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SECTION 48 REPORT

THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL
AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

ST JOHN THE EVANGELIST CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Beacon Road
Bradford
BD6 3DQ

School URN	107333
Chair of Governors	Mr Ian Partridge
Headteacher	Mrs Kathryn Spillane
RE Subject Leader	Miss Maria Karas
Parish Priest	Fr Kieran Walker
E-mail address	head@stjohntheevangelist.org.uk
Dates of Inspection	12 th & 13 th December 2012
S48 Inspector	Joe Ginty

INTRODUCTION

The Inspection of St John the Evangelist Catholic Primary School was conducted under the requirements of the Education Act 2005, and in accordance with the Leeds Diocesan Framework and Schedule for Section 48 (s48) 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:

From the **Pupils** section of the s48 Framework:

- a) pupils' attainment in Religious Education (RE)
- b) the remit of the pupils' Ethos Committee
- c) the pupils' contribution to the planning and leading of liturgies and worship

From the **Provision** section of the s48 Framework:

- d) the quality of teaching in RE
- e) the use of assessment to support learning in RE

From the **Leadership and Management** section of the s48 Framework:

- f) the effectiveness of the Governors' challenge and support

The inspector referenced school documentation including:

- Self Evaluation Form (SEF48)
- RE Action Plan 2012-2013
- RE / Catholic Life sections from the School Development Plan
- RE subject leader's files
- Senior Leadership Team (SLT) monitoring of teaching and learning records
- Photographic records '*Celebrating God's Love*'
- Photographic records '*Learning to love, loving to learn*'
- Annual records of pupil and staff liturgies
- School and Parish liturgical calendar
- Samples of pupils' work in RE

The inspector visited RE lessons in Years R, 1, 2, 4 and 6, shared prayers and class-based liturgy with Years R and 4, Circle Time with Year 5 and celebrated the Reception and Key Stage 1 Nativity Play and the whole school Christingle Service.

He held meetings with the Headteacher, RE subject leader, SLT, Chair of Governors, the Parish Priest (who is also the RE Governor), the Ethos Committee, the Head Boy and Head Girl.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This is an average-sized primary school serving the recently formed Catholic parish of Mary Mother of God situated in Bradford South. The proportion of pupils receiving pupil premium is lower than the national average. The school deprivation indicator has remained constant over the past three years and is in line with the national average and the percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below the national average. The percentage of pupils from minority ethnic groups and the percentage of pupils with EAL are below the national average. The percentage of pupils learning English remains very low compared to the national average. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs is below the national average.

There are currently 208 pupils on roll, 63% of whom are of the Catholic Faith with a further 17% of other Christian denominations. There are seven single age classes in the school. There are 10.2 full-time equivalent teachers of whom five are Catholic with two having CCRS or equivalent qualification.

The school benefits from being part of the highly regarded Bradford and Keighley Catholic Schools Partnership (BKCSP) and the Bradford South 2 Local Achievement Partnership, both of which benefit aspects of the school's development and training.

Since the previous Section 48 inspection in 2008, there have been several staff changes and the Governing Body has changed completely. The school is looking forward to celebrating its Golden Jubilee in May 2013.

INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

1

The above is a summative judgement based on the judgements made below:

- Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils
- Provision for Catholic education including the effectiveness of leaders and managers
- Capacity for sustained improvement

OUTCOMES FOR PUPILS, PROVISION FOR CATHOLIC EDUCATION

1

CAPACITY FOR SUSTAINED IMPROVEMENT

1

Main findings

The quality of Catholic education at St John the Evangelist Catholic Primary School is outstanding. The outcomes for pupils, the provision for Catholic education, the effectiveness of leaders and managers are of the highest standard in almost every respect. Through their pursuit of excellence in Catholic education, the governors, headteacher, senior leaders and staff have ensured that the school has continued to build on previously outstanding performance.

Further to the recommendations of the previous S48 inspection in 2008, the school has extended the provision for the spiritual development of pupils, which now includes the outdoor 'Quiet Garden'.

Through rigorous and realistic monitoring of provision and outcomes, the school has a very clear idea of its own strengths and those areas it wishes to develop further. The governors, headteacher and senior leaders share an energetic vision for securing further improvement. They inspire the school community to work towards sustaining this ambitious vision to improve outcomes further. The capacity for sustained improvement is outstanding.

WHAT THE SCHOOL NEEDS TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER

To secure higher levels of pupil attainment in RE the Governors, SLT and staff should collectively:

- promote and extend the current aspects of outstanding teaching in RE;
- embed their improved assessment systems and ensure that levels of attainment are secure through regular moderation of assessment tasks and APP judgements.

PUPILS

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

1

The extent to which pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in RE is outstanding. The school has retained an extensive range of good quality evidence since the last inspection giving a clear indication of pupil attainment and progress in RE. During recent years there have been significant changes to the RE curriculum and schemes of work both locally and nationally. There have also been significant changes in the assessment strategies informing teachers of pupil attainment in the subject. The school has been vigilant throughout, working very closely with others in the diocese and the BKCSF to ensure a high degree of accuracy in work scrutiny, assessment and moderation. All evidence presented in the form of monitoring and evaluation records gives a good indication of pupil attainment and progress.

