

# DIOCESE OF LEEDS



## DIOCESAN BOARD FOR INSPECTIONS

### CANON LAW 806 FINAL INSPECTION REPORT INCORPORATING SECTION 48

#### THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

#### **ST AUGUSTINE'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL** St Wilfrid's Circus, Leeds, LS8 3PF

School URN

108022

Date of S48 inspection and  
OE grade

12<sup>th</sup> & 13<sup>th</sup> June 2019  
1: Outstanding

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Date and grade of last S48  
Inspection

12<sup>th</sup> & 13<sup>th</sup> November 2013  
1: Outstanding

Section 48 Inspector

Alan Dewhurst

## 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**

- St Augustine's Catholic Primary School is highly effective in providing a high quality Catholic education for its pupils.
- The headteacher leads by example, with a clear vision to create an inclusive community that lives out the gospel each day in the quality of its relationships, the kindness, care and respect given to each member and the service given to each family, particularly to the most vulnerable. She models the Catholic mission of the school in outstanding manner. She is supported by a committed senior leadership team and a united staff community in providing the very best for all pupils, regardless of background or religious affiliation.
- The Catholic Life of the school is outstanding. Pupils and staff take ownership of the mission statement that invites them to follow the example of Jesus, treat all as equal, and 'walk in the light', and they put it into practice consistently. Links between the themes of Collective Worship, the Religious Education (RE) curriculum and the school's proclaimed values are so effectively promoted that pupils have a deep understanding of the gospel message.
- Behaviour is excellent. Pupils respect and care for each other. They willingly take on roles that help the school to function well or those that assist others in need.
- The school's pupil population is drawn from many different backgrounds and cultures, with less than half as baptised Catholics. However, such is the effectiveness of the school in promoting its Catholic ethos that there is no discernible difference in the response of pupils to the education provided, the values accepted, the Collective Worship that is shared or in the relationships to each other.
- The words of the school hymn, sung joyfully by the pupils, appear to be lived out on a daily basis:  
*'As one family we will always be*

*A loving and sharing, peaceful and caring  
Happy and holy place to be.....One family we become.'*

- Parents acknowledge the strengths of the school wholeheartedly, its inclusivity and welcome, its strong moral values and spirituality. They particularly comment on the excellent support given to pupils in times of difficulty.
- Religious Education is outstanding. Pupils make excellent progress, often from less than expected starting points. They enjoy their learning and engage fully and willingly in their lessons. They collaborate very easily with each other, are attentive and focused.
- The RE coordinator is deeply committed and has considerable expertise. She promotes improvements very effectively, assisted by the passion and interest of all staff. Good professional development of staff has enabled them to teach confidently, with strong subject knowledge, following a well organised curriculum.
- Collective Worship is celebrated with enthusiasm throughout the school. Leaders and teachers make liturgy accessible to pupils so that all feel comfortable to participate, no matter what background or faith. The Church's liturgical year is threaded through the school's year in imaginative fashion.
- Prayer is central to the life of the school. It is enabled in different forms on a daily basis, and has a significant impact on the spiritual and moral development of pupils.
- Governors give the highest priority to the school's Catholic identity, ensuring that it is addressed first in strategic improvement planning. They give good support to the school leadership and ensure that all the policies and activities of the school are aligned to Catholic teaching.
- The school has fully addressed the recommendations of the previous Section 48 inspection.
- All canonical and statutory requirements are fulfilled.

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

In order to maintain and build upon the outstanding nature of Catholic provision, the school should:

- Develop the analysis and evaluation of the Catholic Life and Collective Worship through a variety of methods in order to strategically plan further improvements
- Continue to develop outstanding teaching and learning in Religious Education through the use of inspirational 'hooks' that actively stimulate and excite pupils
- Continue to develop Collective Worship that is planned and led by pupils in order to improve the breadth and quality of experience, and the increasing independence of pupils.

### **Information about this inspection**

The Inspection of St Augustine'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 2017).

