interest and harness their involvement to best effect. Creative approaches to RE lessons have made a significant impact on pupils' progress.
- Attainment is very good, with a sizeable proportion of pupils achieving beyond age-related expectations by the end of Key Stage 2.
- Collective Worship (CW) is excellent, based on a clear policy and very effective implementation. Leaders have very good knowledge of how to plan and deliver opportunities for worship that is inclusive of all at an age appropriate level. Pupils' skills in preparing and leading Collective Worship are well developed. Links with the school's

parishes, through their parish priests, are well established, and the priests are frequent visitors.

- Leadership roles in the school are clearly defined, supported and held to account effectively by a knowledgeable and committed academy council.
- The headteacher communicates her vision with passion; for her, the school's catholicity, and how it applies to everyone, is of the highest importance, and all acknowledge her outstanding leadership.
- She is supported by an equally committed and able senior leadership team, including knowledgeable and enthusiastic leaders of Religious Education and Collective Worship. Furthermore, the whole staff contribute significantly to the inspirational Catholic ethos.
- Effective and supportive partnerships have been developed by the school, particularly with the other schools in the Bishop Wheeler Catholic Academy Trust.
- Recommendations raised in the previous Section 48 RE inspection and Diocesan canonical review have been effectively addressed.
- All canonical and statutory duties are fulfilled.

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

- Develop a more systematic approach to the monitoring and evaluation of the Catholic Life and Collective Worship, including regular opportunities to collect the views of pupils and parents.
- Continue to develop assessment procedures to analyse and evaluate pupils' progress in Religious Education.
- Consider how to build on the outstanding Collective Worship in the school to give pupils more opportunities and new spaces to develop their prayer life.

#### **Information about this inspection**

The Inspection of Sacred Heart Catholic Primary, a Voluntary Academy, 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 the criteria set by the National Board of Religious Inspectors and Advisers (NBRIA 2017).

The inspector reviewed in detail the following aspects:

- The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school
- The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school

- How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education
- How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship
- The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school
- How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education, Collective Worship and the Catholic Life of the school

The inspection was carried out by one inspector over one and a half days, involving these activities:

- Teaching and learning were observed in 7 classes.
- A range of Collective Worship was observed including a whole school act of worship led by the headteacher, Collective Worship in 2 classrooms, a guided meditation and a meeting of the Rosary Club.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, the senior leadership team, the RE subject leader and the leader of Collective Worship, from the school staff.
- There were also meetings held with the chair and vice-chair of the academy council, the staff governor and the parish priest of Sacred Heart, Ilkley, who is also the RE link governor.
- Discussions were also held with a group of pupils and a group of parents. A number of emails from parents were also received and noted.
- A telephone conversation was held with the school's Catholic Care social worker.
- A sample of pupils' RE workbooks from every class was scrutinised, along with the RE coordinator's file and files for both Collective Worship and Catholic life of the school.
- A range of documents was made available and scrutinised including the Diocesan Self Evaluation Form (DSEF), the RE action plan, the Collective Worship action plan, the School Development Plan (SDP), attainment and progress data, school policies and minutes of academy council meetings.
- Displays around the school and in classrooms were also noted.

### **Information about this school**

- Sacred Heart Catholic Primary is an average sized school, catering for 4-11 year olds. The school has an annual admission number of 30, and there are currently 198 children on roll, 89% of whom are baptised Catholics.
- The school serves the parishes of Sacred Heart, Ilkley, Ss John Fisher and Thomas More, Burley-in-Wharfedale, and English Martyrs, Addingham.
- The school became a Voluntary Academy as part of the Bishop Wheeler Catholic Academy Trust (BWCAT) in 2013. It works in collaboration with schools in the trust, and with St Mary's Teaching School, Horsforth in the School Direct programme for trainee teachers. It is also in partnership with 2 Valleys Collaborative, sharing good practice and training in school improvement.

- Staffing includes 6 full time and 5 part time teachers, with a full time equivalent of 5.6 Catholic teachers. and 6.5 support staff. 3 teachers hold the Catholic Certificate of Religious Studies (CCRS).
- Smaller than the national average proportions of pupils are eligible for the Pupil Premium, have English as an additional language or are on the special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) register.
- Sacred Heart became a designated National Support School in 2015, and is currently providing ongoing support to another trust school.

