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DIOCESAN BOARD FOR INSPECTIONS

CANON LAW 806 FINAL INSPECTION REPORT INCORPORATING SECTION 48

THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

ST PATRICK'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL
NOVA LANE BIRSTALL WEST YORKSHIRE WF17 9LQ

School URN	3823405
Date of S48 inspection and OE grade	13 th and 14 th June 2018 Outstanding
E-mail address	office.stpatricksbirstall@kirkleeseducation.uk
Chair of Governors	Father David Bulmer
Headteacher	Mr. Anthony Rush
RE Subject Leader	Mrs. Nicola Middleton
Date and grade of last S48 Inspection	23 rd and 24 th May, 2013 Outstanding
Section 48 Inspector/s	Patricia Ainge

INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection Grades: 1 is Outstanding, 2 is Good, 3 Requires improvement in order to be good, 4 is Inadequate

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS: how effective is the school in providing Catholic Education.

1

The above judgement on overall effectiveness is based on all the available evidence following the evaluation of:

CATHOLIC LIFE

1

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

1

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

1

Summary of key findings:

This is an outstanding Catholic school

- The headteacher, senior leadership team and governors have a clear vision for this school, believing passionately in achieving the best for all children and promoting the Catholic vision of education both in school and in the wider community. This vision is shared by all staff.
- A strong and vibrant sense of family characterises the school and there is a profound feeling of everybody working together, inspired by the Gospel, to achieve a common goal. A strong sense of mission permeates the school, being visible in the environment and tangible in its daily life. It is encapsulated in the school's mission statement, *We live, love, learn and grow in the light of Christ.*
- Leadership is extremely effective. The headteacher, deputy headteacher and other senior leaders give a clear direction to the school. Strategic planning is efficient and reviewed with regularity to reflect the changing needs of the school. The strong sense of family felt by all stakeholders is testament to the leadership as is the excellent attainment and good progress made by the pupils.
- Religious Education (RE) is given a high priority. The recent appointment of a new subject leader for RE has been very successful and she works with the headteacher, who is also the coordinator for Collective Worship, to provide a wealth of opportunities for the staff and pupils.
- Governors are a visible presence in the school and offer both support and challenge to the leadership team. There has been a number of new governors very recently and time and effort has been put into training them and familiarising them with their role and the needs of the school.
- The parish priest is a regular visitor to the school and the school are highly appreciative of his input. He provides many opportunities for the pupils and, together with the

leadership team, ensures that the school and parish are closely connected. He is currently the chair of governors.

- Collective Worship is of an excellent standard. Many and varied opportunities for prayer are offered to the pupils and the response to it is both prayerful and joyful.
- Pupils are full of enthusiasm for their school and are proud to be St Patrick's pupils. They are highly appreciative of the staff. They are polite and well behaved and their relationships with each other as well as with the adults in school are excellent.
- Teaching is of a very high standard. A high proportion of it is outstanding and none of it is less than good.
- Attainment is excellent, a high percentage of children achieving at or above expected levels by the end of each key stage. Progress is good.
- Assessment is thorough and takes many forms, both formal and informal. It is well embedded within the school and information is used to target learning and development needs.
- Leaders and managers track, record and analyse data, using the results of their analyses to target learning and development needs. Assessment and moderation takes place both in school and within various partnerships, leaders and staff taking full advantage of these to moderate work and agree assessment levels. Partnerships include the pyramid of schools that feed St John Fisher, other Catholic schools in Kirklees and Calderdale and the schools which are part of their RE coordinator cluster. The school both contributes to and benefits from these partnerships.
- The school environment is highly effective, speaking clearly of its Catholic nature. Displays and artefacts offer opportunities for reflection throughout the building. All classrooms have a dedicated prayer and topic corner. An extension has allowed for the creation of a prayer room and the extensive grounds offer the children many opportunities for reflection and worship.
- Pastoral care is exemplary and given the highest priority. Staff and pupils make full use of the opportunities provided by the Catholic Care worker and school leaders and governors are proactive in their care of all.
- The school has a high percentage of Catholic pupils and staff. This provides many advantages such as the close connection between the parish and the school. Other faiths are studied and opportunities are provided for the pupils to learn about these in order to prepare them for the multicultural society to which we belong.
- RE, the Catholic Life of the school and Collective Worship are well resourced and the budget is in line with that of other core subjects. The budget often exceeds other core subjects because of the extra resources purchased, such as the Wednesday Word.
- All areas from the last Section 48 inspection have been addressed and the areas highlighted in the recent Canonical review in autumn 2017 are currently being addressed, some of them having already been achieved.
- All canonical and statutory duties are fulfilled.

