

**DIOCESE OF PLYMOUTH
VICARIATE FOR EVANGELISATION CATECHESIS
AND SCHOOLS**

**S48
INSPECTION REPORT**



St. Margaret Clitherow Catholic Primary School
Polhearne Way
Brixham
Devon
TQ50EE

URN 140768

Head Teacher: Mr Matt Tookey
Acting Chair of Governors: Mr Tony Moloney

Introduction

The inspection of St. Margaret Clitherow Catholic Primary School was carried out under the requirements of the Education Act 2005, and in accordance with Plymouth Diocesan Framework and Schedule for Diocesan Canonical inspectors, approved by the Bishop of Plymouth.

Context for the Inspection

St. Margaret Clitherow is a small primary school with 145 children on roll. Of these 11.6% are Catholic. 17.94% of the children are on the SEN register with five children having a statement of special educational needs. 23% of children on roll are in receipt of Pupil Premium (PP) funding and 13.11% of children receive free school meals.

At the time of the inspection the Head Teacher had been absent from work since November 2016. In addition the RE co-ordinator had been absent from work since January 2017. In addition the position of Chair of Governors is being held by the Vice Chair due to the recent retirement of the Chair. Since November 2016 the second level of senior leadership in the school has taken responsibility for the running of the school with one senior leader taking on the responsibility of acting Head Teacher. The absence of the two key people with responsibility for RE in the school resulted in the appropriate paper-work for the inspection not being available. This has had a serious impact on the outcome of the inspection.

Since the last S48 inspection the school has undergone the following change:

Become an academy as part of CAST – a multi-academy trust incorporating all Catholic primary schools in the Diocese of Plymouth

Key Finding Grade 4	Matthew 6:24
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Grade 4: 'No one can serve two masters; for a slave will either hate the one and love the other, or be devoted to the one and despise the other. Matthew 6:24

Throughout Scripture we are taught that we must choose between God and false gods. Jesus wants us to be free, not just of concerns but of all worries, in order to serve God. It is easy when we are under extreme pressure to respond in ways which are detrimental to our core beliefs and vision. Sometimes this happens because we are facing understandable difficulties. At other times we are insufficiently discerning and go with what seems to be more attractive or safe. When this is the case the school can lose sight of its core mission and purpose. Only a radical re-evaluation of what it means to be a Catholic community and a Catholic school will lead to a rediscovery of the commandment: 'Love one another' and ultimately to people washing one another's feet.

St. Margaret Clitherow is a friendly school where adults and children show care and concern for one another. The school has some key strengths which demonstrate the desire on the part of the school to be an inclusive and supportive environment where children feel safe and can grow to become the best that they can be. This includes the high quality of pastoral care offered to the children and in particular the most vulnerable, of which there are a significant number at St. Margaret Clitherow. The dedication of the whole staff to those with particular needs is to be commended.

However, this inspection has revealed significant gaps in the over-all provision offered to the children, particularly in relation to its life as a Catholic school. These gaps have not come about because staff are complacent or do not care but simply because the vision for the school has focused on pastoral care for vulnerable children and not the wider vision of what it means to be a fully alive Catholic School in every dimension of school life and rooted in the mission of the Church. Those in leadership have been unable or unwilling to appreciate that 'caring' for everyone also means

challenging and making potentially difficult decisions which are ultimately positive for the whole community and individuals within it. Despite concerns raised over time, actions have not been taken to alleviate issues which have been ultimately detrimental to the school. The school's inability to respond to the expectations of the inspection process by providing appropriate paper-work, within the time-frame expected, has made it difficult to assess the true nature of the school's status.

There is no doubt that the senior leaders who have taken on significant responsibilities since November have been working extremely hard in very difficult circumstances. In regard to all aspects of the Catholic Life, offer of support and training over the years have only occasionally been taken up and as a result the school has not developed significantly since the last inspection.

Relationships between the parish and the school are seriously weak and the reluctance of the Parish Priest to engage with the school is a concern which needs to be addressed from all angles.

The governors have recently come to some awareness of the severity of the issues and recognise the need to have a strategic plan to bring about swift change to ensure that the school moves forward in every respect, not least in its mission and vision as a Catholic School.

