

DIOCESE OF LEEDS



DIOCESAN BOARD FOR INSPECTION

SECTION 48 FINAL REPORT

THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL
AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

ST ANTHONY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL
High Busy Lane
Shipley
BD18 1HD

School URN	107348
Chair of Governors	Mrs V Greenwood
Headteacher	Mrs M T Bannister
RE Subject Leader	Mr R Gaul
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Dates of Inspection	29 th & 30 th September 2010
S48 Inspector	Mr J Ginty

INTRODUCTION

The Inspection of St Anthony'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 inspector visited Religious Education (RE) lessons in each class group to observe teaching. He held meetings with the headteacher, RE subject leader, staff, parish priest, governor, pupil council and met parents. He examined school documentation including the RE subject leader's file, planning and assessment files, monitoring and evaluation records, meeting minutes, pupil questionnaire returns.

He also shared in the celebration of Mass of Thanksgiving in the school marking the 40th Anniversary of the school's foundation together with pupils past and present, staff past and present, parents and members of the parish and local community.

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

- the effectiveness of development planning processes undertaken by leaders and managers
- the formal monitoring of the provision for Collective Worship
- monitoring and evaluation strategies being used in RE
- the action taken by the school as a result of pupil surveys and the impact of that action

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Anthony's is in the parish of St Theresa Benedicta of the Cross, which incorporates the former parishes of St Anthony's, St Walburga's and St Aidan's. The mass centre for the parish is at St Walburga's Church. The school is celebrating its 40th Anniversary this academic year.

The school is smaller than average with a published admission number of 18. There are currently 128 pupils on role, 60% are of the Catholic Faith. The majority of pupils are from predominantly white background. The proportion of pupils with Special Educational Needs is in line with the national average. The school is divided into five class bases, with classes vertically grouped. Year 6 is taught as a separate year group.

There are 6.2 full-time equivalent teachers the majority of whom are Catholic and 4 have CCRS or equivalent qualifications. The headteacher has been in post for two years.

INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

1

CAPACITY FOR SUSTAINED IMPROVEMENT

1

Main findings

At St Anthony's Catholic Primary School the outcomes for pupils, the provision for Catholic education, the effectiveness of leaders and managers and the school's capacity for sustained improvement are uniformly outstanding. Morale is very high and belief in the school's success runs through all levels of staff, governors, pupils and their parents.

St Anthony's is a centre of excellence in the North Bradford suburb of Windhill. It is a school which encourages pupils to deepen and sustain their personal faith in order to see and serve Christ within their wider society. Central to the school's Catholic life is the liturgical and spiritual participation in the local Church. The children understand and live out the Gospel in their everyday lives. St Anthony's is distinctively Catholic in its nature; reaching out to the wider community.

The pursuit of excellence in Catholic education has built on previously good performance and led to year on year improvement since the last s48 inspection in 2007. Self-evaluation at all levels is grounded in rigorous and honest analysis. Through cooperative and collaborative planning, the setting of challenging targets and regular review of the impact of its action, the school has a very clear idea of its own strengths and those areas it wishes to develop further. The governors, headteacher, deputy headteacher and RE subject leader inspire the school community to work towards meeting an ambitious vision.

The school has well-established links with neighbouring parishes and the Bradford Catholic Schools' Partnership. The school employs the services of the Diocese and Local Education Authority to very good effect, especially in music and the creative arts. There are developing links with neighbouring upper schools particularly through sport and ICT.

WHAT THE SCHOOL NEEDS TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER

- Continue to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the new RE scheme of work, '*The Way, the Truth and the Life*' through existing quality assurance procedures.
- Further develop the skills and expertise of staff by facilitating access to career development opportunities with a focus on middle-management training in the context of Catholic education.
- Continue to encourage families from the former parish of St Anthony to be actively involved in the liturgy, worship and social life of St Theresa Benedicta of the Cross.

PUPILS

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

1

Outcomes for all pupils are outstanding. Learning extends far beyond that of the RE subject syllabus and permeates every aspect of the child's life and personal development. The social, moral and spiritual development of the pupils is a significant strength of the school and this is the direct result of the wholehearted dedication and commitment of each and every member of staff to the Aims and Mission of the school. The school community collectively reviewed its Mission two years ago and the succinct motto, '*Every Child, Every Chance, Every Day*' is actively demonstrated by all adults. They are excellent role models and enthusiastically share their own faith and values with the pupils in this a very supportive and caring school. St Anthony's is an inclusive school where there are no barriers to learning. Pupils are keen to learn, concentrate well and make very good progress.

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). Standards of attainment are at least good in all strands of each attainment target.