What the school needs to do to improve further.

- To provide greater opportunity for pupils to plan and lead collective worship independently; creating a progressive list of expectations for each year group which culminate in older pupils planning and leading entire acts of worship for others.

- To make greater use of Driver words in planning and in learning objectives in order to differentiate tasks more clearly and to target learning; to improve progress and to assist children in identifying their own next steps.
- To update the school planning documents to clearly identify what has been done and what is in process or pending, in order to make the information more easily accessible for all relevant stakeholders.

Information about this inspection

The Inspection of St Patrick's 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 2017).

The inspector reviewed in detail the following aspects:

- How successfully the school has addressed the points for improvement arising from the last inspection and the latest canonical review.
- How children contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school
- How well pupils achieve and enjoy their RE.
- The quality of teaching and how well pupils respond to this.
- The RE curriculum and how well it promotes pupils' learning
- Leadership and management and how well they promote and monitor the provision for Catholic Education at this school.
- How well children contribute to and benefit from Collective Worship in the school.

The inspection was carried out by one inspector over one and a half days:

- A tour of the school was given by the headteacher.
- A brief meeting with all staff was held at the beginning of the first day.
- Teaching and learning were observed in nine classes including nursery and reception.
- A varied selection of Collective Worship was observed, including a Mass for two classes, parishioners and parents, a pre-Eucharistic liturgy for Key Stage 1 (KS1) and two key stage acts of praise.
- Meetings were held with a number of different people including the headteacher, the RE coordinator, the parish priest who is also the chair of governors, the Catholic Care worker, a group of pupils, a group of parents and a group of staff which included teachers, support staff, peripatetic staff and catering staff. Informal chats were also held with parishioners.
- Opportunity was taken to observe and listen to the school chamber choir led by a member of the Diocesan music team as well as a session she conducted with Year 5.
- A sample of work was scrutinised from every class along with other evidence provided by teachers such as prayers and work from displays.

- A range of documentation was scrutinised including the RE coordinator's file, which included evidence of monitoring, the assessment file, the school moderation portfolio, the Diocesan Self Evaluation Form (DSEF) and the School Development Plan (SDP).
- Other documents were also made available and scrutinised such as tracking data, more evidence of monitoring, teachers' planning and details of Continuing Professional Development (CPD).
- Examples of liturgies and staff prayer were also scrutinised.
- Displays in classrooms and around the school and photographic evidence have been noted. These often featured high quality artwork by the pupils as well as religious artefacts.

Information about this school

- St. Patrick's is a slightly larger than average primary school. It is very popular and is oversubscribed.
- The school serves the parishes of St. Patrick's Birstall and of St. Paul's Cleckheaton. Almost all of the pupils are baptised Catholics and come from within the schools extensive catchment area.
- The school was opened in 1877 and has been housed in the current building since 1965.
- 2.4% of pupils are on the Special Needs and Disabilities Register but there are none currently with a statement of Special Educational Needs.
- There are 9 full time teachers, including the head, and two part time teachers who provide release time for Planning, Preparation and Assessment. 6 teachers have the Catholic Certificate of Religious Studies (CCRS).
- The percentage of children in receipt of free school meals is 8.7.
- There have been significant changes on the governing body recently.
- The headteacher and RE coordinator regularly attend Diocesan training and meetings as well as working closely with a number of different partnerships to promote the Catholic Life of the school and RE as well as sharing their own good practice.