Summary of Key Findings

1. Gospel values are implicit in the life of the school but not embedded in such a way that they are explicitly lived out in the life of the school.
2. The mission statement has little or no impact on the life of the school.
3. Pastoral care of vulnerable children is a strength of the school. Staff work extremely hard to nurture, nourish and support the needs of children with particularly challenging behaviours.
4. Relationships within the school are highly positive.
5. Children are polite, very well behaved and have a desire to learn. They are interested in their learning and have a desire to make progress. However, the quality of teaching is varied, ranging from excellent to below what might be expected. Where teaching is strong expectations of children are high and children respond well. Poor lessons tended to rely on teachers dominating activities.
6. New members of staff are welcomed into the school and supported by an effective induction programme.
7. Pupils take on roles of responsibility within the school but see this as an imposition rather than something which they aspire to.
8. The school engages well with the wider community both within CAST and further afield, particularly within the area of Brixham.
9. Despite the lack of engagement with the Parish Priest, the school works hard to provide children with opportunities to participate in a variety of services both in school and in the Church.
10. Children participate well in acts of worship, however the quality of that worship requires further development to ensure the provision of rich and prayerful experiences for all.
11. There are some visible signs of the Catholic nature of the school in displays around the school but many of these lack inspiration and fail to engage children.

Areas of Focus for Development

The school's mission as a Catholic School would be enhanced by focusing planned development in the following areas:

For all involved in the running of St. Margaret Clitherow, in conjunction with support from Diocesan advisers, to establish a clear vision for the school and put in place an appropriate, staged plan of implementation. This will include:

- Focused work on renewing the mission and vision of the school.
- CPD for all on what it means to live out the five 'W's of the Catholic Life Framework.
- A programme of outreach to other Catholic Schools and CPD for staff to develop their skills in the teaching of RE, celebrating acts of worship and creating a dynamic environment which reflects the mission of the Church.

St. Margaret Clitherow as a Catholic Community
Grade 2

(Welcome, Welfare, and Witness)
John 13:34-35

It is clear that Gospel values are implicit in the life of the school but it is not evident how these are lived out on a daily basis, beyond people being kind and caring to one another. There is no doubting the commitment of the staff to the children at St. Margaret Clitherow. As has been noted, this is a school that is particularly strong in its motivation to work with and support children who often present with highly challenging behaviours. These children are treated with compassion, understanding and a determination to ensure that these children receive every opportunity to succeed. The school has committed itself to ensuring that adults are well-trained and resourced to work with these children. Trained Thrive and Rainbows Practitioners support other staff, as well as the children. Safe-guarding is strong and the school is highly thought of in Torbay for its excellent judgement of Safe-guarding issues.

Clearly this brings with it challenges, not least ensuring that all children are catered for and those without specific needs do not become lost, as adults respond to those with greatest need. The school is aware of this danger and recognises that this is something that they must hold in mind and strategically find ways to avoid. The emphasis within the school on being a 'caring' school is commendable but it does not of itself reflect the purpose of a Catholic School. This is an area which requires a deeper engagement and, with a fluctuating staff, very overt messages so that all adults can embrace the religious dimension of the life in a Catholic school.

Relationships between members of the school community are supportive and positive and new staff feel welcomed and helped to develop their teaching and classroom practice. Teachers new to the profession speak positively about the induction they have received. Whilst the school is an active member of the local Catholic cluster group and works in partnership with other CAST schools, the school's direction would be helped by exchanging practice and visits to these schools. At present there is no tangible evidence to show how the school takes advantage of how other schools could support them.

For the most part, children are happy and enjoy their school. They participate in many extracurricular activities, particularly in sport and music. They enjoy a range of opportunities to go out into the wider community. Recent events have included participating in the Brixham Christingle Service and visiting local rest homes to sing to the residents. In addition the children raise money for a variety of charities including responding well to visitors from CAFOD and FairTrade.

Children in Year 6 are encouraged to take on responsibilities and participate constructively in the school life beyond routine lessons and activities. However, children do not always feel positively about these expectations and their perception is that they are imposed rather than something that they willingly take on. Occasionally, but not always, the school council feel that they are listened to and when this happens they feel very positive. An example of this would be the implementation of a weekly cup for the class that has the highest attendance. This was suggested by the council and they were delighted by the outcome.