The inspector reviewed in detail the following aspects:

- The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school
- The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school
- How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education
- How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship
- The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school
- How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education, Collective Worship and the Catholic Life of the school

The inspection was carried out by one inspector over two days:

- Teaching and learning in Religious Education (RE) lessons was observed in fourteen classes.
- A whole school Collective Worship (led by Year 3) was attended. There were also observations of five classroom worship gatherings and a voluntary worship at breaktime. The inspector also attended two staff worship reflections.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, RE subject leader, SENCO, parish priest and chair of governors.
- Discussions were also held with three groups of pupils and a group of parents.
- A sample of pupils' RE workbooks, Catholic Life books and assessment records from every class was scrutinised, along with the RE coordinator's files.
- A range of documents was made available and scrutinised, including the Diocesan Self Evaluation Form (DSEF), the action plan for RE, Catholic Life and Collective Worship, the School Improvement Plan, attainment and progress data, surveys, school policies, minutes of governor body meetings, and samples of Collective Worship records and resources.
- Relevant areas of the school website and displays around the school and in classrooms were also noted.

### **Information about this school**

- St Augustine's Catholic Primary is a large voluntary aided school serving the parish of St Augustine of Canterbury parish in Leeds.
- There are 420 full time pupils on roll, with an additional 45 pupils attending part time in the nursery. Approximately 44% of pupils are baptised Catholics.
- The school serves an area of significant social and economic deprivation.
- Around three quarters of pupils are from a black or minority ethnic background, and half of pupils have English as an additional language. Approximately one third of pupils are eligible for the pupil premium grant. These proportions are all significantly greater than the national average.
- The school has 16 full time and 8 part time teachers. 17 teachers are involved in the teaching of Religious Education. 3 teachers have the Catholic Certificate of Religious

Studies and 2 more teachers are currently undertaking the qualification. There are 25 classroom support staff.

## 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.                    | <b>1</b> |
| The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school  | <b>1</b> |
| How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision of the Catholic Life of the school | <b>1</b> |

- Pupils are very active participants in the Catholic Life and mission of the school. They are keen to involve themselves in the opportunities that the school offers and have started to play a role in evaluating the school's provision and suggesting improvements.
- Pupils look after each other very well. They show great respect for each other and for those who teach and support them. Their behaviour is excellent. They understand the dignity and care each person deserves. As one pupil remarked, 'As Christians, we should love each other no matter what; we are all equal in the eyes of God'.
- They understand the commitment that being a member of a school and faith community entails. Pupils know and understand the values the school holds and the virtues that they should aim to have. They are quick to offer prayers for each other and for others in their community. They understand fully that they should 'Walk in the Light' because that is what God asks of them.
- They willingly involve themselves in taking responsibility for each other and for the functions of the school. Many take on membership of groups that promote the Catholic Life.
- The Mini Vinnies, from Years 4 and 5, commit themselves to the ideals of the St Vincent de Paul Society: For example, they have produced a booklet showing how everyone is welcome in the school, have organised a charity Christmas shoe box collection, have sung carols at a local care home and made a food collection for St Gregory's Crypt. They all applied for this role voluntarily because 'we wanted to help other people', as one pupil said. Another wrote, 'I already have ideas that can make this world a special place.'
- The 'Faith in Action' group are drawn from Year 6, and have undertaken to work towards an award recognising how they are living out their faith in their daily lives. Collecting backpacks to support Mary's Meals, taking part in the 'Big Sing', litter picking, visiting the Stations of the Cross at Mount Calvary, and leading a Stations liturgy for Year 3 have been some of their activities.