Full report - inspection judgements

CATHOLIC LIFE

The Catholic Life of the school is Outstanding

The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school.	1
The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school	1

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision of the Catholic Life of the school	1
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- The Catholic Life of the school is given an extremely high priority by all stakeholders. All are committed to creating a community underpinned by Gospel values. Many people, in an attempt to describe how they felt about the Catholic Life of the school said, ‘The faith is in the walls.’
- The mission statement is pivotal to the life of the school. Its recent review has ensured that it is child friendly and is owned by all stakeholders. The strapline *We live, love, learn and grow in the light of Christ* is known and owned by all.
- Pupils are clearly highly committed to and enthusiastic about their school. They are proud of belonging to the community created by the school and of their own roles as part of that community. They played a part in formulating the new mission statement and take responsibility for living this out on a daily basis. They appreciate the staff and the way that they go out of their way to encourage them. One child said that the best thing about the school was the way that “teachers are gentle and kind and they encourage you to be a better person.”
- All pupils, from the youngest to the oldest, demonstrated respect and reverence in their approach to Collective worship, contributing in many different ways in all Collective Worship observed.
- Relationships between all stakeholders are excellent. The staff appreciate their own responsibility as role models for the pupils and as a result, a strong sense of personal self-worth and respect for each other is prevalent in the school. This is evident in daily life but also in the way staff support each other and are unafraid to ask for help if they feel it will benefit the pupils.
- All people asked spoke of a sense of family and belonging in the school. Many of the children are second, third or fourth generation pupils at St Patrick’s and some of the staff came as pupils. This sense of family was owned by everybody from the headteacher and governors to the people who work part-time with the school, such as a peripatetic music teacher and the Catholic Care worker. All stakeholders referred to it as being one of the key strengths of the school. “This school has been part of my life for the last thirty years and I hope it will be until the day I die,” was a comment made by the cook who provides school dinners.
- The Personal, Social, Moral and Economic (PSHE) education of the pupils is of a high quality. Pupils are confident that their problems will be addressed and that they know to whom they would go if a problem should arise. A Catholic care worker is employed and both staff and pupils access her support. She was very positive in her praise for the school, talking about the sense of family and the way that the school lived out the Gospel on a daily basis.
- Pupils have a keen sense of responsibility towards others and proactively work to help people in the local community as well as those further afield. They enthusiastically take responsibility for outreach, raising money for various charities such as an orphanage in Romania and Cafod. They have formed a Mini Vinnies group and have had a considerable impact in their short existence so far, sending cards to sick parishioners, and supporting a local drop in centre, for instance. The RE coordinator explained that they consider themselves to be a Mini Vinnies school and the group represents the rest of the pupils.

- The behaviour of the children is excellent. A lot of good modelling takes place - the staff providing good role models for all children and the older pupils providing good role models for younger children and pupils.
- Teachers have high expectations of each child and clearly know the capabilities and needs of each child in their class, including the few that have special educational needs. Children attain at a very high level and progress well as they journey through the school.
- The staff work hard to provide a wide range of opportunities for all pupils and the pupils are highly appreciative of them. These include many opportunities for sport and also dance and music. Several of the pupils have been offered places in the Cathedral choir and the school runs its own chamber choir, which consists of selected pupils. All pupils are able to join the school choir. All of these opportunities give them self-confidence and achievement and this is carried into their daily life and lessons.
- The pastoral care seen in the school is excellent. This is seen in the care not only of the pupils but also of the parents and the staff.
- Currently the school is awaiting guidance from the Diocese regarding a programme for Relationship and Sex Education (RSE). This area of the curriculum is still addressed however, through puberty talks in Year 5 and through PSHE.
- Parents were enthusiastic in their praise of the school. Many of the parents spoken to had several children at the school and some were ex pupils. They appreciated the opportunities that their children were given and the way that staff were approachable. One parent said, "Teachers always make time for you." They stressed how important the sense of family prevalent in the school was.
- Parents were also complimentary about the communication they receive from school, feeling that they were kept in touch with what was happening in many different ways. They particularly appreciated the use of an app, which alerted them to new information or photographs on the website.
- The environment clearly speaks of the Catholic nature of the school. The displays in the classrooms and around the school are of a high standard as are the designated spaces such as the Prayer Room. The Prayer Room provides a great facility for the staff and pupils who can and do access it on a voluntary basis. The woodland in the school grounds is often used to facilitate experiences of awe and wonder as well as reflection.
- The school is very involved in the wider community, both the parish and beyond. For example, Batley Churches Together provides opportunities for the school to work and celebrate with other schools of different faiths or no denomination. It is also active in the local cluster of schools and the local pyramid of schools.
- School pupils and staff are very involved in charitable outreach, making a big difference to both the local and global community. Examples of this are their work with Cafod, the Mini Vinnies, their support for a Romanian orphanage as well as support for Catholic Care through their Lenten programmes.
- All leaders and governors are involved in monitoring and promoting the Catholic Life of the school. Comprehensive strategic planning documents are in place such as the DSEF and the SDP, which gives RE a high priority. Further documentation evidences the monitoring and drive for improvement, such as the subject leader's file on RE, Canonical returns and the moderation and assessment portfolios. All issues discussed at governors meetings are done so in light of the question, 'How can we make this a better Catholic school?'

