

# DIOCESE OF LEEDS



DIOCESAN BOARD FOR INSPECTION

## SECTION 48 REPORT

THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL  
AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

ST MARY & ST PETER CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Upper Nidd Street  
Leeds Road  
Bradford  
BD3 9ND

School URN	107329
Chair of Governors	Elaine Barker
Headteacher	John McManus
RE Subject Leaders	Louise Namvar and Shannele Cowban
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Dates of Inspection	4 <sup>th</sup> & 5 <sup>th</sup> July 2011
S48 Inspectors	Joe Ginty accompanied by Kevin Higgins

## **INTRODUCTION**

The Inspection of St Mary's & St Peter's Catholic Primary School was carried out under the requirements of the Education Act 2005, and in accordance with the Leeds Diocesan Framework and Schedule for Section 48 Inspections approved by the Bishop of Leeds. The inspection reviews and evaluates how effective the school is in providing Catholic education. This process begins with the school's own self-evaluation and the inspection schedule follows the criteria set by the National Board of Religious Inspectors and Advisers (NBRIA 2010).

The inspectors reviewed in detail the following aspects:

- the extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life of the school and the provision for Collective Worship;
- the extent to which the Religious Education (RE) curriculum meets the pupils' needs and the monitoring of that provision;
- how well leaders and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for RE and plan and implement improvement to outcomes for pupils.

The inspectors shared whole school Friday and Monday prayer assemblies, KS1 & KS2 liturgies and class liturgy in Y5. They observed RE lessons in Nursery, Years 1, 2, 4, 6 and a Philosophy for Children lesson in Y5.

They held meetings with the chair of governors together with the Parish Priest, headteacher, deputy headteacher, RE subject leaders, members of staff and the pupil council. They also examined school documentation including the school's Self Evaluation Form (SEF), the RE Action Plan, the subject-leader's portfolio, recent minutes of the governing body, monitoring, assessment and tracking records, samples of teacher planning and pupils' RE books.

## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

St Mary's and St Peter's is an average sized Catholic Primary School formed in 2009 through the amalgamation of the former separate St Mary's and St Peter's schools following a three year period of federation. The school has an admission number of 30 and there are currently 247 pupils on roll of whom 21% are of the Catholic Faith; 9% are of other Christian denominations; and 70% of other faith backgrounds.

The school is located in a deprived area of the city and a significant number of pupils show delayed language and communication skills on entry to the school. The percentage of pupils from ethnic minority groups and those whose first language not believed to be English is very high. Wide ranges of ethnic groups are represented at the school. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average and there are two pupils with statements of special educational needs. The school is 'housed' in a three storey building which in itself raises issues in terms of accessibility. The FSM index is above the national average. The school continues to address the challenges of attendance and punctuality and recent initiatives show positive signs of impact.

There are 13.5 full-time equivalent teachers eight of who are Catholic and three have CCRS or equivalent qualification.

# INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

## OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

2

*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

2

## CAPACITY FOR SUSTAINED IMPROVEMENT

2

### Main findings

St Mary's and St Peter's Catholic school provides a good quality of Catholic education.

The sense of belonging is traditional and tangible. The governors and senior leadership team inspire the school community to work towards meeting an ambitious vision and morale amongst all at the school is very high. There is a great sense of pride in the school and a determination to meet the many and varied needs of the pupils, their families and the local community. The strong sense of shared mission, partnership and collaboration are at the heart of the school's vision and this evangelical mission of the Church extends to the wider community through the school's very presence in it. It is a school where community cohesion is a living reality.

The outcomes for pupils, the provision for Catholic education, the effectiveness of leaders and managers and the school's capacity for sustained improvement are all good and there are aspects of outstanding practice.

### WHAT THE SCHOOL NEEDS TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER

- Encourage the pupils to take a more pro-active role in preparing and leading acts of worship, and facilitate this particularly in the classroom setting.
- Agree a strategic plan, which gives clear indication of the progression of the RE curriculum across the age range supported through the consistent and regular use of the identified highly effective teaching strategies.
- Introduce a whole school target drawn from the school improvement plan for the Catholic life of the school and/or RE into the Performance Management cycle for staff.

## PUPILS

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

2

Outcomes for all pupils are good. The school motto proclaims, *'In God we love, laugh and learn'*. These are not merely words but the fundamental beliefs lived out by the pupils in their daily life at school. The pupils regard school as a safe, helpful, friendly, happy and enjoyable environment. They feel valued because everybody cares about them.

Pupils are keen to learn, take a pride in their work and enjoy what they are doing. Their creative and imaginative work adorns the attractive displays in their classrooms and around the school. There are some examples of pupils using IT facilities to enhance their work. This is an inclusive school where there are no barriers to learning. In the context of the distinctive identity of the Catholic school, the inclusion of all is a central goal and a shared vision.