□

## Full report - inspection judgements

### CATHOLIC LIFE

#### The Catholic Life of the school is outstanding

The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school.	1
The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school	1
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision of the Catholic Life of the school	1

- All pupils are active participants in the Catholic Life of the school. They have a full understanding of the school's motto, *Deo Maximo Optimo*, the mission statement and the values that underpin all of the school's functioning. They contribute significantly to the application of the mission in their daily lives.
- They show a sincere respect for themselves and their peers, and for the environment of the school. Their behaviour of almost all pupils is excellent. They show an ability to focus, reflect, listen and consider matters religious, spiritual and moral. They are able to forgive and be forgiven. They enjoy and celebrate the success of others.
- They acknowledge the 'special' characteristics of a Catholic school, the importance of prayer, to learn about the person of Jesus and about 'love, forgiveness and hope', as one pupil said. Another stated that 'we learn to be grateful and helpful', while a friend said 'Everybody's kind to each other'. These are widely held views.
- They understand the importance in caring for each other. This can be seen in the close relationships built up between the Year 6 buddies and the Reception class pupils, and in the easy mixing between pupils in different age groups, for example.
- Established groups of pupils are effective in developing the Catholic Life of the school through their activities. For instance, the school council organises board games sessions for classes at breaktime; and the Mini Vinnies group has been particularly active during Lent in promoting 'acts of generosity' around school. This has involved a daily 'mission task', shared with each class for pupils to carry out amongst their peers or at home. Examples were 'tell a friend something that you like about them', 'cheer up someone who is looking sad' and 'Random Notes: Leave a post-it note in an unexpected place giving encouragement'.

- Pupils reach out regularly to those in need beyond the school. Recent examples of charitable fund-raising are many and varied, including a 'Tough Mudder' day for the NSPCC, a Year 6 talent show, a 'Yellow Day' in memory of a pupil's parent with contributions to a Children's Heart Surgery Fund and a sponsored walk for the Good Shepherd Appeal for Catholic Care.
- Pupils participate willingly in the school's chaplaincy provision, through the liturgical celebrations in school and parish, and through voluntary activities such as Rosary Club, the Travelling Crib and House Masses.
- The pupils respond well to the school's support for their personal and emotional needs through the curriculum and pastoral care given by all members of staff. 'He feels safe and the school has a nurturing feel' was a typical comment by a parent.
- Pupils value and respect the Catholic tradition. They develop a sense of wonder through frequent opportunities for reflection, and have an understanding that they are called by God to live their lives 'following God's way', as a child remarked.
- Pupils play some part in the evaluation of the Catholic Life of the school informally but this is at present infrequent and not formally scheduled.
- The school's mission statement plays a central role in the provision for the Catholic Life. Pupils understand that Jesus' words, '*I chose you, and appointed you to go and bear much fruit*' places a responsibility on them to preach the Gospel through their actions. The school has embedded its 5 values linked to the mission statement (grow, respect, excel, include, challenge) through revisiting these with pupils at the beginning of each year, and through the half-termly rewards for those demonstrating implementation of these values.
- The Catholicity of the school is also very effectively presented in its environment through impressive displays of themes, pupils' work, religious artefacts and focal points for worship.
- The headteacher's vision of ensuring that God's love is shared by treating all who learn and work in the school community as individuals is borne out in the pastoral care given to pupils, families and staff. Support is given willingly where and when it is needed. This is backed up by thoughtful policies, such as the positive behaviour policy, and the commitment to the use of a Catholic Care social worker, who acknowledges the effective way the school's liaises with her and reinforces ongoing support strategies.
- Pastoral care and support is praised by parents, 'excellent, not only for pupils but for staff and families'.
- The curriculum is designed to offer many opportunities for moral and spiritual development of pupils, through Catholic social teaching within the RE curriculum, Relationship and Sex Education (RSE), and making links to Catholic teaching within other subjects. Parents are well informed of the content of the RSE programme. They applaud its approach but would also welcome its revision to include more emphasis on strategies for developing good mental health and tackling current delicate issues. The school is well aware of this need and has already put plans in place for revising provision, in collaboration with partner schools.
- Leaders and governors have ensured that the Catholic Life of the school is the highest priority in its strategic development planning. They have a clear vision and have been effective in (tackling) tackling recommendations for improvement. Governors receive regular reports from the headteacher.
- Self evaluation of the Catholic Life is accurate in identifying strengths and areas for development. Monitoring has, however, been less systematic in judging the impact of

Catholic Life provision and would benefit from the inclusion of all stakeholders, including pupils and parents, in its processes.

