

DIOCESE OF LEEDS



DIOCESAN BOARD FOR INSPECTIONS

SECTION 48 FINAL REPORT

THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL
AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

ST. JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL
JOSEPH STREET
HUNSLET, LEEDS LS10 2AD

School URN

108028

School DfE Number

383 3374

E-mail address

Snellie01@leedslearning.net

Chair of Governors

Fr. Eamon McGeough

Headteacher

Mrs. Elizabeth Snelling

RE Subject Leader

Mrs. Angela Filarowski

Date of Inspection

27th and 28th June 2011

Section 48 Inspector

Mr. David Gott accompanied by
Mrs Anne Winfield.

INTRODUCTION

The inspection of St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Hunslet was carried out by one inspector and one observer/trainee inspector for the Diocese of Leeds. The inspection was conducted under the statutory requirements of the Education Act (2005) Section 48 and in full accordance with criteria as set out by the National Board of Religious Inspectors and Advisors (NBRIA) and approved by the Bishop of Leeds.

The inspector observed a sample of six Religious Education (RE) lessons, four acts of Collective Worship one choral singing lesson and one lunchtime liturgy group meeting. Observations covered all three primary key stages. Meetings were held with the chair of governors/ Parish Priest, the headteacher, the RE co-ordinator, a representative group of parents and pupils. A wide range of RE documentation was scrutinised including those aspects of the School Improvement Plan relating to priorities in RE and the Catholic life of the School. The RE co-ordinator's planning, monitoring, assessment, pupil progress tracking and reporting files were also scrutinised. Moderated portfolios of assessed pupil RE work and governors' approved RE policies, meetings and minutes were also examined. Samples of pupil's RE work/books across all key stages were scrutinised. Those aspects of the school's budget relating to RE were also examined.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Hunslet is a smaller than average, Voluntary Aided, one form entry school in the Leeds Diocese. The school is located close to the city centre of Leeds in the recently created parish of St. Margaret of Clitherow, formed from the merger of the parishes of St. Joseph's, St Peter's and St. Philips.

Over recent years the area has faced a number of demographic and socio economic challenges, which have left pockets of deprivation within the school's catchment area. Pupil mobility and the proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals are well above national average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above the national average. A number of pupils join the school other than in the reception class. Some of these pupils come from outside the UK and have English as their additional language.

Currently there are 173 pupils on roll. This is a considerable increase on numbers at the time of the last inspection (124 in 2008). Over 90 pupils are of the Catholic faith (60 in 2008). 54 pupils are of other Christian denominations (15 in 2008).

The published admission number has been increased from 24 (2008) to 30 (2011) to accommodate the rising demand for places at the school. Pupils are now taught in 7 single age classes by 9.5 full time equivalent teachers of whom 6 are of the Catholic faith. Four teachers hold the Catholic Certificate of Religious Studies or equivalent qualification.

The majority of Year 6 pupils transfer to Mount St. Mary's Catholic High School, Leeds in Year 7. A minority transfer to St. Thomas á Becket Catholic High School, Wakefield. Growing inter school links are being established.

INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

1

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

1

CAPACITY FOR SUSTAINED IMPROVEMENT

1

Main findings

St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School Hunslet is an outstandingly effective school. Outcomes for pupils, the provision for Catholic education and the school's capacity for sustained improvement are at least good with both judged to be outstanding.

Despite a period of considerable demographic change in the Hunslet area resulting in above average deprivation factors, fluctuating pupil numbers, unavoidable turbulence in staffing, including Senior Leadership Team and reconfiguration of the Catholic parish structure in the area, the headteacher and staff, Parish Priest and governors are to be congratulated on their resilience and unswerving pursuit of excellence in Catholic Education in the face of so many significant challenges. They have effected exceptional improvement at the school since the last inspection (2008).

The decline in pupil numbers has been completely reversed to the extent that the demand for pupil places now exceeds the number of places available. Over the 2010-2011 academic year 30 reception class pupils joined the school in September and 18 Year 6 pupils will leave for high school at the end of the summer term.

Staffing levels (including Senior Leadership Team) have now stabilised. A balance of experienced and newly qualified teachers staff the school on a permanent basis. The Senior Leadership Team which includes the RE co-ordinator have established very effective, data rich, monitoring/ review self evaluation systems to raise standards of attainment in RE and the Catholic life of the school. This inspection judged that the school had been overly modest in some areas of its self assessment gradings. The Senior Leadership Team and other leaders and managers inspire the school community to work towards meeting the school's ambitious Vision and Mission Statements. Morale is very high at St. Joseph's and belief in the school's success runs through all levels of staff. Processes for managing the performance of staff and for their Continuous Professional Development – include aspects of RE and the Catholic life of the school.

