

**DENOMINATIONAL INSPECTION  
REPORT (Section 48)**

on

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

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**School:** St Catherine's Catholic Primary School

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**School URN:** 112305

**Headteacher:** Mrs Angela Hill

**Chair of Governors:** Mr Denis Smith

**Section 48 Inspector:** Mr Chris Wilkins

**Date of Inspection:** 7<sup>th</sup> March 2013

The inspection report is produced for the Rt. Reverend Michael Campbell O.S.A., the Bishop of Lancaster (c.f. Code Canon Law, 804, 806), and for the Governing Body of the school (Education Act 2005, Section 48). The inspection reviews, evaluates and plans further improvements in the school's witness to the Catholic faith and Curriculum Religious Education. This process begins with the school's own self-evaluation.

The inspection schedule follows criteria set by the National Board of Advisers and Inspectors.

## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

This is a smaller than average size Catholic primary school serving the parish of St Catherine, Penrith. 54% of pupils are baptised Catholics and 37% are from other Christian denominations. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is considerably lower than the national average. An above average proportion of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. Most Year Six pupils move on to Ullswater Community College and Queen Elizabeth Grammar School.

## **FACTUAL INFORMATION**

### **Pupil Catchment:**

Number of pupils on roll:	112
Planned Admission Number of Pupils:	20
Percentage of pupils baptised RC:	54%
Percentage of pupils from other Christian denominations:	37%
Percentage of pupils from other faith backgrounds:	2%
Percentage of pupils with no religious affiliation:	8%
Percentage of pupils from ethnic groups:	15%
Percentage of pupils with special needs:	15%

### **Staffing**

Full-time teachers:	5
Part-time teachers:	1
Percentage of Catholic teachers:	72%
Percentage of teachers with CCRS:	55%

### **Percentage of learning time given to RE:**

FS	10%	Yr 4	10%
Yr 1	10%	Yr 5	10%
Yr 2	10%	Yr 6	10%
Yr 3	10%		

### **Parish served by the school:**

St Catherine's Penrith

## **Overall Effectiveness**

<b>1</b>
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## **Capacity for sustained improvement**

<b>1</b>
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## **MAIN FINDINGS**

St Catherine's has made rapid and sustained progress and is outstanding in the majority of its work. This is because of the dedication of the staff to the school, the outstanding leadership shown by the head teacher, assistant head and the Governing Body, and the way in which pupils respond to the excellent example they are set. The head teacher leads the school well, she has worked incredibly hard to ensure the relatively new staff work effectively together as a team and collectively drive the school forward. Governors work closely with the head teacher and are knowledgeable about the progress and needs of the school in Religious Education. Staff are incredibly supportive of each other and work very well as a team.

St Catherine's is an inclusive school, where work is planned to meet the needs of all pupils. This emphasis on ensuring teaching meets the needs of all pupils is a major factor in the high standards reached by pupils. Parents are supportive of the school and are very positive about the work that the school does. Pupils are eager to learn, speak highly of their school and talk enthusiastically about the way in which they are taught about the Catholic faith. The school has addressed all the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. The provision for Catholic education is excellent.

### **The School's capacity for sustained improvement**

The school has excellent capacity for sustained improvement. Governors have a real understanding of the work of the school and what it does well, and what it needs to do to improve. The head teacher has successfully improved teaching and learning through successful training of a dedicated staff. Parents are clear that their children are being well taught and that they are being kept well informed about their progress. The issues identified at the last inspection have been addressed. Assessment procedures are robust and inform planning well and standards have improved. The school is continuing to provide opportunities for more able pupils.

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

- Further enhance children's spiritual development by bringing families and the parish community closer together.
- Continue to work to improve the outcomes for more able pupils in achieving Level 3 at Key Stage 1 and Level 5 at Key Stage 2.

## **PUPILS**

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

<b>2</b>
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Outcomes for pupils at St Catherine's are good and are improving rapidly. This is due to a structured approach to teaching with high quality and challenging questioning techniques evident across the school. A wide range of approaches enable pupils to learn in what they describe as "fun and interesting ways". Use of a whole school model to obtain success in lessons accelerates pupils' learning and enables the pupils to assess their own progress. This was especially evident in a lesson observed in Year 5/6 where questioning by the teacher was very good and challenging to pupils, who are given many opportunities to experience and extend their faith and grow in their knowledge of the faith through this. Another good example was in a Year 1/2 lesson where pupils were able to explore the meaning of Lent in their lives. The Catholic Life of the school is evident in all aspects of the school's work.

When pupils were discussing their work they demonstrated a good level of knowledge and are able to articulate how they know they are developing their understanding. It is clear that pupils enjoy RE and look forward to their RE lessons. They recall in detail their curriculum days focused around Hanukah, Diwali and Easter.