In terms of preparing pupils for life in modern Britain and for global citizenship, displays around the school indicate that British Values are taken seriously. While links with the local community are strong, the school needs to develop its links with the wider community and provide children with opportunities for helping them to develop a clear understanding and appreciation of ethnic and cultural diversity. In line with this, the leadership team needs to ensure that pupils are provided with opportunities for reciprocal learning (such as a link with another school in a different country to develop mutual respect and awareness of other groups and communities).

Catholic Social Teaching requires of us that we fully embrace the dignity of the human person and nourish them to become the very best that they can be. In school this means building community and ensuring an environment which is attractive, cared for and reflects the ethos of the school. St. Margaret Clitherow is blessed to have a new extension to its school. This part of the school is attractive and appears cared for. The older part of the school, however, appears dated, uncared for and lacks a vibrancy that should enrich the learning of children. In this part of the school, although some focal points in classrooms are attractive, around the school they appear uniform and unengaging. Displays, particularly in general places such as the hall, need attention and show that work done by children is honoured.

Areas for Development

1. To revisit the Mission Statement and involve the whole community in developing an accessible and reflective statement of purpose which is rooted in the Gospel.
2. To provide on-going opportunities for all staff to come to a deeper understanding of what constitutes a Catholic School in all its richness.
3. To develop a comprehensive and systematic approach to understanding and celebrating diversity. This should include ensuring that pupils have exposure and engagement with other cultures beyond what is delivered by staff of the school.

The School as a Catholic Community Grade 4	Leadership and Management Matthew 6:24
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Throughout Scripture we are taught that we must choose between God and false gods. Jesus wants us to be free, not just of concerns but of all worries, in order to serve God. It is easy when we are under extreme pressure to respond in ways which are detrimental to our core beliefs and vision. Sometimes this happens because we are facing understandable difficulties. At other times we are insufficiently discerning and go with what seems to be more attractive or safe. When this is the case the school can lose sight of its core mission and purpose. Only a radical re-evaluation of what it means to be a Catholic community and a Catholic school will lead to a rediscovery of the commandment: 'Love one another' and ultimately to people washing one another's feet.

The scripture quote attached to this grade might suggest that the current leadership team of St. Margaret Clitherow has chosen false gods as opposed to God. This is not the case. However it is a leadership team under pressure and currently facing serious challenges. The absence of a Head Teacher and the RE Coordinator has made this inspection very difficult. The school has a leadership model which consists of the Head Teacher and then three class-based teachers as senior leaders. One of these, a part-time teacher, has taken on the full time role of acting Head Teacher. These three teachers are to be commended for the efforts they have made to maintain the running of the

school and ensure that children remain safe and well-educated. They have been doing this consciously aware that they face an imminent Ofsted inspection. Throughout this inspection they worked hard to respond to the requests of inspectors and consistently sought to locate evidence when required. Without the school's Self-evaluation document (SEF) of RE and Catholic Life, assessing and validating the schools view of itself has been limited to what can be seen and discussed during the inspection itself. The Catholic life of the school is something that should be so embedded that when people are absent, everyone else can continue as normal. The experience of this inspection revealed that the Catholic Life is held by the Head Teacher and the RE Co-ordinator, with it having little impact on the understanding of other adults.

At St. Margaret Clitherow, it would seem that the school's commitment to the vulnerable has become its driving force and a belief that this is the only thing that matters in a Catholic school. As a consequence it is clear that this is its strength. The desire to care for everyone is commendable but caring also needs to come with appropriate challenge when people are either not able or do not do what is expected of them. This challenge has been absent. Governors now recognise this and accept that it is something which has to be addressed if the school is to move forward as a Catholic school in all its fullness.

Without evidence available it is not possible to comment on the monitoring of progress in RE. An assessment file made available shows that there is a lack of understanding in relation to RE assessment levels, which hampers progression in RE. The governor responsible for RE and Catholic Life has just taken on the role. As an experienced person in this area, he will need to work effectively to bring about a change in the direction of the school.

The school has a good record for enabling all staff to attend Diocesan training. The RE leader has regularly attended RE Co-ordinators' meetings. Ensuring that all training is implemented and cascaded effectively is an area for development. In addition CPD needs to include a planned programme which includes developing an understanding of Catholic Social Teaching.

At this point in time the school needs considerable support to ensure that the leadership of the school can refocus and re-orientate itself towards the priority of living its mission as a Catholic School.

