

DIOCESE OF LEEDS



DIOCESAN BOARD FOR INSPECTIONS

SECTION 48 FINAL REPORT

THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL
AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School
St Peter's Avenue Sowerby Bridge Halifax HX6 1BC

School URN	107558
School DfE Number	3328
E-mail address	headteacher@sacredheart.calderdale.sch.uk
Chair of Governors	Dr Malcolm Henry
Headteacher	Mrs Moya Whitworth
RE Subject Leader	Mrs Moya Whitworth
Date of Inspection	3 rd - 4 th December 2012
Section 48 Inspector	Mrs Barbara Ford

INTRODUCTION

The Inspection of Sacred Heart 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 the criteria set by the National Board of Religious Inspectors and Advisers (NBRIA 2010). The inspector reviewed in detail the following aspects:

- the extent to which the pupils contribute to the Catholic life of the school;
- the effectiveness of the use of assessment to support learning in RE;
- the quality of Collective Worship provided by the school;
- the overall effectiveness of leaders and managers in developing the Catholic life of the school.

She shared key stage worship and a whole school act of Collective Worship. She observed Religious Education (RE) lessons in classes 1, 2 and 5 and a 'Godly Play' session. She held meetings with the Headteacher, Chair of Governors, Parish Priest, Assistant Headteacher, members of staff, school council, and parents and carers. She examined school documentation including the school's Self Evaluation Form (SEF), the School Improvement Plan, monitoring and assessment records, samples of teacher planning and pupils' RE books.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School is smaller than average, serving the parishes of Sacred Heart and St Patrick, Sowerby Bridge and The Good Shepherd, Mytholmroyd. There are 138 pupils on roll of whom 37% are Catholic. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage. The socio-economic context of the school is changing and the proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is above average, as is the proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school has identified 40% of pupils as vulnerable. All pupils are taught in mixed age classes. There are 5(fte) teachers, of whom five are of the Catholic Faith. No teacher holds CCRS or equivalent, although one is considering it. Changes to the Leadership Team, include the internal appointment of an assistant headteacher, in July 2012 and a newly appointed TLR2 post.

INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

2

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

2

CAPACITY FOR SUSTAINED IMPROVEMENT

2

Main findings

Sacred Heart is a good, inclusive Catholic school with outstanding elements, where there are no barriers to learning. The outcomes for pupils are outstanding and the provision for Catholic education is good. At Sacred Heart there is a deep commitment to caring for the needs of the whole child and consequently pupils show a high level of consideration for each other and for the staff, ensuring that the mission statement, 'In our school, each child is encouraged to love and respect God, His people, the world in which we live, and to appreciate the talents given to us and to use them to the full' is lived out in the daily life of school.

Pupils of all abilities and particular learning needs are very happy at Sacred Heart enjoying opportunities to live by and spread Gospel values participating constructively in the Catholic life of the school. They are energised by the task and are a source of inspiration for the whole community. The teaching is consistently good and effective in ensuring that pupils are motivated and engaged. Staff are good role models, living the faith, knowledgeable and catering for different learning styles.

The provision for Collective Worship is a significant strength of the school, being central to the life of the school and a key part of every school and shared parish celebration. Vibrant acts of worship engage all pupils' interest and inspire in them deep thought and heartfelt response.

WHAT THE SCHOOL NEEDS TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER

- Embed rigorous systems for assessment, including target setting and pupil tracking to ensure security of judgements in RE. Make more consistent the use of the 'I can statements' by pupils, thereby developing self/peer assessments.
- Raise attainment by improving scaffolding marking, giving 'next step' targets, to ensure that pupils are aware of ways to improve their work and make better progress.
- Develop the rigorous self-evaluation systems undertaken by the headteacher, to include the governors. This would enable governors to make firm judgements about how well the school is doing and what it needs to do to further improve.