The children's prior knowledge in RE and their understanding of the faith is generally quite low on entry to Reception but as a consequence of the high quality provision the progress these young children make is exceptional. Evidence indicates that the pupils' rate of progress in RE is broadly consistent through KS1 and KS2. Early identification of special education need and a high level of support, together with well-planned provision, help to ensure that during their time at the school the overall progress made by all groups of pupils, including those with particular educational need, is outstanding.

From 2008 to 2011 pupils' attainment in RE was broadly in line with national expectation. Evidence for 2011-2012 shows attainment rising above the national average. Projected outcomes for the current academic year would suggest that pupil attainment could be significantly above the national average with 20% of pupils attaining Level 3 by the end of Year 2 and 25% of pupils attaining Level 5 by the end of Year 6. These are most encouraging indicators of an upward trend in pupil attainment in the subject.

During observed lessons, in their work, in discussions and through the bright and colourful displays in the classrooms and throughout the school, the pupils endorse their enjoyment of the subject and show a good level of knowledge across the many topics they have covered including a very good awareness, understanding and appreciation of other world faiths, traditions and customs.

All pupils actively subscribe to the ethos of the school based on fundamental Gospel values and proudly express their ownership of the expectations shared by all. It is an ethos encompassing their relationships with others: how they treat others, and how they themselves expect to be treated. The pupils are acutely aware that their actions always have consequences and have an astute understanding of right and wrong. All pupils display a sound ethical awareness of their school environment, of the broader locality and of the international world in which they live. Their behaviour is exemplary at all times. They are happy and feel safe and secure. They are unanimous in their praise for their teachers (*all adults*) who they regard as inspirational, trustworthy, kind and caring.

The pupils make a significant contribution to the life of the Parish, the BKCSP, and to the broader community, being actively involved in initiatives and celebrations throughout the year. They assume positions or responsibility in the school and undertake their duties with steely determination, enjoyment and pride. Buddy Systems are an integral part of daily life. The elected Pupil Council actively represents the pupil body and has a significant impact on the life of the school. The recently formed Ethos Committee is determined to further enhance prayer and liturgy, RE displays and promote the continued use of the Prayer Garden.

The pupils' response through prayer, liturgy and worship is an aspect the staff and clergy have encouraged and facilitated for some time. The pupils have the confidence and wherewithal to prepare and lead a range of liturgical and prayer opportunities at class, KS and whole school level. The Parish Priest and staff are excellent role models, they give the pupils consistent help and encouragement and as a result the pupils flourish from the earliest age and thrive spiritually, morally and socially during the many and varied opportunities they have to pray, sing, quietly meditate and joyfully rejoice together. The older pupils enjoy their 'residential' that they regard as an opportunity to get to know themselves and others better.

From the earliest age, the pupils adopt a mature and respectful attitude at prayer and have a very good understanding of the nature and format of worship. They display reverence, listen well, respect silence, respond and sing enthusiastically. They are overtly happy in their celebration of their life in Christ, the Word of God. Pupils of all ages compose prayers, prepare liturgies and write reflections appropriate to their age and ability. The pupils regard the 'Prayer Garden' as a focal point of the school and are very appreciative of the opportunities they have collectively and individually to spend peaceful, thoughtful, relaxing time there. Their response to, and participation in Collective Worship is exemplary and a significant strength of the school.

The child's response to the school's missionary statement and the outstanding provision captured in one heartfelt written quotation:

'Meeting Jesus is like being trapped in love.'

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 provision for Catholic education is outstanding. The Catholic mission proclaimed by the school is a living reality and has been since the school's foundation almost fifty years ago. The school proclaims through its Mission Statement, published in their Prospectus and displayed within the school for all to see:

'St John the Evangelist School is a place where we meet Jesus.'

All adults in the school are excellent role models and enthusiastically share their own beliefs, values and faith journeys with the pupils in a challenging, supportive and caring way. This living, sharing and celebrating of the Gospel (*Evangelisation*) fills each school day. The adults are the first and primary provision and this fact more than any other is cause for celebration. The teaching (*Catechesis*) is of a reciprocal and trusting nature where all adults assume responsibility for teaching the children and they are the first to recognise that they themselves have much to learn from them.

A broad range of monitoring records show the quality of teaching in RE to be consistently good and there are many examples of outstanding practice. Observations of teaching conducted during the inspection confirm this judgement.

Where outstanding, teachers use a range of enthusiastic and dynamic teaching styles that fully engage pupils. The use of time is well thought-out, lessons proceed at a brisk pace and the transition from one phase of the lesson to another is smooth. Appropriate differentiated tasks best meet the learning needs of the pupils and challenge pupils of all abilities including the more able. Cross-curriculum links are well considered and there is creative use of IT and resources to enhance teaching and learning in the subject. Marking of pupils' work is frequent, celebrating achievement and indicating the next step for learning. Some teachers also add an additional level of challenge through their questioning and as such, the pupils receive the opportunity to extend their thinking and reasoning skills. Such teachers are prepared to 'think outside the box' in being creative and imaginative in their approach. Where these factors come into play it is clear that teaching and learning in RE also enhances other curriculum areas.