Focus for Development

1. As a leadership team, to fully appreciate the need for improvement in all areas of the Catholic life and develop a systematic implementation programme based on clear analysis and data.
2. To set in place a clear monitoring programme to evaluate the progress and well-being of all children and the quality of teaching and learning.
3. To discuss with the Area Adviser of CAST and the RE Adviser the best way to gain guidance and support as to how to move forward.

Observing teachers with children revealed just how much they consistently model Christ in the way that they relate to them and how they deliver lessons. Teachers are positive, affirming and engaging, so that children feel safe and for the most part respond well in their lessons. Children generally behave well, remain focused and engage with what they are asked to do. However, in some lessons independent work is hampered by a lack of clarity as to what is expected of children. When this

happens children become dis-engaged and their behaviour deteriorates. Lessons observed were patchy, ranging from excellent to below what might be expected. Where they were strong teachers had high expectations of children, had developed the teaching materials to suit the children and knew where the direction of the lesson was going. Where they were not as strong, teachers tended to dominate the lessons, working very hard, but having little expectations of children and keeping them on the carpet for too long. Generally, there is little differentiation within lessons, though teachers do appear to offer the children a balance of both attainment target one (learning about RE) and attainment target two (learning from RE). Pupils spoke of enjoying their RE but could not talk about their learning in any depth, nor were they sure about their next steps. A lack of 'working walls' for RE mean that 'Big Questions' are not recorded and children have little opportunity to explore these.

Planning of lessons is now supported by a Diocesan writing group that provides support for teaching. However, whilst this is still an area for development, it still requires teachers to think about the planning in relationship to the children they teach. This requires support from the RE leader to do this. A number of the lessons observed did not reflect this guidance. A lack of evidence to show how lessons are monitored and teachers supported make it difficult to comment further on how the leadership in RE is supporting teachers to develop their skills and confidence to deliver promising lessons where children progress and move forward. Work in books shows little progression and although marking does encourage children to take next steps, there is little evidence that they are given time to respond to these.

Focus for Development

1. For all staff to be helped with using the materials provided to support the RE curriculum
2. Ensure that pupils are given time and opportunities to explore the 'Big Questions'
3. Put in place a rigorous monitoring programme which involves lesson observations, work scrutiny, moderation and assessment for learning.
4. Develop a consistent marking policy which includes peer assessment and dedicated improvement time for pupils to reflect and respond to next step questions.
5. Ensure that planning clearly identifies attainment targets, strands and RE levels of attainment as set out by the Bishop's Conference of England and Wales.

The School as a Celebrating Community Grade 3	Worship John 5:6-8
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Although there is a desire on the part of staff to provide positive spiritual experiences for the children, a lack of formation and a poor relationship with the Parish Priest mean that there is a lack of confidence about how to express this dimension of the school's life. Support and guidance could easily remedy this so that all members of staff feel able to facilitate and develop strong liturgical experiences for the children. Some progress has been made within this area but further development is needed so that all members of staff can be involved and helped to learn the skills of delivering acts of worship. The goal ultimately is for children to be fully involved in carrying out acts of worship.

Within the prayer opportunities experienced, children responded well. They appreciate the opportunities for silence and creativity. However, too often what is offered move into becoming a 'lesson' where teacher felt the need to 'teach' something. Developing the skills to allow for children to reflect and be still is not something to shy away from but to encourage. Children did seem to have the capacity for this but were not allowed to engage with it fully. This reflects their openness to God's presence in their own lives and that of others.

Currently the engagement with the Parish Priest is minimal. This seems to be for a variety of reasons, not least that the small number of Catholics appears to make it difficult when celebrating Mass. However, whilst the school is keen for this relationship to grow so that the school can fully engage in the traditions and practices of the Catholic Church, this needs the school and the Parish Priest to develop a strong and positive relationship.

