

INTRODUCTION

The Inspection of St William's Catholic Primary School, Bradford 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.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

St. William's is an average size voluntary aided Roman Catholic primary school serving the parish of Our Lady and St William close to the city centre of Bradford. The school serves an area with higher than average levels of unemployment and social disadvantage. Approximately half of the children come from white British backgrounds with a steadily increasing number of children from ethnic minority backgrounds joining the school in recent years. A high proportion of children speak English as a second language. There are 17 different languages currently identified in the school. Indicators suggest that the children's ability on entry to the school is generally below the national expectation for the age group. The age range of pupils is from 3 to 11 years. The indicative admission number is 30. There are currently 227 pupils on roll including nursery. 71 pupils have been identified as having special educational needs. 2 children have a statutory statement of special educational needs. 6 of the 9 teachers are of the Catholic faith. The school has achieved the Active Mark, Healthy Schools and the Financial Management Standard.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL

The overall effectiveness of the school is satisfactory with good features. Over the last four years there has been a noticeable change in the range of backgrounds its pupils have come from and the range of needs they bring to the school. During this same period the school leadership's efforts to bring about consistency and continuity and raise standards in teaching and learning have been disrupted by significant staff changes. At the time of the inspection advertised vacant posts had been filled and the senior leadership team increased ready for the next academic year. The governing body has also seen significant change with new governors being appointed and a new chair of governors being elected. The headteacher and reformed governing body are working very hard to bring about planned developments. Improvements to monitoring and evaluation of the school by governors and staff are at an early stage of development.

Teaching in Religious Education is good overall. The school has a warm, welcoming and caring environment which caters for all aspects of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The personal development of children is good. During the inspection the pupils were very well behaved, polite and friendly and showed a good attitude to their learning. Pupils are making satisfactory progress in Religious Education and provision for prayer and worship is good. Religious Education is planned using the 'Here I Am' programme of study. The school enriches its curriculum by providing a range of extra curricular activities.

Improvement since the last inspection

Following the last Section 23 inspection in February 2005 the school's planned improvements were impeded by a period of key staff absences and changes. The school produced a Religious Education Action Plan during the spring term of 2009 which has revisited improvements recommended by the previous inspection. The school's Mission Statement has been reviewed. The governors are supporting the school leadership in tackling its present and forthcoming challenges regarding Religious Education and the Catholic nature of the school. Members of staff have received training in the assessment and levelling of children's work in Religious Education.

Capacity to improve

The school's self-evaluation is accurate. The school leadership and governors have identified areas for improvement and agreed strategies needed to bring about the improvements through

their School Improvement Plan, Governing Body Action Plan and a Religious Education Action Plan. The plans, however, are at an early stage in their development making the capacity to improve satisfactory.

What the school should do to improve further

- Further develop the role of governors in monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the school.
- Further develop teacher skills in the moderation and levelling of children's Religious Education work as an aid to embedding assessment and pupil tracking in Religious Education.
- Establish the monitoring and evaluation of Religious Education as a regular feature on the school's monitoring programme as a means of raising standards

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

The leadership and management of the Catholic life of the school are good as a result of recent significant improvements. The headteacher has led the school through a period of exceptional turbulence when keeping the school stable was the overriding priority rather than being able to focus on the improvements sought. The reforming of the governing body during the spring term of 2009 has energised the school and important issues have been addressed to further improve the Catholic life of the school. A Governing Body Action Plan and a Religious Education Action Plan have been formulated and implemented setting clear priorities for improvement. These plans are starting to impact on the school showing that governors and school leaders are determined to raise standards. They are working hard with conscientious staff members to ensure a high quality provision for Catholic education at the school in the context of maintaining sensitivity to a multi-faith pupil roll.

Community cohesion is a strong feature of the school. The recently elected chair of governors is the designated Religious Education governor and a regular and welcome visitor to the school. He has introduced a Religious Education governor report to keep governors informed on all aspects of the Catholic life of the school. Governors are encouraged to continue to further develop their role in monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the school. The reviewed Mission Statement includes the succinct motto 'Christ is at our heart'. Parents are starting to help with the school's self-evaluation through the newly formed Parent Council. Children speak through their council.

THE QUALITY OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

The provision for collective worship is good and a key feature of school life. The prayer and worship policy sets out clear guidelines and provision for the development of prayer and worship throughout the school. By following the policy's clear guidelines the school ensures that the planning and provision for prayer, collective worship and liturgies is thorough, thoughtful and systematically integral to the daily life of the school for both pupils and staff. Prayer and worship opportunities provide a range of settings to include music and song, art, dance, readings, drama, speech and silence for reflection. The parish priest celebrates a Mass in school at the beginning and end of the school year and on other occasions. Assemblies are planned in line with the liturgical year. Each week there is a whole school assembly at which children's achievements are celebrated and certificates are distributed. There are also separate key stage assemblies and a class led assembly each week to which parents are invited.

The school is very aware of community cohesion and recognises and supports the spiritual development of its Muslim children. Children are encouraged to care about local, national and global issues and all school members can respond at their own level of faith and belief. All are included and learn respect for diversity. During the assembly and prayer and worship opportunities seen during the inspection children responded well. They were well-behaved and attentive. The Year 6 assembly

allowed children to demonstrate the range of settings listed above. The Year 2 prayer and worship opportunity was perfectly matched to the age of children.