Religious Education is Outstanding

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education	1
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education	1
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education	1

- Pupils are highly enthusiastic and keen to apply themselves in their RE lessons. The behaviour of the children during lessons is outstanding. They concentrate well and join in all lessons with eagerness. They remain on task when left to work alone and the work they produce is of a high standard.
- All lessons begin with a reflection and this ensures that pupils appreciate the fact that RE is different and special. They are reflective and thoughtful during this time and take part reverently. Their subsequent participation in the lesson is lively and involved, offering suggestions, asking questions and responding to tasks with enjoyment and enthusiasm.
- Learning objectives and I Can statements help frame the lessons. Learning objectives are shared at the beginning of each lesson ensuring that pupils know what they are trying to achieve and they are enabled to evaluate their work at the end of the lesson by using specific I Can statements. These are in the pupils' books and are used as part of pupil and teacher assessment.
- Pupils work is of a high standard and clearly shows progress over time. Both verbal and written feedback is given as appropriate. Some of the classes received more detailed written feedback and sharing this good practice would enhance progress.
- Pupils are given the opportunity to reflect upon their own work. This is more formalised in some classes such as the "Year 5 Tweet" which the pupils write at the end of a piece of work and in which they tweet how they feel they have achieved.
- Attainment is very high at the end of each key stage. Progress is good but staff are keen to improve this and the RE coordinator and the headteacher have identified this as an area to target. A more consistent use of Driver words by both staff and pupils would benefit this.
- Teaching is consistently of a high standard, much of it being outstanding with no teaching being less than good. A variety of stimulating and enjoyable lessons was seen, which testified to the creativity and commitment of the staff. Pupils appreciate the work that their teachers put into making their lessons enjoyable, one pupil saying, "Teachers make it easy when it's hard."
- Teacher knowledge is excellent. The fact that the majority of teachers are Catholics is of huge benefit to the school as it brings a wide range of knowledge and experience to RE. When staff illness means that supply staff are needed the leadership put a great deal of time and effort into ensuring that they get the very best possible for the school and try to ensure continuity for the pupils.
- Teachers make every effort to ensure that pupils understand that the message of the Gospel is a message for today and not a history lesson. The RE Policy states, "Attempts to make clear connections between the truths of faith and pupil experience of

life are essential.” This was highly evident in all lessons as well as in all acts of Collective Worship.

- Support staff are well deployed throughout the school and are effectively used in RE lessons to enhance the learning. They use their own initiative, moving between pupils as necessary. They are often invited to contribute ideas to planning and routinely give feedback to teachers as part of lesson evaluations. They feel both valued and supported.
- The school uses the scheme The Way, the Truth and the Life (WTL) as the basis and framework for RE lessons but is not constricted by it. This scheme is now well embedded in school and the staff add to it and enhance it by using a variety of resources and creative ideas, which offer engaging, imaginative and exciting opportunities for learning.
- Assessment is well embedded within the curriculum. Half-termly tasks are completed and assessed and at the end of each term teachers provide an assessment of each pupil. Staff are supported in their levelling by the portfolio of moderated work, which has been created by the school in partnership with other schools and also by the school assessment folder. Termly meetings are held where work is discussed and evaluated.
- Curriculum RE benefits from the leadership of a highly skilled and committed member of staff. She has only recently taken over this role and has been supported by the headteacher who is very experienced and who was previously responsible for RE. She has a thorough understanding of the subject and of the staff and their capabilities. She offers both formal and informal support for teachers and provides an excellent role model.
- Leaders and Managers operate a rigorous monitoring scheme using both formal and informal methods. Formal methods include lesson observations and work scrutinies while informal monitoring takes place regularly as the headteacher and governors are moving around the school and visiting classrooms. Monitoring twilights, which include RE, are held three times a year.
- Continuing Professional Development in RE and the Catholic Life of the school is ongoing and the school uses both external CPD and in-school support to help their teachers to develop. Peer support is used and appreciated by all staff to share good practice and to enhance teaching and learning.
- RE is given a high priority by the school, teaching time being in line with and often exceeding statutory time.
- One child encapsulated the feeling within the school when she said, “We are learning to build a life on faith. God is our rock.”

