

# DIOCESE OF LEEDS



DIOCESAN BOARD FOR INSPECTIONS

## SECTION 48 FINAL REPORT

THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL  
AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION  
ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL  
BAFFAM LANE SELBY NORTH YORKSHIRE YO89AX

School URN

121639

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Chair of Governors

Mr. Mike Dugher

Headteacher

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Date of Inspection

22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2012

Section 48 Inspector

Mr. David Gott

## **INTRODUCTION**

The inspection, was carried out by 1 inspector over a period of 1 ½ days, under the requirements of Section 48 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection follows the Leeds Diocesan Framework and Schedule for Section 48 Inspectors as approved by the Bishop of Leeds and set by the National Board of Religious Inspectors and Advisors (NBRIA). The inspection process starts with the school's own self evaluation.

A sample of 6 Religious Education (RE) lessons and 2 acts of Collective Worship (CW) were observed, covering all 3 key stages. Meetings were held with the Headteacher, RE Subject Leader, representatives of the governing body (including the Chair, and Parish Priest). Similarly meetings were held with representative groups of parents and pupils. A meeting was also held with the RE Subject Leader of the Catholic high school to which the majority of Year 6 pupils transfer. A wide range of evidence of RE/Catholic Life of The School was scrutinised, including the School Development Plan (SDP), RE monitoring and evaluation documentation, RE budget allocation, minutes of governors meetings and Continuous Professional Development (CPD) records. Similarly pupil RE progress tracking data, home, school, parish newsletters, school prospectus, website, a representative sample of KS1 and KS2 RE workbooks and RE displays were also scrutinised.

## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

St. Mary's Catholic Primary School, Selby is a smaller than average sized Voluntary Aided school of the Diocese of Leeds. The school was founded to serve the needs of the families of St. Mary's Parish. Consequently the school draws pupils from a far wider catchment area than that of the immediate area in which the school is located.

Over recent years the pupil roll has fluctuated but in the last 18 months numbers have begun to increase to the point where this year, the Early Years Foundation Key Stage (Reception Class) was oversubscribed, resulting in the school being granted permission to exceed its current Published Admission Limit (PAL) of 26 pupils per year. The total pupil roll currently stands at 151 pupils aged 4 – 11 years, currently taught in 6 classes, 2 of which are mixed age. Currently the school does not have designated nursery provision. A growing number of pupils are joining the school at key stages higher than foundation. Pupil attendance rates are above average and rising.

The percentage of baptised Catholic pupils on roll is 64% and rising. The majority of pupils on roll are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils for whom English is a second language is 13%. The proportion of pupils with disabilities and those with special educational needs supported through school action is above average, but a slightly lower than average proportion of pupils are supported at school action plus or have a statement of special educational needs.

Since the last RE Inspection (2011) there have been extensive changes in staffing at the school. In September 2011, 50% of the teaching staff were newly qualified. There was also an Acting Headteacher and an Acting Deputy Headteacher. In March 2012 the Acting Headteacher was appointed Headteacher. Currently there is an Acting Deputy

Headteacher in post. In line with the governors succession management plan a new Chair of Governors has been elected. The school has also welcomed a new Parish Priest.

Of the 7 full time teachers at the school, 3 are Catholic. (There are currently no part time teachers). 1 teacher possesses the Catholic Certificate of Religious Studies (CCRS) Qualification. 1 teacher is currently undertaking CCRS. All 7 teachers teach RE.

Pupil knowledge and attainment in RE, on entry into the Early Years Foundation Key Stage varies greatly from year to year, a significant proportion of pupils are often below their age appropriate expectations in their knowledge of RE. By the time pupils leave the school the majority are in line with national expectations in RE.

St. Mary's maintains strong home, school, parish links through regular newsletters and joint seasonal liturgical celebrations including joint parish/ school Masses. Parents and parishioners are always invited. The school choir also actively supports parish and local community events, especially those of a charitable nature. St. Mary's also maintains close links with Holy Family Catholic High School, Carlton, to where the majority of Y6 pupils transfer for their secondary education.

The school makes provision for before and after school care clubs which are run on the school premises through a private provider. A variety of extracurricular clubs are also provided by the school. These are organised and run by the teaching staff.