The pupils acknowledge that their views are considered and their reasonable suggestions and requests adopted. The same are evidenced in the achievements of the School Council, representative of all year groups, who speak with pride and passion about their school and are able to identify the impact of specific improvements made. A recent example of this is the provision of play equipment that has greatly enhanced the outdoor environment and provides a variety of opportunities for the pupils to enjoy their recreational time together.

From an entry starting point which is generally well below national expectations in RE, the attainment of most pupils in RE is at least satisfactory and in some cases is good. The Early Years curriculum provides a solid foundation, built upon throughout KS 1, by the end of which 70% of pupils are meeting Level 2. This represents quite a significant improvement since the last inspection in 2008. The pupils maintain steady progress throughout KS 2 and the majority of them reach a confident Level 4 in the subject by the end of Year 6. This too is an improvement over the past three years. This attainment is broadly in line with other Core areas of the curriculum. An increasing number of pupils are entering school at a time other than Reception and the school makes a conscientious and determined effort to support these pupils and meet what are often quite fundamental needs. Attainment is obviously limited for those pupils entering the school in KS2. However, there are no significant differences in the progress of groups of pupils. Progress overall in RE is at least good and in many instances outstanding.

Pupils are very positive when talking about their RE lessons. They are finding the new scheme of work, *'The Way, the Truth and the Life'*, both interesting and challenging. They have some opportunities to comment on the topics covered in RE and all pupils have a reasonable idea of how well they are doing and how they might improve. They respond very positively to the varied opportunities for discussion and the sharing of their own beliefs and traditions. They show a high level of respect and consideration for each other and for the adults in the school and wider community. Their close friendships cross all social, ethnic and cultural divides. This augurs well for the future stability, peace and cohesion in the multi-cultural climate in which they all live. They are very aware of how they can help others who are in need and less fortunate than themselves. Their behaviour is exemplary at all times and this is a significant strength of the school.

The pupils' response to liturgy and worship gives clear indication that they understand the importance of prayer. Pupils are secure and ready to express their own views and beliefs.

From an early age, they are confident taking part in acts of worship at class, key stage and whole school level and take some responsibility for the preparation of it through biblical reference and writing their own prayers. They act with reverence, pray devoutly, sing joyfully, reflect in silence and join in the liturgy appropriately and with meaning.

Members of staff lead class and school worship through their own example in creative and imaginative ways. Now would seem time for the school to encourage the pupils to assume more responsibility for planning and leading prayer and liturgy particularly in the security of the classroom setting. Evidence would suggest that the pupils would rise to the challenge given the continued support and guidance from their teachers, all of who are excellent role models.

*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:	
• <i>the quality of pupils' learning and their progress</i>	2
• <i>the quality of learning for pupils with particular learning needs and/or disabilities and their progress</i>	2
• <i>pupils' attainment in Religious Education</i>	3
<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 is good. Teaching extends well beyond the boundaries of the classroom and enriches the lives of the pupils during their daily life in the school. The school embarks on the Mission:

*'To provide a Christ centered worshipping community where uniqueness and difference is embraced and celebrated. Each person, especially the most vulnerable, is nurtured to achieve their full potential and human wholeness enabling them to make a valuable contribution to society as a child of God.'*

The vision proclaimed by the school is a living reality. The spiritual and moral development of the pupils is a significant strength of the school and this is the direct result of the wholehearted dedication and commitment of each member of staff to that mission and vision. All adults are excellent role models and enthusiastically share their own beliefs and values with the pupils in a challenging, supportive and caring way.

The quality of teaching in RE is generally good with examples of outstanding practice. The majority of teachers display a secure knowledge and understanding of Catholic teaching, enhanced through regular professional development opportunities. Where teaching is outstanding, teachers harness their good subject knowledge with a range of effective teaching strategies to maintain the interest of the pupils throughout the lesson, ensuring that they are motivated and engaged thereby securing effective learning. Differentiation by task ensures that pupils of all abilities remain actively engaged throughout the lesson. Clear statement of the learning objectives and regular reference to them ensure the pupils remain focused. The use of 'Godly Play', role play and 'Philosophy for Children' are

particularly effective strategies which afford the pupils with opportunities to fully engage in prayerful activities and share their own beliefs and customs alongside, and within, the context of Catholic teaching.

The school would do well to consider including such strategies, together with the ‘SEAL’ resources and diocesan ‘Ethos statements’ within an overall strategic plan for the delivery of, and support for, a modified and appropriate RE scheme. This would ensure regular and consistent use throughout the school of that seen to be outstanding practice and thereby maintain a year on year progression of topics based on Catholic teaching, supported by strategies that are highly effective in meeting the needs of the pupils.

There are good cross-curriculum links, consolidated through the recently introduced International Primary Curriculum. There is also evidence of the effective use of IT to enhance teaching in R.E.