- The RE ambassadors' group has taken on the role of evaluating the Catholic Life, going on learning walks to look at the prominence of the Catholic identity in the school environment and presenting questionnaires to other pupils.
- Pupils value the school's chaplaincy provision very much, taking advantage of the opportunities this offers them, via Collective Worship gatherings and more informal voluntary opportunities for prayer.
- The school's relationships and sex education programme enables pupils to understand about growing up, and how to keep healthy and stay safe, as acknowledged by parents.
- Pupils appreciate the personal support that the school offers them, and feel confident and secure in being able to turn to any member of staff when in difficulty.
- All pupils are keen to reach out to others in need beyond their own community, as evidenced by the school's involvement in supporting a wide range of charities, including the Good Shepherd Appeal, Mission Together, CAFOD, MacMillan Cancer and Save the Children. These have all benefited from the school's fundraising activities in the last year.
- Pupils take a pride in their own cultural identities, religious beliefs and backgrounds within a united community. They deeply value the school's Catholic ethos, and joyfully involve themselves in celebrations. They also keenly take part in parish celebrations, such as in Sunday Masses and preparation for the Sacraments, and have represented the school at Diocesan events, with a large number joining the choir at cathedral celebrations.
- The school's mission statement is well known to all the community. When asked about it, all pupils were able to recite by heart the scripture quotation from St John's gospel, *'I am the light of the world; whoever follows me will have the light of life,'* that forms part of the statement. It has a profound effect on everyone at St Augustine's. All the community take ownership of the mission on a day to day basis.
- Staff members show full commitment to promoting the Catholic mission of the school, and do so with passion and determination. They fully engage with initiatives that strengthen the Catholic ethos, and bring skilful and imaginative approaches to interweaving many aspects of the Catholic Life, Religious Education and Collective Worship into one cohesive whole.
- An example of this strength of the school is the way the links between the weekly Statements of Belief, the prayer focus for each month, the themes for acts of worship in class and the termly focus on 'Values and Virtues' are taught so that pupils see and understand how the message of the gospel can be lived out.
- There is a very strong sense of community, with excellent relationships among and between adults and children. The involvement of all in the Catholic mission creates a joyful and supportive environment with a tangible sense of calmness.
- Its Catholic character is very evident throughout the school environment. There are well presented and attractive displays in the entrance hall, throughout each classroom, the school hall, and in the walkway outside classrooms. There are special prayer focus areas in each class too.
- The school has responded to a previous recommendation to develop a prayer garden with wonderful commitment. There is an attractive, reflective space in the garden in the middle of the school, with prominent cross and religious statues of St Francis and Our Lady, where prayer groups often meet. Another area outside Key Stage 1 has been created, much valued by pupils, with a beautiful mosaic as a focal point. Furthermore,

each Early Years Foundation Stage playground has its own prayer area, with garden and space inside a shelter.

- Catholic social teaching is very evident in provision, both within the curriculum and in the extra activities undertaken by groups of pupils, as well as in their response to caring for each other and God's world. These opportunities are well documented in the impressive 'Catholic Life' books that each class builds up in their own particular style.
- The Statement of Belief is reflected upon each week in class, and there is celebration and praise of pupils who show an example during the day. A further development this year has been the creation of awards each half term, focusing on two of the 'virtues' from the Jesuit Pupil Profile. These have helped pupils to understand the meaning of 'compassionate', 'generous' and 'faith-filled', for instance. The school's current focus on 'curious' and 'active' was reflected on a chart in each classroom, where pupils' achievement of these virtues was noted on post-it notes.
- These approaches are part of the provision that has a significant effect on pupils' spiritual and moral development. Parents commented on how well the school's strategies had positively influenced their children in wanting to make the right choices and care for each other, as well as hold the right values. One parent gave an example of a daughter wishing to help a homeless person that the family came across and another shared her joy at her daughter winning an award for being 'truthful and eloquent'.
- The chaplaincy provision of the school is excellent. This is modelled extremely well by headteacher and RE coordinator, but also involves the strong leadership of all staff. The newly appointed parish priest (from September) has also significantly enhanced the school's chaplaincy provision.
- The school is currently developing its Relationships and Sex Education programme, following diocesan guidelines, keeping Catholic teaching at the heart of its approach while incorporating a new scheme for personal, social and health education.
- The school leadership is deeply committed to the Church's mission in education. The headteacher leads by example and shares with senior leaders and governors the importance of giving the Catholic Life the highest priority. This is evidenced in the school's strategic planning documents, its recruitment strategy and its governors' committee business.
- School Improvement Planning is very focused, with effective identification of actions, and close monitoring of how these actions are implemented. There is collection of evidence of the school's effectiveness, through surveys and questionnaires, although limited analysis of the main conclusions to be drawn.
- Collaboration with the local Leeds Catholic Schools Partnership is very well developed, leading to sharing of good practice and joint professional development events. The school has responded enthusiastically to diocesan policies and initiatives, such as in the focus on virtues.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

### Religious Education is outstanding

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|--|---|
| 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 |