The school has attained a number of nationally accredited standards including 'Inclusion Mark', 'Basic Skills Agency Quality Mark' and 'Healthy Schools Award'.

## 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

St. Mary's Catholic Primary School is a rapidly improving school providing a good quality of Catholic education with some outstanding aspects. Outcomes for pupils, provision for Catholic education, the effectiveness of leaders and managers and the school's capacity for sustained improvement are all good with aspects of outstanding practice. The previous decline in pupil numbers has been significantly halted. Admissions numbers to the reception class now exceed the current Published Admission Number (PAN) of 26. The governing body have successfully negotiated with the Diocese of Leeds and the local authority for an increase in the school's PAN to 30 for future years.

St Mary's School is very clearly a community which puts 'Christ at the Centre' of all that it sets out to achieve and where everyone is loved, valued and respected as a unique creation of an ever loving God. The Headteacher, RE Subject Leader, staff (teaching and support), Governors and the Parish Priest are fully committed to 'living out' the school mission. They are highly motivated and inspire the whole school community to have high expectations about their task of working towards meeting their shared Catholic vision for the school:

*'The mission for our school is to grow as a community through our faith in God giving love and respect to all'.*

Following a former period of turbulence in staffing, the governing body have worked hard to achieve stability. The current Headteacher was appointed in March 2012 (having previously served as Acting Head). The RE Subject Leader (Acting Deputy Head) has been responsible for RE since September 2012.

Under the current leadership and management team, there is a feeling of high morale across all key stages of the school. The Headteacher and RE Subject Leader have had a significantly positive effect on raising standards in RE/Catholic Life of the School. Areas identified for improvement in the last inspection have been conscientiously addressed to the extent that inspection grade boundaries have been crossed in 9 significant areas in this inspection, most notably teaching and learning in RE. The RE Subject Leader is also a member of the Senior Leadership Team of the school.

Through improvements made to the school's monitoring and evaluation systems the school's own self evaluation of its current areas of strength and areas for further development is very accurate. These factors have been successfully incorporated into the School Development Plan (SDP) and will help to drive school improvement in RE/Catholic Life further forward.

Parents and pupils say that they recognise the considerable improvements the school has made in recent times under the current leadership and management team. Pupils say that they enjoy RE and value the Catholic Life of the School. Pupils respond well and are keen to participate in acts of Collective Worship (CW). They are at ease when praying with their school community and appreciate what is taking place. Their observed behaviour is exemplary. They treat all staff and each other with respect and courtesy.

The newly appointed Parish Priest values the warmth of the welcome and the strength of the support he has already received from the whole school and parish community. He looks forward to building on the already existing home, school, parish links.

## **What the school needs to do to improve further**

In line with the School Development Plan working in partnership with diocesan and local cluster based expertise and others:

- Continue to drive up standards in RE/Catholic Life of the School by further consistently developing and embedding agreed systems for the planning, delivery, monitoring, evaluation, tracking and reporting of pupil, class, key stage progress in RE/Catholic Life of the School across all key stages.
- Continue to make enhanced opportunities available for all staff (teaching and support) and governors to access high quality Continuous Professional Development (CPD) to deepen their subject knowledge of RE/Catholic Life of the School.
- Continue to further develop school based expertise and confidence in assessing levels of pupil attainment in RE, in particular with respect to 'signposting and targeting next steps' in learning in RE. In conjunction with diocesan guidance, local Catholic High School cluster based arrangements, develop exemplar moderated portfolios of pupils' RE work on themes linked to the school's RE Programmes of Study (e.g. 'The Way, The Truth and The Life'). Such portfolios will form valuable guides for staff new to the teaching and assessment of RE.
- Continue to promote and deepen home, school, parish links by further developing joint school/parish events and celebrations - perhaps also involving high school students who were former pupils of St. Mary's School.