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

Collective Worship is Outstanding

How well pupils respond to and participate in the school’s Collective Worship	1
The quality of provision for Collective Worship	1

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship	1
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- The Collective Worship in the school is of an excellent quality. It is led by the headteacher who has a wealth of experience. It is varied and creative and offers opportunities for all stakeholders to be joyful, to be thoughtful and to be prayerful. It engages all stakeholders and the quality of participation and reverence is outstanding.
- It is given a very high priority and is central to the life of the school. Prayer frames each day and the opportunities for prayer throughout the day and the week are many and varied.
- Pupils participate with enthusiasm in all Collective Worship, showing confidence and security in their understanding of the liturgical year and different forms of prayer. They are clearly skilled at leading many different aspects of worship and independently plan and prepare elements of all worship. This now needs to be extended and opportunities given for them to plan and prepare complete acts of worship.
- The variety of forms of prayer is impressive, the staff and pupils taking care to find the best way for the worship to speak to the participants. Care is always taken to ensure that the worship is appropriate to the age and experience of the pupils. Reflection, traditional prayer, singing, music, dance and drama are all elements of worship that are used with regularity.
- Living in a praying community has a huge impact on pupils. It is evident in their behaviour and relationships that they clearly understand their individual responsibility as followers of Jesus. The Gospel messages and stories are always made relevant to the pupils' daily life and practical ways to live them out are suggested and discussed.
- The provision for Collective Worship is excellent. The leadership team provide high quality liturgy and worship and are role models for other members of staff. Support is given to all staff both formally and informally. CPD takes place externally as does in-school support for staff and this ensures that the quality of Collective Worship is of a high standard across the school.
- The parish priest is a frequent visitor to school and his thoughtful support is of great benefit to the school. He is instrumental, together with the headteacher, in promoting sacramental preparation in school. Confirmation classes for Year 6 are currently ongoing after school, run by the parish priest and the headteacher.
- Links with the parish are good, for instance the parish Mass is celebrated in school every fortnight, pupils regularly visit Church for Mass and other celebrations and the Mini Vinnies sent cards to the sick of the parish at Christmas. Many of the staff live in the parishes which the school serves and some serve as catechists for children's liturgy.
- There is great variety in the worship that is offered, from class worship to Mass. Junior and infant praise offer pupils the opportunity to share their gifts while praising God and to contribute their own ideas and skills. Pre-Eucharistic liturgy, which is held for KS1, offers an opportunity to focus on and explore a specific part of the Mass. The liturgy witnessed was highly effective, beginning with a dramatisation of sharing a family meal and then moving to a dramatisation of the last Supper. This was then brought back to the present with a reminder of the priest's words and actions during Mass. The connections were very simple and very clear and all children present left the liturgy with a greater understanding of the Mass than when they entered.

- Opportunities are created for parents, parishioners and other stakeholders to participate in the school Collective Worship and they are greatly appreciative of these.
- A high level of experience and expertise is present among many staff and this is used to great effect to ensure the high quality of all worship in the school. The partnerships the school enjoys are also used to effect. They are part of Batley Churches Together and this provides the staff and pupils with opportunities to worship with people of other Christian faiths.
- Collective Worship is regularly evaluated through observation and discussion and all leaders take part in this. A more formal record of observations would allow all staff to appreciate the strengths and the areas for improvement in the school.
- CPD is effective and staff are supported both formally and informally. Courses and retreats are made available to staff and less experienced staff are also supported through working with one of the more experienced staff.