- There has been a good level of continuing professional development (CPD) offered to staff and this has strengthened their understanding of mission and their roles within the school.
- Parents are very supportive of the school, recognising the strength of its Catholic ethos and the effect this has on their children. They talk about the ‘real warmth’ and ‘community spirit’ that exists. ‘Like being part of a big family’ was one parent’s comment, where ‘Catholic teaching is fundamental to the spiritual and emotional development of our children’, as another wrote.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

### Religious Education is outstanding

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education	<b>1</b>
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education	<b>1</b>
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education	<b>1</b>

- Attainment and progress in Religious Education is excellent. As soon as pupils enter the school in Reception, they start to develop their religious literacy and knowledge of scripture so that by the end of Key Stage 1 almost all achieve age-related expectations and a significant number achieve beyond these. By the end of Key Stage 2 the proportion achieving at a higher level than expected has grown, indicating continued very good progress.
- Most groups make comparable progress with each other. The school’s effective support for pupils with special educational needs or disabilities, through careful planning and allocation of resource, has been effective in enabling them to achieve higher assessment levels than previously.
- As a result of outstanding teaching, pupils are able to reflect spiritually, think ethically and theologically, and become aware of the demands of commitment to religious life. They concentrate well and are able to work collaboratively with their peers on a variety of learning tasks. They actively seek to improve, prompted by challenging feedback from teachers.
- Pupils’ enjoyment of Religious Education lessons is widespread across year groups, as a result of the variety of learning tasks and opportunities they are offered. They seize on the school values of ‘challenge’, ‘excel’ and ‘grow’ in their learning. They even requested ‘more RE accessories’ to augment their learning in a meeting with the inspector.

- The quality of work in pupils' books is consistently of a high standard. This is mirrored by the work on display on classroom walls and in corridors.
- Lesson observations during the inspection gave further evidence of outstanding teaching which promotes learning, enjoyment, progress and attainment of pupils. Teaching styles are very varied in approach, intriguing pupils and drawing them in to a lesson. Examples seen included the use of 'clues' of artefacts to consider before embarking on a religious story, the use of religious artwork to illustrate and inspire, and pupils' encouragement to combine their thoughts on a question or issue with others in a 'silent debate'.
- Teachers know their pupils well and make careful plans to differentiate learning tasks to match pupils' stage of learning, to consolidate previous learning and develop independence. They are very creative in the way in which they approach religious topics, leading to a high level of enjoyment and engagement. Praise and affirmation are used constantly. Pupils are encouraged to express their thoughts openly and without judgement, to question and disagree if they wish, in an atmosphere of mutual respect.
- Teaching assistants are deployed throughout classes during RE lessons. They engage with particular groups or individual pupils with skill and sensitivity. Their prompting and support enables pupils to engage with the lesson and make good progress
- Marking is often detailed, focused clearly on learning intentions and challenging to pupils to make improvements or to extend themselves. Where this is the case, pupils are responding appropriately, and often at length, demonstrating a deepening of their learning.
- Assessment is used appropriately, following Diocesan guidelines, for summative and formative record keeping. This is moderated regularly to ensure accuracy.
- The RE curriculum meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference, with 10% or more of the timetable dedicated to the subject across all year groups.
- The school is using the Diocesan recommended scheme, The Way, the Truth and the Life, as its core provision, but extending the RE curriculum into other subject areas at appropriate opportunities. The adoption of the 'Virtues' of the John Paul II Foundation for Sport into physical pursuits is an example.
- The RE curriculum's development of religious literacy and knowledge of scripture is a tremendous strength, enabling older pupils to have the tools to develop discussion and give evidence when addressing religious topics. The inter-linking of the RE curriculum and the provision for Collective Worship is also very effective in building pupils' knowledge.
- Parents acknowledge teachers' skill and dedication in providing an excellent religious foundation for their children. They see that 'teachers are bothered about seeing the children make progress', that they 'challenge the children to go further' and that they are 'very proud when children achieve'.
- The school has taken steps to increase knowledge of other world faiths, not only through the particular weeks of study planned for in the curriculum, but also through occasional but regular gatherings to consider important feasts and seasons, and through links with a school in another area that has a very different ethnic and demographical population. Parents would welcome the extension of these links.
- The school leadership and academy council have given much prominence to ensuring that Religious Education is well resourced, including a high priority given to professional development opportunities for staff, many of whom have accessed courses during the last 12 months. Parental support has enabled the school to increase the number of bibles in classes, and these are used very regularly.