- The progress of pupils in Religious Education is excellent, with all groups showing closely comparable achievement.
- Starting points when pupils enter school are typically well below average, with very few pupils showing expected age-related knowledge and understanding, and with language skills often underdeveloped. As a result of very good teaching, pupils make gains from the early years onwards, consistently through school so that the majority achieve in line with Diocesan averages at the end of Key Stage 2, and a significant minority exceed expectations in attainment.
- Almost two thirds of pupils make more than expected progress from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2, with all pupils making at least expected progress. This includes pupils with special educational needs, English as an additional language or those who are eligible for the pupil premium.
- Religious literacy development is particularly effective, with a strong emphasis on ensuring pupils have and understand the correct vocabulary to articulate their thoughts.
- Pupils show the ability to reflect on their learning, and are given ample opportunity to express their thought and feelings. They understand the concept of religious faith, and that the Catholic RE curriculum teaches them to 'follow Jesus, to walk in his footsteps', as one child put it succinctly.
- Pupils concentrate very well, sustain their attention, collaborate easily and willingly with each other, and engage with their learning attentively in focused manner. They respond well to their learning tasks and challenges in a calm and measured way.
- The quality of pupils' work in their books is excellent. They are able to express themselves well, to reflect on their learning, to discuss religious matters and relate them to their own circumstances and issues in the modern world. They are given the chance to present their work in a variety of different ways.
- Teaching in Religious Education is very effective. Planning is very consistent, leading to the delivery of appropriately pitched lessons, with allowances for challenge and support according to the ability of pupils. There is well grounded consolidation of previous learning, with attention to detail in the development of knowledge and understanding, the immersion in religious vocabulary and significant opportunities for reflection. Teaching assistants play an effective part in supporting learning for individuals and groups, quietly providing assurance or focusing attention, or leading groups in active tasks.
- The range of activities to promote learning is very varied. Younger pupils have many active learning opportunities, such as in the use of art or design tasks, or role play to

embed the sequence of religious stories from scripture. As pupils move through the school, these tasks become more sophisticated and opportunities for extended writing in different genres are more frequent. Scripture features strongly in pupils' learning tasks, as does the chance to turn to the creation of prayer, and the expression of pupils' own thoughts and feelings. As pupils reach upper Key Stage 2, they are immersed in research tasks and the examination of scripture passages, interpreting these to understand specific themes.

- The school follows the recommended Diocesan RE scheme, 'The Way, the Truth and the Life', and supplements the curriculum with visits and visitors to enrich and extend learning. The teaching of other World Faiths is well structured, with each year group focusing on one religion, and presenting their learning to the rest of the school in an assembly. Year 6 benefit from the opportunity of a residential retreat.
- Teachers show confidence, passion and interest in the subject, and convey these well to pupils. They have a very good level of subject knowledge and can impart this effectively, so that pupils are motivated to do well. Marking is very effective in letting pupils know how well they have done, and in challenging them to expand on their learning, which pupils take up in their 'purple pen' writing.
- Creativity in teaching is evident in the range of tasks pupils are asked to accomplish. 'Walking in the footsteps of Jesus', creating a 'tree of kindness' on which to hang kind words, making a video of how to look after God's creation and blowing bubbles of prayers to God at Ascension time are just a few examples.
- Most lessons observed started with sharing of a specific learning objective, followed by imparting of knowledge by teachers, sometimes at significant length. Pupils were attentive and calmly focused in such lessons, but occasionally too passive, and the 'buzz' of stimulated interest was missing. The provision of a variety of ways to capture pupils' attention and engagement in lessons to promote greater independence and response is sometimes required.
- The Religious Education curriculum meets the Bishops' conference requirements and the additional requirements of the Diocesan bishop are fully implemented. Religious Education is given full parity with other core subjects in terms of resourcing and professional development.
- The RE coordinator plays an inspiring role in leadership of the subject and its links to both the Catholic Life and Collective Worship. She is very committed to ensuring the highest quality of Catholic education, supported by the headteacher, the RE team and the rest of the staff. She has imparted very effective professional development as well as disseminating new developments and good practice from diocesan meetings and links with other schools. Staff members are very well supported by the availability of quality resources.
- There is an organised schedule of monitoring and analysis of provision, including lesson observations and scrutiny of pupils' work. Assessment procedures are well developed, with judgments moderated in-house and alongside teachers from neighbouring schools. Monitoring activity leads to well targeted action planning.
- Governors play a full role in ensuring the quality of Religious Education, receiving and questioning reports, as well as looking at the range of pupils' work. Policies relating to Religious Education are up to date and well considered.