## **PUPILS**

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

<b>2</b>
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RE outcomes for pupils at St. Mary's are good. Most make at least good progress and some make outstanding progress, with nothing that is inadequate. Children enter the Foundation Key Stage (Reception Class) from a variety of external (mainly private) settings (7 in 2012). Their knowledge and understanding of RE on entry is highly variable. The imaginative and enjoyable Early Years/Key Stage 1 RE Curriculum provides a solid foundation which is very successfully built upon by the majority of pupils to ensure that they make rapid progress and largely achieve to national expectations (Level 2) for their age (2012 End of Key Stage I 87.5% Level 2 in RE). By the time the majority of pupils leave Year 6 they are achieving standards broadly in line or above national expectations (level 4) for their age. (2012 End of Key Stage II 84.5% Level 4+ in RE). Pupil mobility is an increasing issue at the school with 20% of pupils joining the school at times other than

the Foundation Key Stage. RE attainment levels at KS1 and KS2 are rising broadly in line with attainment levels in the other core curriculum areas at the school. Pupils with particular learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress. Effective staff teamwork, differentiation in RE lesson planning, good teaching, conscientious efforts and patience of dedicated support staff all have a very positive impact on the good learning outcomes of these pupils.

The school motto: *'Loving, Laughing and Learning in the Light of the Lord'* is lived out on a daily basis in classrooms and playground alike. Pupils are keen to do well in RE, say that they feel valued, listened to and well cared for and are justifiably proud of their school. Over recent years leadership and management of the school have worked hard in conjunction with the diocese on providing a phased series of improvements to the school building, to provide pupils and staff with an enjoyable learning environment in which all say that they feel happy, safe and secure.

Pupils willingly take on responsibilities and participate constructively in the Catholic Life of the School beyond routine lessons and activities including evaluating the Catholic Life of the School. One particularly popular initiative is the 'Buddies' scheme which pairs up Year 6 pupils with Reception Class children to help them integrate into everyday school life at St. Mary's, particularly at lunchtimes and break times. Pupils and parents say how much they enjoy and appreciate this initiative.

Pupils at St. Mary's are reflective and inquiring. They respond very positively to the frequent opportunities RE lessons provide to discuss specific issues with their 'talk partners'. Teachers and support staff are very skilled at capturing any emerging 'wonder questions' to display in the classroom RE focal area. Examples of such questions evidenced were: 'When and where was God made?', 'When was Mary born' and 'How did Jesus do miracles?'

Pupils at St. Mary's understand that religious belief and spiritual values are important for many people. They show interest in the religious life of others, and respect religious objects in the school. They understand the importance of key Christian celebrations in school and in the wider parish community. They enjoy taking an active part in preparing and leading CW with confidence and enthusiasm particularly at KS2. They act with appropriate reverence, join in community prayers and quiet reflections. They are becoming increasingly skilled in the use of scripture and religious symbols to support their prayer. They readily participate in communal hymn singing.

Pupils are alert to the needs of others and seek justice for all within and beyond the school community. They understand the need to both forgive and to be forgiven and have a clear understanding of right and wrong. Pupils at St. Mary's are highly responsive to Catholic social teaching on issues of justice and peace. Through pupil led fundraising efforts the school supports local, regional, national and international charitable community projects to help those in need (e.g. Thomas Cammack Appeal, Crisis at Christmas, 'The Good Shepherd Fund' / Catholic Care and CAFOD). The education for a child in India is sponsored through charitable voluntary collections taken at Christmas performances.

Baptised Catholic pupils from St. Mary's and elsewhere are prepared for First Sacraments in the parish by the Parish Priest and the parish catechist. The school and the wider

parish community support the children and their families in their preparations and celebrations.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education.</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
• the quality of pupils' learning and their progress	<b>2</b>
• the quality of learning for pupils with particular learning needs and/or disabilities and their progress	<b>2</b>
• pupils' attainment in Religious Education	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life of the school.</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship.</b>	<b>2</b>

## PROVISION

**How effective the provision is for Catholic education.**

**2**

The provision for Catholic Education at St. Mary's is good. The Church's mission in education permeates the whole school and the day to day classroom lives of the pupils in particular. A key focal RE display in the main school hall featured the 'Year of Faith'. Symbols and icons of the Catholic faith are prominently displayed both externally (e.g. on outdoor school signage) and internally in public areas (e.g. main school entrance/reception area) as an outward sign of the school's Catholic ethos. At the time of the inspection, (November) the reception entrance area also featured a remembrance plaque to a former pupil of the school killed in action on HMS Glamorgan in the South Atlantic in 1982.