Pupil learning and progress in RE and the Catholic life of the school are outstanding.

Pupil behaviour is exemplary at St. Joseph's. Pupils feel valued and listened to and are justifiably proud of their school.

The governing body have made considerable progress since the last inspection and are now firmly focused on formalising existing systems for holding the Senior Leadership Team to account. A clearly discernible trend of rapid improvement is evident. Governors have high levels of expertise and discharge their statutory and canonical responsibilities effectively. They have approved an extensive suite of RE and related policy documents including 'Education for Personal Relationships' (EPR) and 'Education and Community Cohesion'. Governors are well informed about the school and have established 'link governors' for individual class/year groups. Joint staff/governor training and development days have been established – particularly to strengthen and deepen the spiritual life of the school.

School Leadership and Management are united in living out the school's Mission Statement: 'Striving to teach and inspire all in our community through the life and teachings of Jesus Christ ----to enable everyone to achieve their unique potential'.

WHAT THE SCHOOL NEEDS TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER

In line with the existing RE School Improvement Plan:

- Continue to raise standards of attainment in RE and the Catholic Life of the School by further embedding the recently introduced RE Scheme 'The Way, the Truth & the Life' in to the school's RE Curriculum, in line with diocesan advice, training, support, and guidance;
- Continue to formalise and further develop existing governor procedures for holding Senior Leadership Team to account;
- Continue to further develop the schools existing (EPR) Programme in line with Diocesan advice, training support and guidance;
- Continue to enhance and deepen the spiritual life of the school through continued provision of joint governor and staff guided retreat experiences;
- Continue to further develop and expand existing network links with the wider community to provide opportunities for pupils to deepen their knowledge and understanding of the beliefs, customs and practices of other 'World Faiths'.

Since the last inspection (S48) the school has taken action to address the areas identified for further improvement. The governors and Senior Leadership Team continued to promote high expectations in RE. Consequently pupil attainment and pupil achievement in RE has risen considerably. The governing body and Senior Leadership Team have very successfully introduced and applied systems of school self evaluation towards RE and the Catholic life of the School. As a result, the school has enjoyed considerable success in achieving goals in areas of RE which it has identified for itself. The school Mission Statement has been conscientiously reviewed involving joint governor, staff, pupil and parent involvement.

PUPILS

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

1

The quality of pupils' learning and their progress in RE is outstanding. Most pupils concentrate very well and are rarely off task even when in extended periods without direction from an adult. Progress is at least good in each key stage for different groups of pupils and is exemplary in some. The quality of learning for pupils with particular learning needs and/or disabilities is particularly well planned which results in outstanding progress. In a KS2 RE lesson on the conversion of St. Paul, the pupils were enthusiastically taking part in a 'This is Your Life' activity based upon St. Paul. Particularly effective learning was evidenced taking place for pupils with learning difficulties via the use of hand held 'easy speak' microphone/recorders prompted by an extremely competent member of the support staff who ensured that excellent pupil progress was achieved during this lesson.

The standards learners achieve in RE are high. Attainment indicators for the final key stage are almost all significantly above average. By the end of Year 6, 95% of pupils achieve level 4+ in RE. This is consistently higher than in other core subject areas. Standards of attainment in RE are at least high in all key stages and there are no unsatisfactory areas. From a very low Foundation Key Stage RE baseline entry point, pupils make exceptional progress in RE across all key stages. This is due to exceptionally good RE lesson planning, good RE subject knowledge, imaginative and lively teaching, linked to enjoyable and suitably differentiated learning activities. The whole support staff actively participate and contribute to the children's learning enjoyment of RE and Collective Worship. Pupils actively lead and take responsibility for shaping activities with a religious character in the school and the wider community. Pupils particularly enjoy taking part in class and whole school assemblies and seasonal liturgical celebrations. Pupils take full advantage of the opportunities the school provides for their personal support and development and evaluating the Catholic life of the school. Values such as compassion, cooperation and team work are intrinsic in all school activities both during and beyond the school day. Pupils actively reach out to help those in greater need. They are pro active in their charitable fundraising efforts on behalf of such charities as Catholic Care, Good Shepherd Fund, CAFOD, St. Gemma's, St. Anne's Shelter for the homeless and Light for the Blind.