## 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 |

- There is genuine enthusiasm for participation in Collective Worship by pupils and staff alike. This is seen in the quality of respectful silence, the keenness to lead or take active part and the response to prayer in all its forms.
- Singing is tuneful and joyful, and appropriate to the occasion. Pupils have welcomed the chance to develop the quality of their singing through specialist teaching, which has also given the opportunity for choral participation in school and at the cathedral. Hymns are acknowledged as prayer within music, and pupils are able to identify appropriate hymns linked to a theme from an early age.
- Pupil preparation and leadership of Collective Worship has developed significantly over the past two years. Pupils are keen to lead through planning, reading or acting. They are developing knowledge of how a liturgy is structured from an early age, following very good modeling by teachers.
- Excellent guidelines of age related expectations are impacting on the confidence of pupils. They start by learning to dress an altar with appropriate artefacts, to light a candle and to initiate the liturgy. They write bidding prayers linking to a theme. Gradually, they take on more responsibility, aided by a helpful planning structure, to set the mood of a gathering, to choose 'The Word', to consider a suitable response, and to set a mission to take forth. They are well supported by teachers in their preparation.
- Now that pupils are very active in using their skills, there is opportunity for developing the quality of liturgical gatherings, with creativity and imagination to engage their peers, building on their developing knowledge and experience, in order to make each occasion spiritually uplifting and awe-inspiring. Developing pupils' independence in leadership would be another suitable step for school leaders and staff.
- Pupils' understanding of the Church's liturgical year is very good, thanks to careful planning by leaders of the school's liturgical calendar, enabling the proper celebration of the seasons and feasts, backed up by other worship activities that reflect themes of the year. Examples of this can be seen in the 'prayer bags' that go home with pupils at key times – praying the rosary during October, the travelling crib leading up to Christmas, and devotion to Mary in the month of May, for instance. The Advent and Lent workshops that take place, creatively making resources, artefacts, decorations and symbols associated with those times, and helped by parents, are further examples.
- Pupils know traditional prayers well, helped by the school's own prayer book and the school faith book used in class. They willingly construct their own prayers for particular intentions, often spontaneously.
- The school's impact in developing prayer was reported by parents, who related how their children would insist on grace being said before meals or prayers being said for

someone who was unwell. A further example of pupils' heartfelt response could be seen in a voluntary activity undertaken by a child in Year 1 during 'free choice' time to write, 'I love you God, I love you so much God,' on a homemade card.

- Prayer is central to the life of the school. A Collective Worship liturgy, be it in the hall in large group or in the classroom, takes place every day, with further prayers said at other times. The staff, too, come together in prayer regularly, with a voluntary prayer liturgy held every Thursday. Worship is cherished by all, and given the highest priority in planning.
- Leaders and staff members have a thorough understanding of the Church's year, and how to make it accessible to pupils. They are passionate about celebrating Collective Worship, and are highly skilled. They have been given excellent professional development to support their leadership.
- Pupils' positive response to voluntary opportunities for prayer is regular and sincere. Large numbers attend the weekly prayer group at breaktime each Thursday, with the leadership alternating between RE coordinator and volunteer pupils. Pupils also enjoy taking home the prayer bags to share with their families. This activity is particularly well initiated in the younger pupils, with a 'prayer bear' being looked after for one or two nights.
- The parish priest is a frequent visitor to school, to say Mass for the whole school or for year groups. He also makes himself available to visit classes to assist with learning. School and parish links are well established, with quite frequent visits to church, despite the long walk, the regular involvement of the school at parish Masses and the posting of news and displays about the school on a parish noticeboard, changed in rotation by different year groups through the year.
- The school has linked well with the parish in assisting with the preparation for and celebration of the sacraments of Reconciliation and the Eucharist on pupils' first occasion, and, lately, working together to prepare candidates for Confirmation.
- Parents are welcomed to many liturgies, particularly those that take place in classrooms, given that the hall cannot accommodate the whole school and several visitors at one time. They are also supported by frequent communication, including RE newsletters, reminders in the regular newsletters, with reference to the Church's season, and the sharing of the Wednesday Word publication.
- Governors are keen to support and participate in the school's liturgical celebrations, informally monitoring as they do so. The parish priest, as link governor, lends expertise to this monitoring and developmental role.
- Self-evaluation of Collective Worship takes place, with pupils actively involved, although there is room for further robust evaluation leading to qualitative improvement than at present, in order to plan and implement further developments.

