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DIOCESAN BOARD FOR INSPECTIONS

SECTION 48 FINAL REPORT

THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL
AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

ST JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL
Grosvenor Road, Dalton, Huddersfield HD5 9HU

School URN	107749
School DfE Number	382/3400
E-mail address	dominic.williams@edukirklees.net
Chair of Governors	Mr. Michael Kelly
Headteacher	Mr. Dominic Williams
RE Subject Leader	Mrs. Anne Meehan
Date of Inspection	9 th and 10 th November, 2011
Section 48 Inspector	Mr. David Gott

INTRODUCTION

The Inspection of St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Huddersfield, was carried out under the requirements of Section 48 of the Education Act 2005, and 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 starts with the school's own self evaluation. The inspection follows the schedule and criteria set by the National Board of Religious Inspectors and Advisors (NIBRIA).

The inspector observed a sample of eight acts of Collective Worship (CW) and ten Religious Education (RE) lessons covering all three primary key stages. Meetings were held with the headteacher, staff, RE subject leader, Parish Priest, parents and pupils. A pre-arranged telephone conversation was held with the Chair of Governors.

A wide range of school RE documentation was scrutinised including policy documents, RE subject leader's planning, assessment, monitoring and evaluation records. The school's moderated RE portfolio and RE audit/budget expenditure was also scrutinised. RE displays and pupil workbooks were also sampled across all key stages.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Dalton Huddersfield, is an average sized Voluntary Aided Primary School belonging to the family of schools of the Catholic Diocese of Leeds.

Currently there are 279 pupils on roll including 26 part time nursery children. The school currently has a published admission number of 50 and gives priority to the baptised Catholic children of families of the recently founded parish of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, which incorporates the twin parishes of St. Joseph's Dalton and English Martyr's Dalton including their associated mass centres in Meltham and Shepley. Currently 196 Catholic pupils are on roll.

The majority of pupils who attend St. Joseph's are of white British heritage. A growing number of pupils are drawn from minority ethnic backgrounds. Currently pupils are arranged into 10 classes taught by 9 full time and 2 part time teachers (10 full time equivalent staff). 7 teachers are Catholic and 7 teachers hold the Catholic Certificate of Religious Studies (CCRS) or equivalent. 10 FTE teachers teach Religious Education (RE).

The percentage of pupils identified with special educational needs and/disabilities is below average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is average.

Since the last Section 48 Inspection (2007), the school has undergone a significant number of staffing changes, particularly at the senior leadership level. Following the retirement of the school's long serving headteacher, the school's long serving deputy headteacher was appointed acting head for a year prior to her retirement. The acting deputy head is in the second year of a secondment from another diocesan primary school. The current permanent headteacher has only been in post since September 2011. The current RE subject leader is due to retire in December 2011 and the school is currently recruiting for a suitable replacement. The governing body has a mixture of new and long serving members.

The Chair of Governors has been in post for just over a year. At the time of the RE inspection, the Parish Priest was about to leave the parish to take up a new appointment within the diocese and the school was awaiting the arrival of the newly appointed Parish Priest. The school has achieved the 'Sport Active' and 'Healthy School' Awards.

INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection Grades: 1 is Outstanding, 2 is Good, 3 is Satisfactory, 4 is Inadequate

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

2

This is a summative judgement based on the 2 judgements below: Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils, provision for Catholic education (includes effectiveness of leaders and managers) and capacity for sustained improvement.

OUTCOMES FOR PUPILS, PROVISION FOR CATHOLIC EDUCATION

2

CAPACITY FOR SUSTAINED IMPROVEMENT

2

Main findings

St. Joseph's School, Huddersfield provides a good standard of Catholic education with no less than satisfactory or inadequate aspects. Outcomes for pupils, the provision for Catholic education and the school's capacity for sustained improvement are all good.

Currently the school is in a period of transition following a number of staffing changes at both the senior leadership and management levels.

The recently appointed headteacher and Chair of Governors clearly demonstrate a very deep commitment to the Church's mission in education. Together with the conscientious commitment of all staff, governors and the parish chaplaincy provision, RE and the Catholic life of the school will continue to be further enhanced under their effective leadership.