Pupils respond to and participate in vibrant acts of Collective Worship. This is because Collective Worship is very well planned and actively involves all pupils. They are keen to participate and join in community prayers with confidence. Pupils reflect in silence and act with respect and reverence. They are at ease and act with integrity when praying with others who have different beliefs and attitudes to spirituality. They are able to distinguish between the spiritual and the material, recognising that God plays a significant part in their lives. They make strong moral decisions and stick to them. A parent of no particular faith persuasion revealed his surprise when on a recent camping holiday with his extended family, his child (a pupil at St. Joseph's), insisted that everyone paused before eating their meals to give thanks to God for the gift of food. Similarly, another parent revealed his surprise on learning that his child had considerably reduced buying video games and was

quietly donating the money to a charity that the school was supporting as the child considered that his spending money would be put to far better use in this way. The school council act positively on pupil feedback they receive. Pupils are proud of their cultural heritage and beliefs and have a strong sense of personal worth. They express their own views and beliefs with confidence and are able to refer to the teachings of Jesus and other key religious figures. They value and respect the Catholic tradition of the school and its links with the wider parish and local community. Pupils take an active part in organising Masses which are held both in school and in the parish church.

Pupil behaviour is exemplary. Pupils treat each other and adults with high levels of respect. They know acutely that their behaviour always has the potential for positive and negative consequences. Pupils take full responsibility for themselves and for their actions. They are quick to support and congratulate others who achieve well. Pupils and parents comment very positively on the school's assigned pupil roles of 'reconcilers' and 'peer mediators'. Parents of pupils new to the school (especially those from overseas whose children joined the school other than at reception class level) said how very appreciative they were of the ways in which their own children had been openly welcomed into the school as 'new joiners' by the other pupils. One parent said, "Every day I thank God for guiding me to St. Joseph's School. We knew no one when we arrived in this area. Now my children are so happy. It's just like belonging to one big happy family. St. Joseph's treats everyone as equal. There have never been any racial tensions or name calling of my children."

Pupils and parents commented positively on the use of a 'wobble box' where by pupils could simply put a confidential note in the box outside the headteacher's office. The Learning Mentor arranges a meeting with the pupil to discuss the specific concerns, which may have happened outside/inside school.

Pupils sing hymns and musical settings of the scriptures with enthusiasm. The work undertaken in the school by the diocesan choral singing teacher pays rich dividends in Collective Worship. Pupils were observed singing musical settings in 4 part harmony. The school choir have recently recorded a CD, with the proceeds going to charity. The choir regularly contributes to Eucharistic and non Eucharistic liturgies both at school and in the parish church. Moving choral performances at seasonal local community events are favourably commented upon. Pupils say that they enjoy singing hymns. Parents and parishioners are particularly appreciative of the school's musical efforts. Recently a pupil has successfully auditioned to join the Leeds Cathedral Junior Choir.

Pupils enjoy voluntary attendance at the weekly lunchtime 'J.A.M. Club' ('Jesus and Me') lead by the Learning Mentor. At the time of inspection, pupils were actively engaged in informal discussions around the Gospel account of how Jesus called Peter the fisherman 'to be a fisher of men'. Pupils were making 'prayer pockets' (from an example provided) and placing a quotation from the Gospel on the front of the pocket. They were then invited to write a private prayer on coloured lolly pop sticks (provided) and place them inside their prayer pocket. The gathering concluded with enthusiastic singing of a hymn to a pre recorded backing track on a CD. The pupils quietly left taking their prayer pockets with them.

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	1
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 at St. Joseph's School is Outstanding. Teaching is at least good and much is outstanding with the result that the pupils are making exceptional progress. Excellent subject knowledge is consistently applied to challenge and inspire pupils to achieve to the best of their ability. Pupils take a pride in their work in RE and are keen to learn more. Teachers and other adults are aware of their pupils' capabilities and prior learning. They set high expectations and plan very effectively to meet the needs of the differing groups of pupils they teach.

High quality resources, including Information and Communication Technology (ICT) are used very effectively, together with the targeted support provided by other experienced and knowledgeable adults in the classrooms, to optimise pupil learning. Consequently, pupils are highly motivated, sustain their concentration extremely well and enjoy their work in RE. Marking of pupils' RE work and dialogue between teachers, other adults and pupils are consistently of a very high quality. Individual RE targets are made explicit for each pupil in the front cover of their RE workbook. Pupils understand in detail how to improve their work and are consistently supported in doing so.