RE teaching overall is good with some outstanding aspects evidenced in all key stages. No inadequate teaching was witnessed. The majority of teaching enables pupils to make good progress as learners. As a result of good assessment procedures, teachers and other adults plan differentiated learning tasks well to meet and sufficiently challenge the needs of all pupils. Half termly formal RE tracking assessments inform individual, group and class pupil progress in RE. Meetings are held between the headteacher and members of staff to identify pupils who are falling behind and how they can be helped. Similarly, discussions are held to ensure that more able pupils are being sufficiently challenged. Peer lesson planning and joint lesson observations have assisted staff in their delivery of high quality, imaginative and stimulating RE lessons. Support provided by other adults in classrooms is well focused and makes a significantly positive contribution to the learning outcomes of those pupils with particular learning difficulties.

RE lesson observations over all 3 key stages confirm that pupils at St. Mary's work at a good pace, are keen to learn, generally take a pride in their RE work enjoy their RE lessons and achieve well. There is a calm purposeful working atmosphere in classrooms. Pupil behaviour is exemplary. Achievement and effort is appropriately celebrated.

Governors approved an RE budget of £500 for the 2011 and 2012 financial year. This is in line with the financial provision made for the other core curriculum areas of English and Maths. This funding provided additional RE classroom resources and staff training in RE.

All classrooms visited provide a designated RE focal areas containing very attractive displays of RE artefacts and pupils' RE work linked to the appropriate RE Programme of Study / Theme for the particular liturgical season or RE topic being covered in the class/ Whole school. 'Weekly Ethos Statements' are prominently displayed to prompt appropriate age related 'circle time' discussions. An area is made available to display RE 'Wonder Questions' which arise in the course of their classroom studies.

At St. Mary's RE is seen as the core subject running through the whole school curriculum. RE is greatly enriched through imaginative and well planned strategies to capitalise on the expertise within and beyond the school. Special Weeks are designated such as 'Global Awareness Week', 'Take One Parable Week' and 'Other Faith Week'. 'Pentecost Parties' are held during the appropriate season. During 'Arts Weeks' pupils have worked with a catechist to produce 'spiritual artwork'. A key action point in the School Development Plan is to further develop this dynamic and exciting creative RE curriculum. Good opportunities are already provided for the pupils' spiritual, moral development and vocational understanding. A wide range of varied extra-curricular activities are offered by the school (including joining the school choir). There is a high take up of these much enjoyed activities.

Staff and pupils pray together regularly. There is a wide range of formal and informal opportunities for daily prayer. Seasonal whole school liturgies are celebrated at key points throughout the Church/school year. Staff work hard to ensure that pupils are skilled in, and equipped to lead class/key stage worship. Selected themes are consistent with the Catholic character of the school and responsive to the religious diversity among pupils. Family members and parishioners are always invited to attend and say how much they look forward to and enjoy taking part in such joint home, school, parish events. Parents also say how much they welcome the regular parish and school newsletters which help to keep them informed on what topics/activities their children are taking part in and how they can help.

Acts of Collective Worship are given a high profile in the day to day life of this school and are well resourced. An inspirational FKS and KSI, Collective Worship on the theme of 'Special Gifts' was greatly enhanced by the quiet, skilful playing of the flute by a member of the teaching staff and by the singing and signing by the children of the hymn 'God's Greatest Gift'. On leaving, each child was given a little heart shape with the word 'love' written on it as a reminder that God loves each of them, just as they should share God's love with each other. Similarly a particularly effective KS2 CW, following diocesan guidelines, was entirely prepared and led by Year 6 pupils on the theme of 'water'. On entry to the school hall, each pupil was given a small blue coloured glass pebble. During the liturgy they were invited to place their 'droplet' on the central RE focal point to form a 'stream of thoughts and prayers' on the large blue cloth draped over different levels to give the effect of flowing water. Through prayers and hymns, pupils were reminded to give thanks to God for his gift of water and that we should do all we can to help those with no water.

Pupils contributed to the CAFOD 'Hunger Cloth' as part of family fast work. Along with 80 other schools representative pupils attended a celebratory Mass in Leeds Cathedral to see the completed cloth and to pray for the reduction of world hunger.