Senior leadership of the school has already undertaken an initial self evaluation of standards in RE and the Catholic life of the school. This inspection found the results of the self evaluation to be very accurate. Governors and senior leaders now recognise the school's strengths and areas for further development.

A number of the areas identified for development in the previous S48 inspection are still on going and have now been subsumed into the newly reformulated School Improvement Plan (SIP) to bring about a 'step change' in the culture of classroom monitoring and evaluation in RE/Catholic life of the school.

Morale is good at St. Joseph's. Staff, pupils, parents/parishioners, parish clergy and governors have a strong belief in the school's continued success. They are justifiably proud of the good reputation the school currently enjoys in the local community.

WHAT THE SCHOOL NEEDS TO DO TO IMPROVE FUTURE

In order to further improve the provision of Catholic education and to further develop the Catholic life of the school the leadership team should:

- actively involve the governors, staff, pupils and parents/parishioners in the review of the school's Mission Statement. This will assist all associated with the school to place Christ, and the teachings of the Catholic Church, at the very centre of all that they are and of all that they seek to do at the school. Further, the leadership team should seek to harness the expertise of staff to identify practical ways in which the resulting Mission Statement can be mediated to pupils in child friendly language to encourage pupils and staff to find ways in which they can contribute to bringing the Mission Statement to life in their every-day classroom practices;
- given the changing staff profile at the school, when the permanent RE subject leader is appointed s/he should consider making available an updated staff RE handbook to support and practically assist newly qualified staff and those new to the school, by providing exemplars of the school's expectations in the planning, delivery, monitoring assessment, marking, recording, evaluation and annual reporting of RE and the Catholic life of the school. The staff handbook should also signpost staff towards additional helpful external RE resources (e.g. Diocese of Leeds website) in order to deepen the RE subject knowledge of staff and further assist their everyday classroom practice;
- in any future planned reordering/remodelling to the school building, consideration should be given to the provision of a designated 'Prayer Room' to enable appropriate high quality RE provision to be more easily accessed by pupils, staff and parents and to help facilitate the deepening of the spiritual development of the Catholic life of the school;
- in order to establish a more effective functioning governing body, the committee structure should be re configured to enable the governing body to more effectively fulfil its strategic role in setting aims and objectives for the school and establishing policies and targets designed to achieve those objectives. In this way school RE standards and pupil RE performance can be more effectively monitored, evaluated and reviewed, enabling the governing body to more easily act as 'critical friend' offering both appropriate challenge and support to the headteacher/senior leadership team;
- ensure that appropriate RE budget provision is maintained to promote the on going professional development and training of the staff and governors in RE/ the Catholic life of the school in line with the agreed priorities made explicit within the School Improvement Plan (SIP);
- In any planned future review of the school's RE curriculum, out of school visits and visitors into school should be introduced in to the teaching of other faiths to extend pupils knowledge, understanding and respect of the beliefs and practices of members of other faith based communities-particularly those within the local neighbourhood which the school serves. Additional resource provision should be drawn upon from the RE department of the high school pyramid to which the school belongs.

PUPILS

How good outcomes are for pupils, taking particular account of variations between different groups.

2

For the majority of pupils at St. Joseph's learning and progress in RE/the Catholic life of the school is good across all three key stages, particularly in view of the generally low baseline levels of RE knowledge and practice that many pupils arrive with when they join the school. Work scrutiny of samples of RE work/books and direct observations of RE lessons and Collective Worship showed appropriate progression both within and between all key stages. Attainment in RE is broadly in line with national expectations and exceeds standards in literacy at the end of KS1. Pupils say that they enjoy RE and appreciate the provision of the new, more attractively produced, RE textbooks linked to the revised RE Programme 'The Way the Truth and the Life'.

Pupils with particular learning needs make good progress in RE as a result of good teacher planning, and support they receive from experienced teaching assistants.

A strength of the school is the exemplary pupil behaviour evidenced in class during RE and Collective Worship. Pupils are polite, courteous and respectful to each other and to the other adults in the classroom. Pupils are keen to do well, generally apply themselves diligently in RE lessons and work at an appropriate pace. Pupils generally seek to produce their best work and are enthusiastic to actively contribute to their own and others learning. This is especially true where the teacher's planning includes appropriate differentiation. Pupils are taught to respect and care for their own and each other's property. Pupils show interest, care and respect for religious artefacts on display in their classrooms and elsewhere throughout the school. Pupils are proud of their school. One pupil commented, "I love being at St. Joseph's. It's fun. I have lots of friends here and the teachers help you if you get stuck with your work."