ACHIEVEMENT AND STANDARDS IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Achievement and standards in Religious Education are satisfactory. Indicators suggest that on starting school the majority of the children's attainment is generally below the national expectation for the age group. The changing pupil roll is resulting in the base level of Catholic experience, knowledge and vocabulary being in decline as the school teaches children from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds. The school monitors pupils, identifies their learning needs and provides targeted support and intervention strategies in order to raise pupil levels of attainment. In response to good teaching pupils make relatively good progress and achieve well by the end of Key Stage 2. The school has identified that children with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. The quality of the marking of children's work varies across the school as a result of teachers not adhering to the school's marking policy. Marking is particularly good where the teacher informs children when they have done well and suggests how the learning intention could be better achieved. Teachers provide a varied range of opportunities for children to achieve an understanding of their religion as witnessed in lessons observed during the inspection. The school has produced a portfolio of levelled work to aid assessment and introduced a pupil tracking system for Religious Education. The inspector encourages the school to continue to further develop teacher skills in the moderation and levelling of children's Religious Education work as an aid to embedding assessment and pupil tracking in Religious Education.

THE QUALITY OF TEACHING AND LEARNING IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The quality of teaching and learning in Religious Education is good. All lessons observed during the inspection were at least satisfactory. Lessons are well planned using both medium term and short term planning based on the diocesan programme of study 'Here I Am'. Learning intentions are identified in lesson plans and written in children's exercise books in Key Stage 2 classes. Lessons are conducted with a positive and inclusive ethos. During the Religious Education lessons observed, as part of the inspection, the children demonstrated good subject knowledge and responded readily to the subject by asking, and being asked, thought provoking questions. This was demonstrated during a Year 6 lesson based on 'problems faced by other people of the world'. Questions were differentiated and probing in order to lead the children to a greater understanding while providing the teacher with the opportunity to assess their learning. All pupil responses were valued and respected. The Early Years Foundation Stage lesson on 'neighbours sharing God's world' provided the necessary active participation of such young children in order to stimulate interest and encourage enthusiasm for the subject. During the summer term 2009 the Religious Education co-ordinator has been monitoring the quality of teaching and learning in curriculum Religious Education through lesson observations, teacher planning and the scrutiny of exercise books. This programme should become a regular feature of the school's ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the subject.

THE QUALITY OF THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CURRICULUM

The quality of the Religious Education curriculum is good. Religious Education has a high profile in the school and is a key element in the School Improvement Plan. It is highly visible through the displayed Mission Statement, Religious Education displays celebrating children's work and the presence of religious artefacts. In-service training for staff helps to ensure that the profile and delivery of Religious Education curriculum is central to the whole curriculum. Religious Education is also underpinned by elements of the 'Creative Curriculum', 'Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning' and 'Personal Social Health Citizen Education' programmes present in the school. At least 10% of teaching time in all classes is allocated to the Religious Education curriculum. This is further enhanced by extended curriculum time for prayer and worship opportunities, assemblies, liturgical and special celebrations. The Religious Education curriculum meets all national and diocesan requirements and is devised to meet the individual needs of the children of St. William's

school. The children learn about other faiths and key times in the calendars of other faiths. The curriculum actively promotes social cohesion at all levels and provision is good. Interactive whiteboards were used in some lessons observed but offer far great potential for enhancing the quality of curriculum Religious Education. The Religious Education curriculum is broad and balanced promoting the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and preparing them well for the next stage of their education.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF CURRICULUM RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Leadership and management of curriculum Religious Education are satisfactory. The development of curriculum Religious Education has been impeded as a consequence of the long term absence and changes of subject leader. The recently appointed Religious Education co-ordinator is, however, proving to be a conscientious and dedicated subject leader. Supported by the headteacher and governing body she has identified what needs to be done to develop the subject. This resulted in a comprehensive Religious Education Action Plan being produced in the spring term 2009 and approved by the governing body in May 2009. Since then she has worked hard in carrying out lesson planning and Religious Education exercise book scrutinies and reporting her findings to staff. The school leadership and governing body have a clear understanding of the national and diocesan requirements and are endeavouring to ensure that these are met. The designated Religious Education governor and permanent deacon is very active in his role and is keen to ensure that the leadership of the school receive the necessary challenge, support and encouragement of the governing body. It was minuted at the 2009 spring term governing body meeting that Religious Education is to be a regular agenda item at future meetings. The parish priest is developing his pastoral role in the school and oversees the parish based Sacramental Programme. Planned improvements are at an early stage of development but there are some very strong green shoots of change growing at St William's being greatly aided in their growth by the reviewed Mission Statement which puts 'Christ at our heart'.

THE INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS ARE:	Grade	
Overall effectiveness of the school	3	Explanation of the Grades 1 = Outstanding 2 = Good 3 = Satisfactory 4 = Inadequate
Leadership and management of the Catholic life of the school	2	
The quality of Collective Worship	2	
Achievement and standards in Religious Education	3	
The quality of teaching and learning in Religious Education	2	
The quality of the Religious Education curriculum	2	
Leadership and management of curriculum Religious Education	3	