Staff willingly undertake RE/Catholic Life of the School, Continuous Professional Development (CPD). Staff say how much they appreciated the staff training day held at Ampleforth Abbey.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching in Religious Education.</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The use of assessment to support learning in Religious Education.</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which the Religious Education curriculum meets pupils' needs.</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school.</b>	<b>2</b>

## **LEADERS AND MANAGERS**

**How effective leaders and managers are in developing the Catholic life of the School.**

**2**

Leaders, governors and managers clearly demonstrate a very strong commitment to the Church's mission in education with spiritual and moral development a priority. They lead by example ensuring that the school keeps Gospel values at the centre of all that is done. They conduct a range of very effective systematic monitoring activities relating to provision and outcomes in RE/Catholic life. Their analysis provides a firm basis for accurate diagnosis of the school's strengths and areas for further development which lead to significant improvement to outcomes for pupils. RE is seen as the core subject of the school curriculum. The school's Self Evaluation grading's were found to be very accurate and very honest.

Staff and pupils have a high regard for the Catholic Life of the School and in particular Collective Worship (CW). Weekly 'Ethos Statements' and shared CW allow staff and pupils to reflect and develop their own personal ownership and joint partnership within it.

The School Development Plan provides a clear vision of the identified priority areas for further school improvement in RE/Catholic Life of the School. Progress in achieving the identified objectives is regularly monitored and reported back to governors in line with other core curriculum areas.

The knowledgeable and experienced Governing Body (GB) are well organised. GB meetings are very accurately minuted, the committee structure functions well, timetable allocations for RE comply with Bishops Conference recommendations and statutory requirements. The Vice Chair of Governors has recently been elected Chair, in line with the GB's succession management plan. The GB have an outstanding track record of taking decisive action to safeguard the religious character and academic standards of the

school. The GB act with integrity to ensure that the school is run in statutory according with its Instrument of Government as a Voluntary Aided School and in keeping the school's Diocesan Trust Deed. The GB very effectively challenge and support the Catholic dimension of the school, acting as 'critical friend' to the school's Senior Leadership Team to ensure that any areas needing development are accurately identified and tracked decisively. They also very effectively conduct reviews to ensure that the school's statutory and canonical responsibilities are being met. The programme of study for Education in Personal Relationships (EPR) is due to be renewed in line with recent diocesan guidelines.

Governors have successfully worked their way through 2 phases of a planned 5 phase building remodelling programme for the school going forward when funding is available.

The recently appointed Parish Priest is already a very popular and regular visitor to the school. A very successful joint parish/school 'Induction Service' was held to welcome him.

The school actively engages in and is firmly committed to partnership activities designed to further promote the Catholic Life of the School, enhance pupil learning and improve overall pupil well-being. Productive links are being strengthened with the local Catholic High School through regular meetings between the two Headteachers and the RE Subject Leaders. Student placements are also offered to colleges of further and higher education. Staff training for the Headteacher, Acting Deputy Headteacher and other members of teaching staff by diocesan staff has improved the consistency of teaching, assessment and tracking of pupil progress in RE. Partnerships with North Yorkshire Local Authority School Improvement Services have also been very productive. The school's Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) works well in partnership with other local support agencies and, with the help of the Parent Support Worker, considerably improved the support for and attendance of vulnerable pupils at the school. 'Rainbow' groups have been run successfully at the school to help those in need of emotional healing.

The RE Co-ordinator attends Parish Council Meetings which helps to promote and better co-ordinate close home, school and parish links. The school actively participates in parish based community projects (e.g. making up 'harvest baskets' to distribute to parishioners nominated by the parish St. Vincent de Paul Society). Similarly pupils donate Christmas gifts at an annual 'Gift Mass' where presents are collected for distribution by Catholic Care to children in need in the diocese. Pupil members of the school choir say they enjoy being invited to sing at local residential care homes and at the switching on of the Christmas lights at Brayton Village Green and Westwood Care Home.

St. Mary's is a place which seeks to value everyone associated with the school as a child of God, where every individual is encouraged, supported and enabled to mature towards their full growth in Christ and achieve their rightful potential. It is a place which enthusiastically celebrates that the things of God always take first place.

'Loving, Laughing and Learning in the Light of the Lord'

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>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.</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>How well leaders and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education and plan and implement improvement to outcomes for pupils.</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>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.</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>How well leaders and managers develop partnerships with other providers, organisations and services in order to promote Catholic learning and pupil well-being.</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>How effectively leaders and managers promote Community Cohesion.</b>	<b>2</b>