An innovative and topical pupil rewards display in the main school hall features the five Olympic rings where each colour coded Olympic ring signifies a particular attribute for which the pupil named alongside it was publicly recognised in a whole school rewards assembly.

Pupils willingly and generously respond to the needs of others through organising and contributing to various charitable fund raising events. Over the past year, the school has supported CAFOD, Catholic Care, ('The Good Shepherd Fund'), Poppy Appeal, Christmas Shoebox Appeal and The Forget me not Trust. Staff also took part in a sponsored 'midnight walk' in support of Kirkwood Hospice.

St. Joseph's offers pupils and parents a wide range of opportunities for participation in Collective Worship. Seasonal liturgical celebrations, monthly Masses in the adjoining parish church, individual class/key stage/whole school special assemblies and First Sacrament Celebrations with the wider parish. Last year a number of pupils participated in the Pope's visit to Britain by singing in the choir.

Pupils have a good level of understanding of the importance of key religious celebrations in school throughout the Church's liturgical year. Pupils act with reverence during Collective Worship. Themes are linked appropriately to key stage RE programmes of study. Pupils are at ease praying with others. They know community prayers and hymns very well and are keen to

participate. No one acts in a manner contrary to their beliefs and all show respect for each other.

The headteacher is actively exploring a curriculum initiative to promote a higher profile for music and singing in RE and Catholic life of the school. Undoubtedly the formation of a school choir and the establishment of an instrumental music liturgy group to support whole school and key stage seasonal liturgies will greatly enhance the quality of pupil participation in acts of Collective Worship. Pupils say they would welcome the opportunity to play their musical instruments in the parish church.

Each class at St. Joseph’s is named after a particular saint (e.g. St. Ninian, St. Bernadette) but when questioned, although all pupils could say which saint their particular class were named after, none of the pupils were able to recall any factual information about their class saint. However, when questioned about the school’s patron saint (St. Joseph), all pupils could contribute a high level of information – including clarification that St. Joseph was the step father of Jesus and that Mary was not married to Joseph at the time of the Annunciation.

These are the grades for pupils’ outcomes

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education.	2
Taking into account:	
• the quality of pupils’ learning and their progress	2
• the quality of learning for pupils with particular learning needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
• pupils’ attainment in Religious Education	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life of the school.	2
How well pupils respond to and participate in the school’s Collective Worship.	2

PROVISION

How effective the provision is for Catholic education.

2

The provision for Catholic education at St. Joseph’s School is good. Teaching of RE and the Catholic Life of the school overall is good. No unsatisfactory or inadequate teaching of RE was evidenced during the inspection. RE teaching was at its most effective where lessons were well planned and appropriately differentiated and well resourced, to meet the needs of all the learners. Similarly, where pupils are actively encouraged to take responsibility for inputting aspects of the lesson, the learning process came alive. Lesson observations suggest that pupils do rise to the challenge of assuming greater responsibility for planning and leading Collective Worship in their own classroom where they are given support, guidance and good role models to follow offered by their class teachers. Particularly effective use of ‘talk partners’ was witnessed in some of the more effective RE lessons.

A pleasing aspect of the CW evidenced over all key stages, was inclusion by the leader of a brief moment of silence to enable pupils and staff to reflect and pray in private.

A Foundation Key Stage (FKS) pupil completing a painting on the RE Theme 'God's World' was able to explain that the red and yellow patches on her picture, "Are the flowers that God made for our world". Another pupil added, "Yes! He made all the animals as well." And another pupil said, "And us!"

In another FKS class, a pupil was rewarded for completing a good piece of work by being given a plastic brick to place in the model house that the class was building (linked to the RE theme 'Homes and Families'). At the same time, the teacher also invited the child to say a little prayer for a member of the child's own family who shares their home with them.

In another FKS class, the children knew and could say their class prayer:

"Dear God we thank you for all the people you have made to look after us. God loves each one of us. Each one of us is special"

A notable feature of FKS was the positive contribution that experienced support staff, students on placements from a local sixth form college and parent volunteers make to the overall success of the children's learning. Two students on placement said how much they looked forward to coming to the school and that the experience had prompted them to actively consider working in an early years setting in their future career.