Governors and senior leaders traditionally ensure that the necessary funding for RE is available and this is put to good use. Assessment materials supporting the RE scheme are used to increasingly good effect to inform teachers’ planning and future learning opportunities. Developing tracking records will give an indication of how well the pupils attain and the progress they make over time in relation to the Attainment Targets in RE. Recent modifications to the data tracking records mean that teachers will be able to report pupils’ attainment and progress in RE more effectively.

St Mary’s and St Peter’s is a prayerful community where Collective Worship is 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. The liturgies and themes reflect a good understanding of the Church’s mission and include the spiritual aspirations of all pupils. The quality of Collective Worship could be further enhanced if the pupils assumed a greater responsibility for preparing and leading their class-based worship.

*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>3</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.**

<b>2</b>
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The governors and leadership team are deeply committed to the Church’s mission in education and are effective in every aspect of their role, outstanding in some. They are

aware of the school's major strengths and those areas for development in respect to its Catholic character and they are implementing satisfactory plans aimed at improving the outcomes for pupils. All staff work enthusiastically in pursuit of the school's aims.

Governors conduct a range of monitoring activities relating to provision and outcomes. They keep informed through their own in-depth knowledge of the area, their regular visits to the school that include observations and discussions, and through the written reports of the headteacher. Their analysis provides a good basis for accurate diagnosis of the school's strengths and areas for development. Governors and the leadership team share a very clear vision of how the school might improve further, their aims are set out in comprehensive school and subject Action plans.

The Chair of Governors enjoys a life-long association with the school and a long-standing relationship with staff, pupils and parents, demonstrating clarity of vision and acting with determination in challenging and supporting the school in tackling areas for development and so bringing about improvements. The Parish Priest is a popular and regular visitor to the school and actively leads school and parish liturgies involving the pupils whilst promoting the broader involvement of many in the life of the Church. He has an informed awareness of the quality of teaching and learning in RE. He knows the children and their families well and they know him.

For some time, the governors have operated an effective recruitment policy and they maintain oversight of the professional development of staff. The governors know intuitively *'who is right'* for their school and ensure that support and guidance is readily available to new members of staff. An effective Performance Management system is followed by the governors who, at the start of the next cycle, should ensure that they introduce a whole school target drawn from the school improvement plan for the Catholic life of the school and/or RE every member of staff.

The headteacher joined the school in January 2011 and brings with him a wealth of experience in Catholic education. He is deeply committed to building on the many strengths and successes of his popular and long-serving predecessor in taking the school forward and the early indications are that he is having a very positive impact on the life of the school.

Leadership of RE is good and systems are in place to monitor, evaluate, challenge and support, thereby ensuring that responsibilities are being met. The school should consider the matter of the formal reporting of pupil attainment, progress in RE to the governing body, exercising the same rigour and detail as other core areas of the curriculum thereby affording it the high profile it deserves.

The subject leaders have this year introduced the new RE scheme and will soon be in a position to evaluate its effectiveness and make any necessary modifications to it, ensuring that it effectively meets the needs of the pupils. Through in-service opportunities, direct guidance and regular discussion they have ensured that all staff are equipped with the required planning and assessment materials. They have also maintained oversight of RE resources to ensure that these meet the demands of the curriculum. All planning and assessment resources are readily available to staff on the 'Scratchpad' within the school's VLE.

The school participates fully and actively in developing and implementing a variety of partnership activities. These activities themselves make an excellent contribution to pupils' achievement and well-being. The Early Years staff have undertaken home visits prior to admission and these are of far reaching benefit to school and families alike. The

school employs a Parental Involvement Worker whose own contribution together with that of local support agencies is again having a hugely positive impact on the lives of the more vulnerable and needy members of the school community. These are exemplary practices introduced by the school that will certainly contribute to ongoing improvements in the lives of the children and their parents. The school does not currently have a PTA but there are plans to re-establish this.

The school has been instrumental in developing and maintaining highly effective working partnerships with local organizations such as the local mosques and CofE church, the BD3 partnership of schools, the secondary schools to which the pupils transfer at age 11 and the Bradford Catholic Partnership. The school is highly regarded locally and it is a significant feature that parents opt to send their children to it. Parents support the school wholeheartedly and there are no requests to withdraw from any teaching or social activities. Farther afield, the school has an effective and productive working partnership with Rathmell Primary School, Settle.

The school actively promotes pupils' initiative in learning about and supporting charities at local, national and global levels and the response is repeatedly generous.

Since the last inspection, the school has continued to promote high expectations and pupils' attainment and progress in RE have risen significantly. The school has a good idea of its own strengths and those areas it wishes to develop further. A great deal of thought, time and expense has been afforded the 'fabric' of the building in order to maintain what is an attractive and stimulating teaching and learning environment.

Governors and the senior leaders inspire the school community to work towards maintaining an ambitious vision. Morale is high and belief in the school's success runs through all levels of the community. Consequently, the school has a good capacity for sustained improvement.

*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>2</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>1</b>
<b>How effectively leaders and managers promote Community Cohesion.</b>	<b>1</b>