Pupils take a pride in their work and are interested and enthusiastic about their learning. Their work is neat and colourful both in their books and in the attractive displays around the school. They are adept at using IT to research topics and enhance their learning. They are knowledgeable about major world religions and have benefited enormously from their visits to other places of worship and the visits to the school of faith group leaders. They recall with enthusiasm previous topics they have covered in the RE syllabus and demonstrate a good understanding of the Bible and how to access passages from the Old and New Testaments and interpret their relevance.

The pupils find the new scheme of work both interesting and challenging. During this first topic of the new term the pupils in Classes 1 and 2 consider ways in which they could look after the things in the world God had created for them. This was seen in Class 1 as the pupils carefully planted out winter pansies whilst Class 2 demonstrated a very keen moral and ethical awareness through their well considered and reasoned responses when discussing how they and others might (or might not) care for all that God has created for us to enjoy.

The pupils in Class 3 showed a very good awareness of signs and their meanings in everyday life and were exploring the signs associated with Baptism. In Class 4 the pupils were enthusiastically engaged in role play reliving the story of Abraham whilst Class 5 were studying the parable of '*The Lost Sheep*' and how this helps to demonstrate that the Kingdom of God is for everyone.

All lessons were well planned and resourced. IT facilities were used effectively to enhance learning. All pupils were engaged throughout the lessons in the differentiated activities provided for them. Where appropriate, classroom support staff ensured that pupils with particular needs gained full access to learning opportunities. Pupils were interested in their tasks and obviously enjoyed what they were doing.

Pupils are very positive when talking about their RE lessons and particularly relish *'being actively involved through drama, hot-seating, collaborative working and researching on the internet.'* Pupils are very happy at St Anthony's. They take on specific responsibilities as exemplified by the School Council and participate constructively in the Catholic life of the school. The pupils recognise that they are listened to, their views are valued, and that reasonable suggestions and requests are taken on board. Recent initiatives, part funded by the pupils through fund-raising activities, have seen the provision of extensive outdoor play equipment in one area and similar facilities are pending in another.

Pupils understand that religious belief and spiritual values are important for many people. They show interest in the religious life of others and were animated in recounting their visits to a Buddhist Centre, a Sikh Temple, the Madni Masjid Mosque and a Hindu Temple. In the words of one pupil:

'I find it very interesting because it makes things a whole lot easier to understand people of other religions....it is easier to get to know the reasons they do the things they have to as part of their belief.'

The pupils' response to prayer, liturgy and worship, gives clear indication that they understand the importance of key celebrations in school throughout the liturgical year and in the parish community. Pupils are secure and ready to express their own views and beliefs. They are confident in preparing and leading acts of worship. They act with reverence, sing joyfully, reflect in silence and join in community prayers appropriately and with meaning. The pupils themselves are able to articulate the effect that the school's provision for prayer, liturgy and worship is having on them:

'Prayer and reflection time is helpful because when I pray I clear my mind of everything but praying and I like that feeling. RE helps me to understand how Jesus wants me to be. It also helps me to be considerate about other people's feelings and to have forgiveness for them. Also, RE helps me to be prepared for what is ahead of me.'

Pupils show a high level of respect and consideration for each other and for the staff. Their behaviour is exemplary in all given situations.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education.	1
Taking into account:	
• the quality of pupils' learning and their progress	1
• the quality of learning for pupils with particular learning needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
• 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.

1

The quality of teaching in RE is outstanding and is securing effective learning. Robust systems for planning, monitoring and assessment are embedded in good practice ensuring that the needs of all pupils are being met. The teaching is consistently effective in ensuring that pupils are motivated and engaged. Teachers' good subject knowledge and their willingness to share their own faith journey and strong faith commitment, inspires and challenges the pupils and contributes to their good attainment.

In recent years the school has ensured that generous funding for RE has been available and this has been put to very good use throughout. The most recent acquisition following extensive consultation and staff in-service training is the new RE scheme '*The Way, the Truth and the Life*' which is now being used throughout the school. The early indications since the scheme's adoption are encouraging. Good and imaginative use is made of resources, including interactive whiteboards, to maximise learning. Support provided by all supporting adults is pupil focused and makes a significant contribution to the quality of learning. Teachers maintain attainment records, strand coverage records, assessed work and tracking progress sheets. The impact of these comprehensive assessment procedures is that teachers and other adults plan well to meet the needs of all pupils. Pupils are provided with positive feedback, both orally and through marking. They know how well they have done and can discuss what they need to do to improve further.