In a KS1 class working on the theme: 'God's Great Plan' 'driver words' and 'talk partners' were witnessed being skilfully employed to support and encourage pupils to write 'rainbow promises'.

In another KS1 class studying the theme 'Mary the Mother of God', a pupil knew that the word 'angel' means 'a messenger from God'. Another pupil knew that, "It was the Angel Gabriel who brought the special message to Mary that she had been chosen to be the mother of Jesus."

Pupils actively engaged with their 'talk partner' in discussions about how Mary might have been feeling and whether she could have said, "No," to the angel. The lesson concluded in a simple act of Collective Worship with the pupils singing 'Love is something if you give it away' encouraged pupils to reflect on the fact that despite Mary being frightened she still placed all her trust in God because she knew that God created her and loved her.

Another KS1 class, studying the theme 'Mysteries', listened to the poem 'What Happens in Heaven?' and then went on to complete very creative 'I wonder...' thought-bubbles and additional verses to the poem.

Through internet resources shown on the Interactive Whiteboard (IWB) a lower KS2 class examined paintings by famous artists on the theme of 'The Annunciation' identifying similarities and differences in the various paintings. The pupils were able to notice and comment upon even the very smallest details because the pictures were enlarged so well by use of the IWB. Through skilful teacher led discussion, pupils recognised that some questions are very difficult to answer and that we should all try to follow Mary's example by placing our trust in God.

An Upper KS2 class studying the theme 'Trust in God' were set a number of moral and ethical dilemmas to discuss with their 'talk partner'. Pupils were assigned opposing views to defend. The class teacher posed the dilemma, 'I don't trust God anymore because he has let my grandmother die!' The teacher then asked the pupils to reverse the roles with their 'talk partner'. The lesson was supported by the class RE wall display 'Trust in God' which encouraged pupils to make links to show how feelings and beliefs about trust affect how we each behave in school and at home.

An upper KS2 lesson on the 10 Commandments commenced with a thoughtful Collective Worship providing pupils with an opportunity for quiet reflection on a brief gospel reading (read very ably by a pupil) leading into a series of pupil intercessions for class prayers for family members. The lesson went on to explore what would happen if the 10 Commandments were to be re written with differing rules. At the conclusion of the class discussions one pupil commented, "We can't be true friends of God if we are forever trying to change God's rules instead of living up to them!"

In another upper KS2 class, studying the theme 'Justice', the teacher called the class to order and informed the pupils that she had been formally asked by the headteacher to announce that with immediate effect the playing of football at break/lunchtimes was banned until further notice. Similarly pupils were informed that using any of the outdoor play equipment was also banned until further notice. There was stunned silence in the classroom until one boy called out, "That's not fair Miss. Why is he doing all this?"

The teacher then went on to introduce the lesson by saying that her opening announcement was in fact untrue. She then invited the pupils to discuss with their 'talk partner' how they had felt when they heard that news. The lesson concluded successfully by utilising pupil led 'freeze frame' drama to explain the links between behaviour in school and feelings and beliefs about what constitutes justice and fair play. The pupils were assisted further in this task by the classroom RE wall display 'God calls us to speak out against injustice.'

RE is treated as a core curriculum subject at St. Joseph's. The time allocation for the teaching of RE adequately fulfils diocesan guidelines. The governing body are compliant in providing an Education for Personal Relationships (EPR) programme 'In the Beginning.' It is intended to review this provision in line with diocesan developments in this area. Parents appreciate being consulted over such materials so that they can support their children at home.

The RE budget is given 'core' allocation. For the last two financial years the RE budget has been in the region of £1500 and £1200 respectively. This is slightly higher than for other core curriculum areas over the same period and in the case of RE includes purchase of additional RE resources for classroom RE focal areas and extra textbooks for the RE scheme. Aspects of RE staff training and development are also included in these costs.

Parents are most supportive of the school and comment favourable about the schools caring family ethos. One parent commented that on a recent shopping trip to her local supermarket, her child was singing 'Our God is a great big God' at the top of her voice as they pushed their shopping trolley around!