Focus for Development

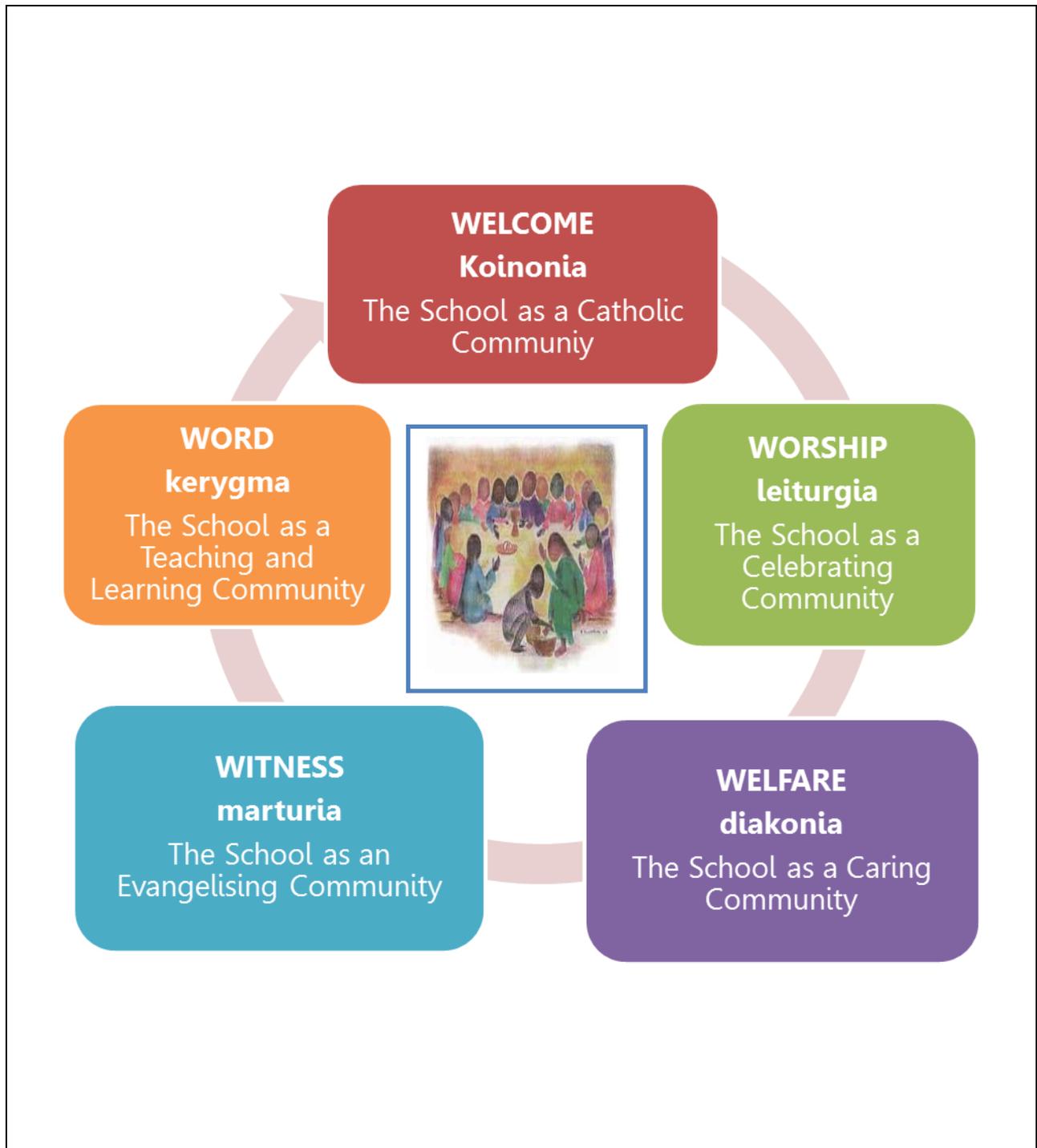
1. Provide formation for all staff to develop their understanding of what constitutes an act of worship so that they can gain the skills needed to model for pupils so that they can develop their own liturgical skills.
2. Identify the spiritual journey of pupils through their school life and put in place a variety of experiences to support this e.g. retreats, pilgrimages which will ultimately enhance their experience of faith and life.

Conclusion

St. Margaret Clitherow is a school with great potential to regain its vision and purpose. Staff, parents, governors and the wider CAST community working together have the capacity to bring about change quickly and with integrity. The school is made up of many good people who have the interests of the pupils at heart. This of itself, along with commitment and strategic planning work will be what transforms St. Margaret Clitherow to become the school that we all want it to be and one which ultimately all can be proud of.