Teachers patiently listen to, observe and question groups of pupils during lessons in order to reshape tasks and explanations to improve learning. The curriculum effectively provides pupils with a deep insight into their Catholic Faith and helps pupils see it in relation to other World Faiths. The RE curriculum provides extensive opportunities for spiritual and moral development. Extra curricular opportunities are varied, have a high take up and are much enjoyed.

The provision for Collective Worship is a significant strength of the school. Collective worship is central to the life of the school and a key part of every school celebration. Prayer opportunities are planned in a manner that attracts and facilitates attendance including parents and other adults from the parish and local community associated with the school. Pupils' liturgical formation is well planned, appropriate to their faith backgrounds and shows progression. The themes, based upon the liturgical calendar, the RE topic theme and/or the integrated SEAL curriculum, reflect a deep understanding of the Church's mission and include the spiritual aspirations of all pupils.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching in Religious Education.	1
The use of assessment to support learning in Religious Education.	1
The extent to which the Religious Education curriculum meets pupils' needs.	1
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 deeply committed to the Church's mission in education and is outstanding in its effectiveness at all levels. The governing body has the expertise to meet the school's needs and is influential in determining the direction of the Catholic life of the school. Their relationships with staff are constructive and governors show determination in challenging and supporting the school in tackling weaknesses and so bringing about improvements. This is evidenced through the work of an active Curriculum and Catholic Life Committee and in individual governor oversight of both subject areas and individual class association. In the context of the distinctive identity of the Catholic school the inclusion of all is a central goal and a shared vision.

The Governors operate an effective recruitment and selection policy and monitor the continuing professional development of staff. The school is blessed with a stable, dedicated and committed staff workforce who give a great deal to the school and the wider community of the church. The opportunity should now be given to those with the requisite experience to undertake further management training within the auspices of Catholic education. This would facilitate their career progression and also be a move towards successful succession planning in the school and beyond.

The headteacher is innovative, dynamic and supportive of staff and pupils alike. In her two years at the school she has been instrumental in leading and promoting a collaborative working environment as a result of which the school can proudly boast a year on year improvement in pupils' attainment and progress. Morale is very high and members of the community feel empowered to promote their strengths to the full and encouraged to develop personally and professionally in a safe and supportive environment.

During this two year period the headteacher has overseen the collaborative review and revision of many key policies and ensured that they are in line with not only local and national requirements but also able to meet the daily needs and aspirations of staff and pupils.

Leadership of RE is outstanding and the subject leader maintains rigorous systems for monitoring and evaluating, for challenging and supporting, for ensuring that responsibilities are being met. He has facilitated the introduction of the new RE scheme through in-service opportunities, direct guidance and regular discussion and has ensured that all staff are equipped with the required planning and assessment materials. He has also maintained oversight of RE resources to ensure that these meet the demands of the curriculum. An attractive display in the main hall provides a clear indication of the various topics being covered by the classes throughout the school.

Governors and the leadership team share a very clear vision of how the school might improve further, their aims are set out in comprehensive school and subject Improvement plans which are shared with staff and parents. Leaders and managers conduct a range of systematic monitoring activities relating to provision and outcomes and their analysis provides a firm basis for accurate diagnosis of the school's strengths and weaknesses.

There is unequivocal and explicit evidence that the Catholic mission of the school is and always has been a priority along with spiritual and moral development of the pupils.

Recently completed mosaics adorning the main hall and school entrance, blessed during a Thanksgiving Mass, celebrate the school's fortieth anniversary. They act as a visual proclamation of the school's mission. The fortieth anniversary celebrations are set to continue throughout the year, recorded in the Book of Memories and culminate on the feast of St Anthony in Summer 2011.

The school participates fully and actively in developing and implementing a variety of partnership activities. These activities themselves make an excellent contribution to pupils' achievement and well-being. The school actively promotes pupils' initiative in learning about and supporting charities at local, national and global levels and the response is repeatedly generous.

Pupils participate in neighbourhood and religious community activities. The school was also well represented by staff and pupils from upper key stage 2 at the Beatification Mass of Cardinal Newman in Birmingham, led by the Holy Father, Pope Benedict XVI in September.

Families from the former parish of St Anthony miss their local church following its recent closure. However, initiatives are underway promoting shared activities with the former parish of St Walburga's such as joint catechesis, preparation for and celebration of the sacraments. The parish priest is eager that such initiatives flourish and that more families commit themselves to the liturgical life of the church.

Parents from all backgrounds are actively involved in the life of the school. Parents who feel particularly vulnerable or insecure are afforded confidential support and guidance. Parents speak in glowing terms of the care and dedication of staff and the high level of trust they and their children place in the school.

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.	1
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