Pupils enjoy their RE work. In a Foundation Key Stage lesson, on the theme 'Church' pupils enthusiastically reflected with their teacher on their recent out of school visit to the Parish Church of St. Joseph and St. Peter, prompted by digital photographs and flipcam recordings taken on the visit and shown on the classroom digital Smartboard. One pupil volunteered, "I liked seeing the tabernacle on the altar in Church".

Groups of pupils happily painted 'Thank You' cards to the Parish Priest and parish deacon; built churches out of play bricks; made statues out of play-dough; used computers to create pictures of churches and a group outdoors built a simple altar and dressed it with appropriate religious artefacts from a resource box provided for the purpose.

A Key Stage 1 class took it in turns to 'hot seat' St. Peter and St. John and the man who could not walk – questioning them each about what happened and how they felt at the time! In another KS1 RE lesson on the theme of 'miracles' a group of pupils happily role

played the miracle of Jesus helping the paralysed man. They used a flipcam to record/replay their results to the class. In explaining what they were doing, one pupil commented, "The man was so poorly, he couldn't walk but he believed in Jesus so much he just knew that Jesus would help him if only he could get near enough to see him! Luckily the man had some great friends who carried him up the stairs and Jesus did help him! Jesus wants us to be good friends to everyone but especially those who need help."

A KS2 RE lesson on the theme 'Belonging to the Church' focused on the Sacrament of Baptism. Using the class Smartboard, the class teacher showed the pupils photographs of her own baptism as a baby and similarly of her own daughter's baptism. The class then went on to re enact the baptism of a baby. Using a doll, pupils role-played the administration of the Sacrament. The religious significance of the various signs and symbols used in the Sacrament of Baptism were very skilfully drawn out of the pupils by appropriate questioning and reviewed by the class teacher at the end of the lesson.

In a KS2 RE lesson on the theme of 'Pentecost': 'The Sacrament of Confirmation', the class teacher challenged groups of pupils to devise their own T.V. radio, magazine or social network adverts for one of the gifts of the Holy Spirit of their own choosing. One pupil wrote (of the gift of understanding), "Without me you will not truly succeed. I help you to understand your friends and your family. I am very special to you and mankind. I give you the ability to see from another person's heart, to feel the feelings of others and to put these before your own."

At St. Joseph's, RE is treated as a core subject of the school curriculum. The conscientious RE co-ordinator ensures that RE and the Catholic life of the School are subjected to the same rigorous degree of scrutiny of teacher planning, preparation, delivery and assessment as other core subject areas. Similarly individual/cohort/key stage attainment tracking data in RE is analysed for positive and negative trends. These are reported to Senior Leadership Team and the governing body. RE resource provision is audited on an annual basis, ensuring that appropriate staff meeting/CPD time is allocated to RE/The Catholic life of the School. A programme of joint staff/governor CPD training opportunities has already been established.

The school RE budget is monitored by the school governors and Senior Leadership Team to ensure that appropriate financial provision is made for RE and the Catholic life of the school. Over the financial years 2010 to 2013, the sum of £3100 has been budgeted for RE resources. This is slightly higher than funding resources allocated for other areas of the school curriculum. To date this funding has supported the purchase of teaching and support materials for the newly introduced RE scheme 'The Way, the Truth and the Life'; RE artefacts to support the teaching of other 'World Faiths' and RE classroom focal points. Joint staff governor training and development opportunities in RE have also been supported through this budget.

The school's RE curriculum very effectively, provides all pupils with deeper insights into the Catholic Faith and also enables pupils to see it in relation to other World Faiths. It successfully seeks to improve on the coherence, relevance and excitement of the well planned learning opportunities provided. As a result, pupils have the opportunity to be enthusiastic and highly motivated learners. They benefit from excellent opportunities to improve their spiritual and moral development.

The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school is Outstanding. It is central to the day to day life of the school/classroom and is a key part of every school celebration. Prayer opportunities for staff and pupils are planned in a manner that attracts and

facilitates attendance, including adults associated with the pupils, the school and the parish. Pupils' liturgical formation is very well planned, appropriate to their faith background and shows progression in line with diocesan guidelines. The themes, chosen by pupils and staff, reflect a deep understanding of the Church's mission and include the spiritual aspirations of all pupils.

