

DIOCESE OF LEEDS DBI



SECTION 48 INSPECTION REPORT

THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL
AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

ST. JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC PRIMAR SCHOOL
Portland Road
Halifax
HX3 6LA

School URN	<input type="text" value="107544"/>
Chair of Governors	<input type="text" value="Mrs. P. Fothergill"/>
Headteacher	<input type="text" value="Mrs. J. Hutton"/>
RE Subject Leader	<input type="text" value="Mrs. L. Brown"/>
Date of Inspection	<input type="text" value="20<sup>th</sup> May 2009"/>
Section 48 Inspector	<input type="text" value="John J Boyle"/>

INTRODUCTION

The Inspection of St. Joseph'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.

Description of the school

St Joseph's Catholic Primary is a one form entry school with a large catchment area serving the Parishes of St Bernard's, Boothtown, St. Theresa's, Queensbury and St. Columba's, Pellon. The school has a diverse socio economic mix in an area of high social deprivation. The percentage of baptised Catholics on role is 48% with a significantly increasing trend of non-Catholic pupils entering school. The percentage of pupils with learning needs is above the national average. The number of stated children is slightly above the national average with further two children awaiting formal statementing. There are eight teachers and two hold the Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies or equivalent.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL

The overall effectiveness of the provision for the Catholic life of the school, of curriculum RE, and the school's main strengths and areas for development.

All levels of leadership and management school are outstanding in developing Religious Education and the Catholic life of the school. The distinctive nature of the school is effectively monitored by the Governors and the Senior Leadership Team with outcomes informing further development needs and improvement of educational and spiritual provision. Chaplaincy provision is excellent. Pupils are well behaved and make a positive contribution to the school, local and global communities. They have varied opportunities for prayer and celebration and are keen to participate reverently and respectfully in worship. Pupil progress is monitored effectively using tracking systems developed by the school. Teaching quality is monitored closely and planning takes into account the ability and level of challenge to individuals, thus ensuring progress. Effective assessment is used to inform planning and to monitor progress. All adults have high expectations as to behaviour, attitude and standards of work. Children live up to these expectations and so make very good progress. The curriculum ensures that children learn that all are created by God and this uniqueness is to be respected leading to a positive contribution to social cohesion. "That everyone matters," is a strength of the school. Leadership has a strong sense of the mission of the church. This is the driving force within school and as such is instrumental and effective in raising achievement. School is reflective of the efficacy of its practice and uses outcomes from this reflection to inform planning for future development.

The effectiveness of any steps taken to promote improvement since the last inspection

Since the last inspection the school has developed a much acclaimed tracking and recording system and developed and improved Circle Time.

The capacity to make further improvements

Given the improvement in outcomes since the last inspection and the ability of senior and subject leaders to drive and sustain further improvement, capacity to improve is outstanding.

The inspection findings indicate that school self-evaluation is accurate and there are no key issues.

THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

How effective are Leadership and Management in developing the Catholic life of the school?

Leadership and management in developing the Catholic life of the school are outstanding. All levels of leadership are driven by a Christocentric mission which provides guidance for the development of Catholic education and the spiritual life of all concerned with the school. Performance management objectives with a special focus on RE are shared by all teachers to drive forward agreed principles. The distinctive nature of the school is monitored regularly and effectively by the Governors and Senior Leadership Team. Outcomes from monitoring lead to further development and improvement of educational and spiritual provision. This development is supported with appropriate training and resources. Chaplaincy provision is excellent with the Parish Priest being a regular visitor providing support and guidance to all. Children are exceedingly well behaved and enjoy making a positive contribution to the school, local and global community by way of the School Council, Buddy system and Playground Friends. All share in fundraising to support CAFOD, Catholic Care and the homeless in Halifax.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

How good is the quality of Collective Worship?

