

DIOCESE OF LEEDS DBI



SECTION 48 INSPECTION REPORT

THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

ST ROBERT'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Ainsty Road
Harrogate
HG1 4AP

School URN

121642

Chair of Governors

Mrs Eileen Toop

Headteacher

Mrs Maureen Benson

RE Subject Leader

Mrs Maureen Harrity

Date of Inspection

12th June 2009

Section 48 Inspector

Joe Ginty

INTRODUCTION

The Reduced Tariff Inspection of St Robert's Catholic Primary School, Harrogate 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 inspector evaluated the Overall Effectiveness of the school and investigated in detail the following aspects:

1. The effectiveness of systems for monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning including monitoring of planning, classroom observations, book/work scrutiny, leveling of work, discussions with pupils, and feedback from parents, parishes and governors.
2. The outcomes of the Collective Worship review and the impact of Collective Worship on the pupils.
3. Pupils' awareness of their own attainment and their knowledge of how to improve following the introduction of Key Skills booklets.

Evidence was gathered from the school's Self Evaluation Form (SEF) 2009; the school's Action Review; the school's Baseline Assessment records; the school's Summative Assessment records; discussions with the Chair of Governors, Headteacher, RE Subject Leader and EYFS Leader; celebration of school Mass led by Y3 pupils; brief observation of Y6 Drama rehearsal.

Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its SEF, were not justified and these have been included where appropriate in the report.

BACKGROUND DETAIL

St Roberts Catholic Primary School is a little larger than average. It serves the two parishes of St Robert's and St Aelred's, Harrogate. The pupils come from varied backgrounds both culturally and socially and on entry to school many attain below expectations for their age. Pupils come from as many as 19 different pre-school settings before joining the Reception Year. A Reception and Reception/Year 1 class make up the Early Years Foundation Stage. There is on-site out-of-school care that is not managed by the governing body. Over 90% of pupils are baptised Catholics. The majority are White British; 20% come from minority ethnic backgrounds; 14% speak a different language at home and 10% are at an early stage of learning to speak English as an additional language. In some year groups up to seven different languages are represented, the most common being Malayalam, Polish and Tagalog.

The school has an above average proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and eight have a statement of special educational need. The proportion of vulnerable pupils is a little higher than average. The rate at which pupils join the school at times other than the usual is also above average. There have been five changes in staffing in the last two years. The school holds the highest grade of the Inclusion Quality Mark, the Dyslexia Friendly School Award and the Healthy Schools Award. In recognition of the school's very high expectations, its total commitment to Inclusion and excellent leadership and support afforded by the SEN coordinator, the school has been named as a Leading School for Inclusion by North Yorkshire Local Authority.

PROGRESS SINCE THE LAST INSPECTION

The effectiveness of systems for monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning including monitoring of planning, classroom observations, book/work scrutiny, leveling of work, discussions with pupils, and feedback from parents, parishes and governors.

The school conducts rigorous monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning using the same reference criteria as in other subjects with additional aspects particular to the subject RE.

Planning is thorough, ensuring good coverage of the RE curriculum and prepared in staff teams on a topic by topic basis. Lesson observations are undertaken by senior leaders and pupils' work is regularly assessed in accordance with diocesan guidelines.

Teachers meet in teams to undertake rigorous and focused assessment strategies which provide an accurate, up-to-date picture of the achievement of all pupils. This information is used consistently and systematically to sustain high levels of achievement. The school is compiling APP files for RE identical to those in Maths and English. This assessed work across all ability ranges is used as benchmarks for the relevant age groups and carried forward year on year, thereby giving a clear indication of pupil progress over time.

Evidence shows that teaching is highly effective in enthusing pupils and ensuring that they learn extremely well. Teachers and other adults are aware of the pupils' capabilities and of their prior learning and understanding, and plan very effectively to build on these. Teachers' excellent subject knowledge is applied consistently to challenge and inspire pupils and ensure they make very good progress in RE. High quality resources, including technology, are used very effectively to optimise learning. Consequently, pupils are highly motivated, sustain their concentration extremely well and enjoy their work.

The outcomes of the Collective Worship review and the impact of CW on the pupils.

Collective Worship is a central part of school life. The school has introduced a new planning format now used by all staff. Each member of staff takes responsibility for preparing the Collective Worship on a rota basis. The school has adopted a thematic approach to worship ensuring that key liturgical and sacramental occasions are celebrated appropriately.

Vibrant acts of worship engage all pupils' interest and inspire in them deep thought and heartfelt response. Pupils regularly prepare and lead worship with confidence and enthusiasm from their earliest years in a variety of settings. They are skilled in using a variety of ways and means to support their private and public prayer. Pupils act with integrity and reverence in worshipful celebration, singing with gusto when the occasion provides.

Pupils' awareness of their own attainment and their knowledge of how to improve following the introduction of Key Skills booklets.

Key Skills booklets have been introduced with the recording completed by teachers. The introduction of the '*I can*' statements help the pupils become more aware of their own attainment and the next step in their learning.

Pupils are attaining generally above average standards in knowledge and understanding of religion (AT1) and an ability to reflect on meaning (AT2) in all key stages. Standards of attainment are above average in all strands of each attainment target. Pupil achievement in RE is at least very good and often outstanding.

Pupils make progress in RE which is at least good and for many, outstanding.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

In the past three years since the last s48 inspection the school has grown and developed. In that time significant innovations and developments in the world of Catholic education have been successfully embedded at the school. The governors have developed their expertise as have the senior leaders at the school impacting on the confidence of the whole community of St Robert's.

The school aspires to give every child the opportunity to achieve to the best of their ability across the full range of educational provision.

The school staff are regarded as pivotal in the ongoing success of the school and their closely-bonded, happy enthusiasm is living proof of the governor's judicious appointments

The school's leadership is deeply committed to the Church's mission in education. They are highly motivated and are a source of inspiration for the whole community. There is unequivocal and explicit evidence that the Catholic mission of the school is a priority along with spiritual and moral development of pupils. This is not only reflected in the school improvement plan, self evaluation form and other documents but in the living spirit of the school - the particular character - the Ethos. The Catholic faith background of the school is fundamental but not exclusive.

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 pupils have a clear understanding of the school's mission, share its purpose, and are actively involved in shaping and supporting it.

The inclusion of all pupils and staff is a central goal and a shared vision. Governors and senior leaders work with others beyond the school to ensure that pupils are given equal opportunities in the broadest sense. Within the school, there is concern, respect and hospitality towards each other.

The pursuit of excellence in Catholic education has built on previously good performance. Morale is very high and belief in the school's success runs through all levels of staff. Processes for managing the performance of staff and for their professional development are used exceptionally well.

THE SCHOOL'S CAPACITY FOR SUSTAINED IMPROVEMENT IS OUTSTANDING

Governors and senior leaders make a highly significant contribution to the work and the Catholic dimension of the school. They have high levels of expertise, are extremely well organised and thorough in their approach. In discharging their statutory and canonical responsibilities, they have highly robust systems for evaluating the effectiveness of their implementation, keeping the work of the school under review and acting upon their findings. Governors are innovative, flexible and adapt to new ideas quickly, supporting the work of the staff in improving outcomes for all pupils. They are confident in providing high levels of professional challenge for its RE to hold the school to account. Governors engage very effectively with parents, pupils and the staff as a whole and are well informed about users' views of the school. They use these views to inform strategic priorities for development.

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