Sarah Adams
January 2017

THE SCHOOL AS A CATHOLIC COMMUNITY



Introduction

The Catholic community is one that is rooted in Baptism, Eucharist and an on-going call to Conversion. The areas of Welcome, Worship, Word, Welfare and Witness can be described as the key components of what it means to live the Christian life. As such, the school as a Catholic community, is called to embrace these as a way of being community and living the mission of the Church. The manner in which these are expressed reveal for us the heart of where the community lies.

Koinonia - (κοινωνία) Welcome

Koinonia is the Greek work for communion, for participation, for the sharing with one another. It is to be welcome an 'other' in fellowship and love. It is to be of an open disposition to receive from another and to respond in love. Within the community it can be minimalized to the gesture of greeting at the front entrance. In school it might simply be seen as the role of the receptionist. Koinonia however, requires a much greater vision of what it means to welcome. Ultimately it speaks of the disposition of every member of the community to be open to the needs of another, be that to listen, to hear, to respond, to act. The idea of welcome will be embedded in all aspects of the school's way of doing things.

Leiturgia – (λείτ-ουργία) Worship

The Greek word 'leiturgia' means public activity or in a religious sense it means 'respect' or 'service'. When it was adopted by the Church it meant to carry out a religious service. It is a public service as opposed to private prayer and concerns the Christian community gathering first and foremost to celebrate the paschal mystery of Jesus Christ. It is also a time when the community gathers to be reconciled, to celebrate, to be fed, and to be sent out in mission. Central to the Catholic School is its call to be a Eucharistic community in the widest sense – that is to be the body of Christ ready to serve the world in its fullness. All prayer, all liturgy ultimately is intended to lead to this. It is not something that happens once a week and has no further meaning. It is an invitation to live each day what has been received through Word and Eucharist.

Marturia – (μαρτυρία) Witness

The core meaning of the Greek word marturia means to testify, to give witness, from which we get the word martyr. Simply it means to share our values and faith with the world and our local community so that others may come to know the love of Christ. Within the Catholic School community this will mean promoting a shared vision and shared values which stem from a shared sense of the teaching of the Gospel. The Christian is called to witness to Christ's teaching in the way they live their life. Like John the Baptist these values are those which direct others to Christ.

Diakonia - (διακονία) Welfare

The word 'diakonia' comes from the Greek word to mean to serve the poor and the oppressed. The emphasis within the word is on service and care for others. Within the Christian community diakonia is a way of being with others. It encourages care and concern for every person regardless of who they are or where they come from. Within the Catholic school, service lies at the heart of the community. It is about how children are supported in their learning, shown compassion when their behaviour is challenging and cared for when they are unhappy or in need. Equally it is about how adults are cared for and care for one another. At the same time the community is one that reaches out to the local community and the wider world, recognising the needs of others and responding to these generously.

Kerygma – (κήρυγμα) Word

Kerygma is the New Testament Greek word for preaching or proclaiming the message of Christ. Within the context of the school this is expressed both in how we expose young Access to the WORD of God through scripture and Christian tradition is considered to be a significant part of what the Christian community is about. By the way they are taught children come to know that God speaks to us in the way that we experience and engage with kindness, beauty, justice, the wonders of the natural world, relationships and the needs of others. It is therefore seen as important that in every

subject, every lesson, positive values and attitudes are communicated. A confident and open attitude to teaching of lessons well thought about and prepared is central to achieving this.

Self-Review

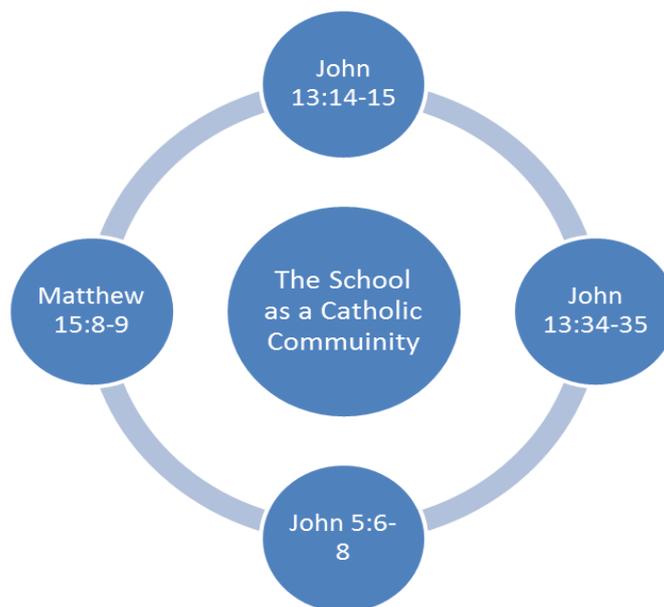
There will be four key areas within which these five elements will be reviewed:

- The School as a Catholic Community (Welcome, Witness and Welfare)
- The School as a Catholic Community (Leadership and Management)
- The School as a Teaching and Learning Community (Word)
- The School as a Celebrating Community (Worship)

For each of these sections focus areas for evaluation are offered and means of gathering evidence to support this work. See appendix for further guidance.