Parents find the parish clergy very approachable. The home school association raised over £2000 at a school fair.

Parents and pupils would welcome the opportunity to broaden their knowledge of the customs, traditions and practices of other local faith communities.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching in Religious Education.	2
The use of assessment to support learning in Religious Education.	2
The extent to which the Religious Education curriculum meets pupils' needs.	2
The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school.	2

LEADERS AND MANAGERS

How effective leaders and managers are in developing the Catholic life of the School.

2

The leadership and management of the Catholic life of St. Joseph's School is good with satisfactory aspects. Despite the school being in a period of transition, having new members of both the governing body (including the Chair of Governors) and teaching staff who have only served for a relatively short length of time, the governing body have been successful in appointing a very experienced headteacher to lead the school.

The extent to which leaders and managers are already developing the Catholic life of St. Joseph's School is good. In particular, the relatively new Chair of Governors and the very recently appointed headteacher are both very actively committed to fulfilling the Church's mission of placing Christ and the teaching of the Catholic Church at the very centre of all that St. Joseph's seeks to achieve.

A 'step change' in the culture of monitoring and evaluating RE and the Catholic life of the school has already been introduced. A very accurate self evaluation form (SEF48) has already been produced of the standards in RE and the Catholic life of the school, ensuring that the senior leadership and management team have an up to date analysis of the school's strengths and areas for further development in RE. The School Improvement Plan incorporates those aspects of RE and the Catholic life of the school which have already been identified for targeted improvement.

The school has been ably served by a soon to retire RE subject leader who has regularly attended diocesan RE co-ordinators training and development meetings to ensure that the school has been kept informed of new developments in the promotion of RE and the Catholic life of the school. A joint RE work scrutiny has been conducted with the headteacher and the RE subject leader, to promote consistency in the school's approach to monitoring and evaluation of RE. Pending a suitable replacement being appointed, the headteacher has determined that he will take over the role of RE co-ordinator next term to ensure that appropriate priority continues to be given to RE and the Catholic life of the school.

Although the school does have a Mission Statement, it is some years since it has been reviewed. The new headteacher has correctly determined that in order to effect a successful transition period, a full review is now necessary. To this end, a full governor, staff, parish clergy training day has already been identified and will take place at Hinsley Hall in January 2012, solely for this important purpose. Following this the leadership team plan to work closely with the expertise that exists within the school, to work with the pupils in class to produce 'child friendly', language and age appropriate copies of the school Mission Statement which can be displayed in the RE focal area of each classroom and public areas of the school. Similarly it is planned to incorporate a 'strap line' from the Mission Statement into all school policy documentation and possibly onto all computer screen savers across the school. Parents are particularly appreciative of the way in which the new headteacher is already harnessing modern means of communication such as text messages to alert parents to school events. Parish newsletters are also placed on the school website.

The reconfiguration of the parish boundaries has meant that St. Joseph's School now serves a far wider catchment area. The leadership and management of the school have correctly identified the importance of developing stronger home, school, and parish links to further

enhance, promote and celebrate the school's Catholic identity throughout the wider parish community. Similarly St. Joseph's is also developing increasingly productive links with All Saint's Catholic High School. St. Joseph's is also an active member of its local Catholic school partnership and is also forming cultural and curriculum links with other local schools and various other external providers.

Recently pupils visited a 'Bible Times' exhibition within the parish community and the local Methodist minister was invited into the school to participate in a school assembly.

Pupils help to organise, attend and actively participate in monthly parish Masses held in the parish church adjacent to the school. Pupils, parents and parishioners comment very favourably on how much they enjoy and look forward to these occasions. Younger pupils also say how much they appreciate the fact that older pupils help and support them in church. Older pupils are looking forward to helping the headteacher and staff to implement further improvements at St. Joseph's.

These are the grades for leadership and management

How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic life of the school and plan and implement improvement to outcomes for pupils.	2
How well leaders and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education and plan and implement improvement to outcomes for pupils.	2
The extent to which the governing body provides effective challenge and support for the Catholic dimension of the school so areas needing development are tackled decisively and statutory and canonical responsibilities met.	3
How well leaders and managers develop partnerships with other providers, organisations and services in order to promote Catholic learning and pupil well-being.	2
How effectively leaders and managers promote Community Cohesion.	3