- The RE coordinator is a knowledgeable and committed leader, with a passion for the subject. He monitors the subject effectively, collaborates with partners and communicates new developments to colleagues. He has shared monitoring with the headteacher and senior leadership team, and all have shown the high priority they are giving to developing standards.
- RE assessment data is collected regularly and analysed in depth to identify trends of performance and areas for improvement. At present, the tracking of assessment data does not reflect the actual progress in learning made by pupils. This is an area for continuing consideration, particularly in the light of impending Diocesan and national developments in RE assessment.

## COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

### Collective Worship is outstanding

How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship	1
The quality of provision for Collective Worship	1
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship	1

- Pupils act reverently and respectfully in Collective Worship. Their attention is focused and they engage willingly with the themes presented. Prayers are recited confidently, reflective periods of silence are maintained without disturbance and singing is joyful and tuneful.
- Excellent practice exists in the preparation and leadership of Collective Worship by pupils. They are acquiring skills in a carefully structured progression, starting from the youngest pupils choosing artefacts for a focal point and preparing the worship environment, through to writing and reading prayers as they get older and, in groups, following a set plan in devising a liturgy for use with their peers in the classroom. Pupils lead these prayer services confidently and with enthusiasm, but also with dignity and respect for the reverential nature of the event.
- Pupils learn a variety of methods of prayer, formal and informal. Their knowledge of the Church's liturgical year is very well developed, through appropriately planned celebrations and displays. They are introduced to a sense of ritual through the structure the school uses for its whole-school assemblies and for classroom acts of worship. These include a 'gathering', the use of a Gospel acclamation, a themed reading from the Gospel, reflection on its message, with consideration of key questions, and a mission to take into that day's activities.
- Pupils' confidence is developed so effectively by the opportunities given to them to participate in, plan and lead acts of worship that by the time they are in older classes they feel able to change plans and insert their own ideas into a themed liturgy. Further prayer developments are also taking place, as witnessed in the guided meditation in one class.

- A strength of Collective Worship is the development of pupils' reverence, particularly through regular times of reflection, either in silence or supported by quiet music.
- Pupils' spiritual development is very effectively influenced by the acts of Collective Worship. They have a sense of awe and wonder, and see prayer as a central part of their daily lives. Pupils were able to describe how they felt that Jesus 'is present' with them at all times. They gave examples of how they felt they could rely on His support in the playground or at home, in disputes or difficult times, expressed in completely unselfconscious manner.
- Parents gave further evidence of the spiritual influence of worship at school, of children 'singing hymns at home', 'praying' and 'talking to Grandad in heaven'.
- Pupils spoke warmly of their opportunities, including the school's encouragement of their prayer life at home, through the travelling crib in Advent, and the travelling rosary in October and May. Another well-received provision is the voluntary attendance at 'Rosary Club' at breaktimes during Lent, where more than 40 pupils were observed praying a decade of the rosary. Pupils would welcome the development of a 'prayer space' in school, where they could go privately to reflect and pray.
- The school plans for Mass to be celebrated at important times, with whole school and class masses, and with 4 'house masses' in church on Sundays through the year. The school encourages the participation of parents and carers at these celebrations. The Sacred Heart parish priest works in close contact with the school to plan the themes and practice of each Mass. He is fulsome in his praise of the school in its preparation of worship and in the response and participation of pupils.
- Leadership of Collective Worship is categorised by detailed thought and preparation, focused on ensuring the most suitable provision for the pupils. The leader of Collective Worship works in effective partnership with the RE subject leader, priests and senior leadership team. She produces a weekly plan of themes, readings and prayers, allied to the liturgical season, and these are adapted by all teachers, or groups of pupils, to provide acts of worship in their classes.
- Teachers' knowledge of the leadership of Collective Worship and Catholic tradition is excellent, backed by regular consideration of Catholic themes through the 'Foundation Stones' programme.
- Some evaluation of the impact of Collective Worship among pupils is carried out by the Collective Worship and Religious Education leaders. Excellent provision would be maintained or further improved by this becoming a regular and systematic activity, with the thoughts of parents and staff also included.