PUPILS

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

1

Pupils achieve well in RE, taking a pride in their work and demonstrating enthusiasm for their learning, finding the new scheme of work '*The Way the Truth and the Life*' both interesting and challenging. Very young children were learning that Advent helps us prepare for the birth of God's son, Jesus. Behaviour is very good in Foundation stage and independent learning is encouraged; for example one child used the outdoor bricks to build a stable, another asked to take the gospel (Rubik) cube outside. Directed learning included making an Advent Wreath and understanding its significance.

In a lesson on 'Preparing for Christmas, at home, at school and within ourselves', young pupils used their individual 'Advent promises' on a daily basis, including as a link to their key stage Collective Worship. They wrote new ideas for preparation on paper strips, which were linked as a class chain, and reminded that we all need to work together as a team, so the chain is not broken. The oldest pupils were well-motivated, empowered and challenged to recognise that God, as Jesus, became a real human, through incarnation. They were immediately involved in matching bible references to the commandments, in pairs, drawing on previous learning and understanding that God needed help to persuade humans to follow the 10 commandments, by sending His only son to free the world from sin. Pupils with particular needs make good progress.

A parent commented, "Withdrawal, for SEN is seen as a privilege. It seems paradoxical, but the management of SEN withdrawal, emphasises the policy of inclusion, which permeates the school."

From a starting point, which is broadly in line with national expectations, pupils attain well in RE. Their attainment is good in knowledge and understanding of religion (AT1) and an ability to reflect on meaning (AT2)

Pupils demonstrate an ability to listen, to give thanks, to forgive and be forgiven. Pupils of all abilities and particular learning needs are very happy at Sacred Heart enjoying opportunities to live by and spread Gospel values and participating constructively in the Catholic life of the school. They are energised by the task and are a source of inspiration for the whole community. By taking on specific responsibilities such as filming the excellent welcome video on the new school website, checking the 'Friendship Stop', fundraising for those less-fortunate and delivering 'Godly Play' to younger children, they have good opportunities to develop their social skills, sense of responsibility and service to others. The School Council's successes include fundraising for playground equipment, such as scooters, hula hoops and pogo sticks. They said, "Our headteacher believes in God and worships Him. She has lots of faith, is friendly and makes you feel safe; she follows through and is always there for you."

All pupils have the opportunity to deliver thoughtful and meaningful Collective Worship for their peers, with confidence and enthusiasm from their earliest years in a variety of gatherings, readily accessing class liturgical resources. They love Fr. Firth, a regular visitor, and celebrant and are delighted when their parents and carers attend their Collective Worship. They use the Prayer room for rosary, quiet time 'when you are worried' and 'Godly Play' sessions, with young pupils leading an absorbing 'Journey to Bethlehem' for the youngest children.

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 consistently good and effective in ensuring that pupils are motivated and engaged. Staff are good role models, living the faith, knowledgeable and catering for different learning styles. In particular, the learning support team, are experienced in helping those who are struggling, using differentiated work, where appropriate. Teachers share learning objectives well in RE, map provision and monitor intervention programmes very effectively and develop very good links with literacy, science, art, music, drama and ICT. Homework tasks are regularly set and enhance the understanding of concepts; for example, research on their (Year of Faith) new class Saint to inform class door displays and learning journals, enthused all age-groups equally.

Assessment of pupils' work in RE is regular. Teachers use the 'I Can statements', fastened into the books, to monitor progress and have termly moderation meetings. Verbal feedback is helpful, suggesting ways to improve and praise is a key feature in lessons. However, marking is inconsistent with lengthy comments not appropriate for young pupils or making clear how pupils could improve. Most pupils are not aware of their targets in RE, nor make use of use the 'I Can statements' themselves.

The curriculum effectively provides pupils with a deep insight into the Catholic Faith and helps pupils see it in relation to other World Faiths and school ensures that curriculum time is given to the teaching of and other faiths with workshops and themed weeks, focused upon promoting the understanding of diversity and community cohesion. In previous years there have been Jewish visitors and visits to a mosque. It is customised to meet the needs of groups and individuals, including personalised programmes for those who need them.