The quality of Collective Worship is outstanding. School enjoys a vibrant liturgical life with Music, dance and drama used effectively to enhance experience and to inspire adults and children in their very varied prayer and celebration activities. All children have opportunities to take lead roles in class and other liturgies. Pupils are keen to participate in worship and in doing so their behaviour is reverent, respectful and consequently their spiritual and moral development is enhanced. Home/school/parish links are strong and encouraged by the quality of worship opportunities that school provides and parents appreciate. Pupils join with the parish community in church to celebrate the Mass on Holydays and other special occasions. The Parish Priest is a regular, welcome visitor to the school. He knows the adults and children well and he plays an important role in their spiritual and pastoral care and development.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

ACHIEVEMENT AND STANDARDS IN RE

How well do pupils achieve in RE?

Pupil achievement is outstanding. Given the starting points, standards in each Key Stage are very high, with all children making very good progress, gaining knowledge, skills and understanding in the process. Individual and cohort progress is effectively monitored by the school's exemplary tracking system. Teaching is appropriately differentiated to take account of abilities thus ensuring appropriate levels of challenge for all pupils and consequently all make progress. Pupils describe teaching as interesting and that the teachers and all other adults help them to learn and as a consequence they are motivated to respond positively. There is no evidence of under-performance.

THE QUALITY OF PROVISION IN RE

How effective are Teaching and learning in RE?

The effectiveness of observed teaching and learning is outstanding. Teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of their Faith and the RE scheme with some working towards the

Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies. A variety of teaching strategies are deployed and all adults have high expectations which challenge pupils and ensure successful learning. Observed teaching is well planned and delivered in an interesting way making good use of ICT to enthuse and challenge children. School has developed its own acclaimed tracking system to record and track individual and cohort progress. Effective assessment is used to inform planning and to monitor progress. Pupil behaviour is excellent as a result of good teaching which arouses their interest and consequent enjoyment. Children work well collectively and as individuals. Parents receive information by way of Diocesan newsletters and other weekly school newsletters. Their experience of school is of a community which listens to parents and encourages children to be well mannered, self-confident, happy, and eager to make progress.

How well does the RE curriculum meet the needs and interests of pupils?

The quality of the Religious Education curriculum is outstanding and makes a significant contribution to spiritual and moral development of pupils and adults. The appropriate Diocesan syllabus is followed and complemented by school throughout the liturgical year. School works with parents and the parish in preparation for first sacraments. Other faiths are taught by way of the RE curriculum, in Assemblies and in PSHCE. Music, literacy, drama and ICT are used effectively to develop knowledge and understanding of other cultures. Children learn about growing up, the importance of family life, relationships and responsibilities and citizenship, developing into caring and responsible young people. Teaching the faith is fundamental and ensures that the children use the examples of the Gospels to model their way of life. A partnership has recently been established with a school in India, after a local Indian doctor told them about conditions within the communities he serves in India. The children raised money to buy books for the school and are in the process of becoming pen pals. The curriculum ensures that children learn that all are created by God and this uniqueness is to be respected and consequently a positive contribution is made to social cohesion.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF RE

How effective are Leadership and Management in raising achievement and supporting all pupils in RE?

The effectiveness of leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all pupils in RE is outstanding. Leaders have a strong sense of the mission of the church and this is the driving force within school and as such is instrumental and effective in raising achievement within a supportive, nurturing environment. The school's Mission Statement underpins all activities and aspects of school life. The distinct Catholic ethos permeates the school creating a unique and inspirational love of learning through gospel values. School staff regularly reflects on and monitor current practice and outcomes are used to guide the drive for improvement and development. Pupils are treated equally and all are enabled to achieve their full potential by way of well planned, effective teaching, and focussed assessment. Appropriate resources are provided and funding is on a par with other Core subjects. Governors are also guided by shared sense of mission and act as critical friends to the school. The designated RE Governor meets termly with the R.E. Co-ordinator to receive regular updates and to offer support and advice.

INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS SUMMARY

ASPECT	GRADE	DESCRIPTOR
OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS	1	Outstanding
THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL		
How effective are Leadership and Management in developing the Catholic life of the school?	1	Outstanding
How good is the quality of Collective Worship?	1	Outstanding
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION		
How well do pupils achieve in RE?	1	Outstanding
How effective are Teaching and learning in RE?	1	Outstanding
How well does the RE curriculum meet the needs and interests of pupils?	1	Outstanding
How effective are Leadership and Management in raising achievement and supporting all pupils in RE?	1	Outstanding