Teachers are increasingly confident in using the RE scheme and praise it for the sound knowledge base and clear developmental structure. Close professional relationships between the teachers and supporting classroom staff enhance the quality of teaching and

learning. This is achieved through effective planning dialogue, clear direction and an unequivocal understanding of roles and responsibilities.

Assessment systems to support and inform teaching are established and teachers have recently adopted the Assessing Pupil Progress (APP) strategy which, when fully implemented, will better inform them of pupil attainment in RE, lending greater 'security' to their judgement. Teachers regularly engage in Pupil Progress meetings and in the core subjects maintain 'class assessment analysis summaries'. This practice could be extended to RE. The school intends to further the use of existing IT systems ('*Assessment Manager*') to record and report on pupil attainment and progress.

St John the Evangelist is a prayerful community where traditionally, liturgy and worship have been central to the life of the school and a significant strength of it. Prayer opportunities are appropriate to the age and needs of the pupils. Themes, based upon the scheme of work topics and the liturgical calendar reflect a deep understanding of the Church's mission and include the spiritual aspirations of all pupils. Celebrations are joyous and vibrant with every child and adult an active participant as was witnessed in both the Nativity Play in which Reception children were angelic, Year 1 children played their parts and Y2 provided the 'heavenly choir' and in the Christingle Service celebrating the advent of the Light of Christ.

The Parish Priest gives generously of his time and energy to the school. He is a frequent and popular visitor, known and respected by all the children, parents and staff. He is a source of inspiration to all. He is the catalyst in the highly cooperative relationship enjoyed by the school and parish covering Sacramental preparation, liturgical celebrations and a very comprehensive social calendar involving children and their families.

The school provides a range of opportunities for pupils to deepen their knowledge, understanding and appreciation of other world faiths and cultures through visits and visitors. The school further supports the Spiritual and Moral development of the pupils through Circle Time, a comprehensive Social, Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) programme and Education in Personal Relationships (EPR).

There are close links with families through several initiatives that inform and extend the family role in the Catholic life of the school and RE. The overwhelming majority of parents state that they are delighted with the school's provision, that their children are happy at school and very well cared for. Many parents are actively committed to the thriving Parents' and Friends' Association.

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	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 governors and senior leaders are deeply committed to the Church's mission in education and are outstanding in their effectiveness in all aspects of their role. This is particularly commendable as since the last s48 inspection there has been a complete change in the constituent membership of the governing body. The governors' underlying belief in driving the school forward is '*Learning to love, loving to learn*' and they ensure that the celebration of the liturgy and prayer of the Church is central to the life of the school. The Chair of Governors enjoys a long-standing relationship with staff, pupils and parents and acts with determination in challenging and supporting the school, in tackling areas for development and so bringing about improvements. The Chair of Governors leads on school 'safeguarding' matters and provision in this area was recently judged outstanding.

There is clarity of vision regarding governance and management, seldom seen. The school leaders maintain operational policies that are clear and transparent thereby enabling the governors to audit effectively through critical analysis. The governors are in a strong position to deal with change that may be planned or unexpected.

Members of the Governing Body maintain a welcome presence in the school as parents themselves, as parishioners and through the effective class link structure. This helps to maintain the strong family ethos and ensures open and informed dialogue. Governors and senior leaders are very aware of the needs of the children and their families and work tirelessly in ensuring the highest quality provision at the school.

The governing body and headteacher have been particularly influential working within the BKCSPP. Their commitment in this venture across all age phases demonstrates an expertise that extends beyond the school as they help to shape and determine the direction of Catholic education across the Bradford and Keighley area.

The school operates a highly effective Performance Management protocol linked directly to promoting the Catholic life of the school. Fully compliant financial practices are in place and Governors maintain an ambitious programme of building and grounds maintenance. The school provides a most attractive and welcoming teaching and learning environment.

The headteacher is an inspirational leader, totally committed to Catholic education. She displays a very calm and sympathetic manner witnessed in her support and guidance of staff, pupils and parents alike. She is instrumental in leading and promoting a collaborative working environment, is effective, constructive and trusting in devolving responsibilities, consequently morale is very high indeed.

Leadership of RE is through professional example and encouragement and is outstanding. The subject leader maintains comprehensive records of achievement in RE and substantial evidence indicative of rigorous ongoing monitoring and evaluating. The RE subject leader has shown the vision and determination to facilitate the successful implementation of the new RE scheme. Through in-service opportunities, direct guidance and regular discussion she has ensured that all staff are equipped with the required planning and assessment materials. She has also maintained oversight of RE resources to ensure that these meet the demands of the curriculum. The RE subject leader

demonstrates her commitment, knowledge and expertise openly and willingly and in so doing is very highly regarded by all staff.

There have been many staffing changes in recent years, some temporary and others permanent. The headteacher, with the support of the governors, has ensured that there has been minimal disruption for the pupils and a continuity in provision. The headteacher is well aware of staff talents and expertise and is well placed to harness these to very good effect. Together with the two Assistant Headteachers, she will be instrumental in leading the school forward within the BKPCS.

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