The RE curriculum provides many opportunities for pupils' excellent spiritual and moral development. Extra curricular opportunities are varied, have a high take up and are much enjoyed. Education in Personal relationships (EPR) is taught through SEAL, 'Circle Time' and across the curriculum. Governors have agreed the diocesan approved 'Sex and Relationships Policy' in 2012, but have decided not to adopt one of the published schemes. A variety of themed events take place each year, for example CAFOD days, The Good Shepherd and Harvest appeals, Lent and Advent liturgies. The 'Wednesday Word', travelling cribs and other liturgical packs are taken home by pupils to share with their families and prove to be very popular.

The provision for Collective Worship is a significant strength of the school. It is central to the life of the school and a key part of every school celebration. Vibrant acts of worship engage all pupils' interest and inspire in them deep thought and heartfelt response. For example pupils were intrigued to hear the disembodied voice of God, sending John the Baptist on his mission, in an exciting whole school act of worship. The pupils' mission was to put their 'Year of Faith' good habit into practice. The themes, chosen by staff, reflect a deep understanding of the Church's mission and include the spiritual aspirations of all and pupils' liturgical formation is well-planned, and shows progression.

Family Masses are very popular and invitations sent out garner a good response. A parent of a pupil who recently transferred said, "It's lovely to see their face light up. They

have their fair share of reading in Assembly, being treated with empathy and a sense of justice.”

The Parish Priest says Mass in school for special feasts and celebrations, leads penitential services; facilitates opportunities for the Sacrament of Reconciliation – or simply ‘a chat’ and visits classes regularly. He is pleased with the pupils’ involvement in Collective Worship and encouraged them to participate enthusiastically in the dramatisation of the Annunciation, during a packed Key Stage 1 act of worship, reminding everyone ‘God has a plan for us all.’

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

2

Leaders are deeply committed to the Church’s mission in education, and good role models, ensuring that improvements to the Catholic life of the school are integral to the School Improvement Plan. The Headteacher is well-thought of and dedicated, providing unequivocal evidence that the Catholic mission of the school is a priority, along with the spiritual and moral development of all pupils. As RE Subject Leader, she effectively monitors and evaluates outcomes for pupils in RE throughout school, via work scrutiny, monitoring, planning, display and prayer areas, observing lessons and providing feedback.

The governing body is keen to meet the needs of the pupils and support the Catholic life of the School and the RE curriculum, being aware of and fulfilling their statutory responsibilities, to ensure that at all times the school is to serve as a witness to the Catholic Faith in Our Lord Jesus Christ. Governors attend assemblies, Masses and school events and appreciate that Sacred Heart School is an important part of the parishes. The RE governor, the Parish Priest, greatly aids spiritual understanding for the whole community, providing excellent chaplaincy and also, as governor, taking ‘learning walks’ as part of monitoring standards.

The school has good partnerships with other providers, organisations and services including, the parents, who are consulted via questionnaires and the ‘parent forum with the parent champion’. Their views are listened to and acted upon appropriately. Many parents and carers wrote to the Inspector to praise Sacred Heart.

One parent commented, “Sacred Heart teaches the children to love and respect God, encourages the children to understand, love and respect one another, irrespective of background, religious belief or nationality.”

Another noted, “RE lessons raise deep thoughts within the children, which they discuss at home. Beautiful work is produced during lessons.”

Parish links include the active Liturgy groups, the sacramental preparation partnership which is valued greatly by pupils, parents, school and the parish; providing opportunities to meet other Y3 First Communion candidates within the cluster; school-led Sunday Family Masses in church, the Key Stage 1 Nativity play, lower Key Stage 2 Easter play and musical events, including upper Key Stage 2 summer production with the parish and the choir singing at St Peter's, All Saints, Mustard Seed and diocesan celebrations.

Partnership activity within the Catholic Calderdale/Sowerby cluster and external agencies enable pupils to achieve and develop well in areas school alone could not provide, for example, provision for Gifted and Talented, sporting 'friendlies' and competitions. The school actively promotes pupils' initiative in learning about and supporting charities at local, national and global levels.

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.	2
How well leaders and managers develop partnerships with other providers, organisations and services in order to promote Catholic learning and pupil well-being.	2
How effectively leaders and managers promote Community Cohesion.	2