Scripture Passages

Scripture passages have been selected to highlight where the focus for the community may be at any one time. These will act as a guideline for the self-review process when schools consider the health of its community. The approach to these is best considered within the context of a cycle. Any anyone time the school may find different areas of its life at different points on the cycle: people to the person of Christ as revealed in scripture, and the manner in which we teach.



CONTEXT FOR THE CHOICE OF SPECIFIC SCRIPTURE REFERENCES –

Scripture has throughout history been interpreted in a variety of ways and is constantly being reinterpreted. The interpretations given here are one way of looking at how the passages may be understood within our own context. Equally there are many other passages which may have been selected but for now these reflect what is at the heart of our mission and which seem appropriate.

- 1. 'If I, your Lord and Teacher have washed your feet, you are also to wash one another's feet. For I have set you an example, that you should also do as I have done to you'. John 13 14-15**

The night before he died Jesus washed the feet of his disciples. Peter, one of the disciples was affronted. To wash another's feet was the lowest job of all, one done by the servants. Jesus, as the leader of the community he was about to establish, was very clear. The call to Christian ministry is a call to service, a humbling act of giving to one another. Unless we can serve our brothers and sisters we can have no part in the life of Christ. A secular understanding of leadership often results in a top down mentality and little shared responsibility. The Christian community however, is one where those in authority act out of their desire to serve, not to be served. As a consequence the message of serving one another permeates the whole community.

- 2. 'I give you a new commandment that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples if you love one another'. John 13:34-35**

The greatest of all commandments is that we love one another. Living the Christian life is to live a life of love which ultimately leads to washing one another's feet. This is a journey. There are times when we succeed and there are times when we become distracted. Other priorities take over or we fall susceptible to the secular world which may be offering a different set of priorities or values. Fear, anxiety or a lack of confidence can impact on the capacity of those in leadership to fully respond to the Christian call above all other demands. As a result, although most of the time the community is responding to the call to love, there are times when this gets forgotten and anomalies creep in.

- 3. 'Do you want to be made well? The sick man answered him, 'Sir, I have no one to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up; and while I am making my way someone else steps down ahead of me.' Jesus said to him, 'Stand up, take your mat and walk.' John 5:6-8'**

The sick man lying by the pool of Bethesda has been there for a many years, stuck in the one place. Although he wants to be better he appears not to be able to move without some help. Jesus offers this to him and orders him to get up and walk. It could be said that the sick man has resided for too long in a 'blame someone else way of being'. Sometimes leaders and school communities do become 'stuck'. Leaders blame teachers, teachers blame students or leaders and the culture prevents an honest engagement in what needs to be done for any progress to be made. Schools stuck or struggling in this kind of cycle need help and support to break free. Healing and reconciliation may need to be a part of this journey. Honest clarification of priorities and challenging self-searching needs to take place for change to occur.

- 4. 'No one can serve two masters; for a slave will either hate the one and love the other, or be devoted to the one and despise the other. Matthew 6:24**

Throughout Scripture we are taught that we must choose between God and false gods. Jesus wants us to be free, not just of concerns but of all worries, in order to serve God. It is easy when we are under extreme pressure to respond in ways which are detrimental to our core beliefs and vision. Sometimes this happens because we are facing understandable difficulties. At other times we are insufficiently discerning and go with what seems to be more attractive or safe. Schools can fall into this trap when results and progress become more important than the all-round development of the child. When this is the case the school has lost sight of its meaning and purpose. As a consequence children are being failed and adults not supported to do what is right. Only a radical re-evaluation of what it means to

be a Catholic community and a Catholic school will lead to a rediscovery of the commandment: 'Love one another' and ultimately to people washing one another's feet.