In a FKS class Collective Worship on the theme of Sts. Peter and Paul, the reading of a children's version of the conversion of St. Paul, prompted further discussions, during which one pupil said, "It's just like us – when we can hear Jesus talking to us but we can't see him – but we know he is there don't we."

In a moving KS2 Collective Worship on the same theme, pupils reflected on the times that even Jesus' closest friends had let him down, but still Jesus forgave them. Pupils reverently re enacted Saul's conversion through readings and freeze-frame drama: pointing out that Jesus wants us to spread his love for us. Home made prayer cards/bookmarks were handed out as pupils left the hall as reminders of how both St. Peter and St. Paul had changed their lives to follow Jesus:

'Help us to be the light
of your love and share
it with everyone we meet.'

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

Leaders and managers at St. Joseph's School Hunslet are outstandingly effective in developing the Catholic life of the school. The school's leadership is deeply committed to the Church's mission in education. They are energised by the task and are a source of inspiration for the whole community. A celebratory central RE display board, located in the foyer of the main school entrance features the school Mission Statement. It depicts ways in which all associated with the school strive to live it out in their day to day school lives.

There is unequivocal and explicit evidence that the Catholic mission of the school is a priority, along with the spiritual and moral development of pupils as exemplified in the School Improvement Plan. Self evaluation at all levels within the school is a coherent reflection of rigorous monitoring, searching analysis and self challenge. This leads on to well targeted planning and actions taken by the school. As a result, outcomes in RE for most pupils are good and some are exceptionally high. Staff feel well supported in RE by the headteacher and RE co-ordinator. In turn the RE co-ordinator feels well supported by the Senior Leadership Team and the diocesan RE co-ordinator. Governors make a particularly significant contribution to the work and Catholic dimension of the school. They have exceptionally high levels of expertise and exert their influence in determining the direction of the Catholic life of the school. Governors were actively involved in reviewing the school Mission Statement. Governors conscientiously discharge their statutory and canonical responsibilities. They have approved an extensive suite of RE related policy documentation.

Governors have ensured that the staff Performance Management Policy incorporates aspects of RE and the Catholic life of the school. The Chair of Governors engages very effectively with parents, pupils and the staff as a whole. He is a very popular, highly respected and regular visitor in school. He is very well informed about users' views of the school. This informs governors' strategic priorities for development of RE and the Catholic life of the school. Governors are proactive in developing joint staff/governor training and development opportunities. An already identified priority for governors is to formalise and make more explicit their current systems for evaluating their own performance and that of providing professional challenge to the Senior Leadership Team of the school.

St. Joseph's participate fully and actively in developing and implementing a variety of partnership activities. The school is an active member of Catholic cluster of schools and parishes. There is an active Parent Family Partnership Cluster which organises joint family support and sporting activities such as visits to the Leeds Rhinos. The school also recently won a local 'Most Talented School' award. Pupils benefit significantly and develop exceptionally well in a number of areas which the school alone could not provide.

Leaders and managers work with others beyond the school to ensure that pupils are given opportunities to enter into dialogue and collaborate with people from different backgrounds. The school actively promotes pupils' initiative in learning about and supporting charities at local, national and global levels. Within the school, there is concern, respect and hospitality towards the other. Pupils' friendship bonds cross cultural/faith/social/economic boundaries.

Acts of Collective Worship leave room for the other person's spiritual identity, their modes of expression and their values. A KS1 Collective Worship commenced with a group of pupils reverently performing a signed dance version of 'Come and Join the Circle'. Provision for RE results in an attitude of respect for all faiths, mutual understanding and integrity, enabling pupils to challenge each others' beliefs and values. Pupils participate in neighbourhood and religious community activities which bring them close to people on the margins of society and those who suffer.

Parents from all backgrounds and especially parents who feel insecure in an academic environment are encouraged to become involved in school decision making.

In the context of the distinctive identity of the Catholic school the inclusion of all is a central goal and a shared vision. During the inspection, a pupil volunteered the following

comment, “Although I am not a Catholic, everyone makes me feel at home here. I am always included in discussions in RE lessons and in school events- I never feel left out.”

The above pupil comment exemplifies the fruition of the concluding sentence of the school Mission Statement: ‘We show compassion, care and respect to all in an ever changing society.’

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.	2
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