The quality and progress of learning for pupils with particular learning needs and/or disabilities is outstanding. This is because of the well thought-out use of additional adult support in RE lessons to provide opportunities to meet individual needs. These sessions are appropriate to the variety of needs identified and very well delivered. All groups of learners make good progress and enjoy their learning in RE. From a starting point below national expectations on entry, as identified by rigorous and detailed assessment, the pupils make good progress in RE during Foundation Stage and enter Key Stages 1 marginally below expected levels. Pupils' progress in RE through Key Stages 1 and 2 is very good resulting in pupils leaving Year 6 attaining broadly in line with expectations. The school works to ensure that more able pupils of all ages achieve higher levels of attainment and further work is required in this area. The pupils at St Catherine's take ownership of their school and work

to support each other in enjoying and learning from the opportunities that the school provides for them to grow as individuals and to extend their horizons. They are proud of their school and are able to talk about the ways in which they help others through their work, for instance, how they became a Fair Trade School and how they raised money to help build the new parish community centre.

Pupils participate fully in assemblies and class worship which are well structured to provide excellent opportunities for group and individual prayer. For example, in a Foundation Stage act of Collective Worship, children reflected clearly on their responsibilities to each other as children of God and the importance of forgiveness. In a Year 3/4 assembly, pupils were attentive, and produced their own detailed personal prayers which were considerate and reflective. Pupils across the school clearly enjoy the visual, tactile and deeply spiritual Collective Worship opportunities and participate fully and enthusiastically in them. Pupils are fully involved in the planning and preparation of Collective Worship and enjoy the responsibility.

## **LEADERS AND MANAGERS**

### **How effective leaders and managers are in developing the Catholic Life of the School**

<b>1</b>
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The outstanding leadership of the school at all levels is rooted in the desire to provide excellent opportunities for all pupils regardless of their faith, background or ability. This aim is shared by all members of the school community. A notable strength of the school is the way in which leaders and managers provide clear direction and strong leadership, especially in developing the strengths and talents of the staff to help to provide leaders of the future. The head teacher ensures that the Catholic Life of the school is central to all aspects of school development, and the governors evaluate the success of this through focused and careful scrutiny. They identify priorities for school development and set appropriate targets for improvement, for example, they have identified the need to support pupil's spiritual development by working to bring families and the parish closer together.

RE has a high priority in the school and this is reflected in its prominence in the school improvement plan, where clearly focused actions and success criteria ensure that standards are raised. The extremely detailed tracking of individual pupils and groups means that the school has a clear understanding of the progress made by pupils, cohorts and groups of learners. Resources for RE are plentiful and varied; they including some commissioned artifacts, which support teaching and learning well.

The involved and dedicated governing body gives significant and wide ranging challenge and support to the school and they fully meet their statutory and canonical responsibilities. They are a visible and supportive presence within school and know the work of the school well. They continue to provide outstanding direction to the school through careful appointments and well thought-out decisions about staffing numbers, for example altering the teaching commitment of the head teacher in order to increase her capacity to lead, both in school and in her role as a Local Leader of Diocesan Education. They are clearly knowledgeable about outcomes for pupils.

Leaders and managers have established strong links locally and in the wider world to the benefit of the pupils attending St Catherine's. The school works closely with the Parish Priest to ensure that opportunities are not missed for pupils to visit church and to develop a closer relationship with the parish. A really good example of this is the Sacramental Preparation programme which involves school, parish and parents working with pupils in the teaching of the faith. Other work undertaken by the school provides good partnerships which benefit pupils. Numerous trips and visitors widen the pupil's perspective of life and this helps them to develop a better understanding and empathy for others.

The work that the school has undertaken to promote Community Cohesion is outstanding. The children are supported in their learning by a varied range of experiences ranging from projects exploring the lives of Gypsy, Roma and Travelling communities, to joint performances with other schools and work on local community engagement. The school involves the children in a wide range of fundraising projects building educational opportunities into each one. Examples of this are the support the school gives to the World Gift project and fundraising for Eden Young Carers. The school ensures that pupils have opportunities to work with people from other cultures and faiths through their links with a school in Palestine.

## **PROVISION**

### **How effective the provision is for Catholic education**

<b>1</b>
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The teaching of RE at St Catherine's is outstanding because of the way in which the staff ensure the needs of all pupils are met. Lessons are well-planned, and delivered and engage pupils in their learning in interesting and exciting ways. The positive way in which children talk about their teachers and the way they are taught is a strong feature of this school. High quality questioning and a consistent a whole school approach to teaching means that staff challenge pupils to develop their thinking. Adults providing support in lessons work equally well with the teacher or independently with groups of learners, and this allows teachers to plan creative and targeted lessons.

Assessment is firmly embedded in the teaching and is closely monitored across the school. The RE curriculum planning is detailed across the school ensuring that learning is suitable for the developmental needs of pupils of different ages. Feedback and marking across the school is of a high standard with excellent pupil engagement and response leading to enhanced learning. The pupils are able to identify what they are learning in their lessons and how they are building on their previous knowledge and experiences.

The RE Curriculum is outstanding because it is based on a whole school approach to meet the needs of all pupils. The focus of the curriculum is the development of spiritual growth of all pupils through knowledge about the Catholic faith and its teachings. The success of this work is evident in the caring attitudes, excellent behaviour and confidence of all pupils at the school.

Provision for Collective Worship is outstanding. Assemblies and liturgies are well-planned and use a wide range of innovative approaches to really draw pupils into prayer. Examples of this are use of school recorded video clips in Foundation Stage Collective Worship and multi-sensory aspects of Key Stage 2 worship. The attention and detail to Collective Worship shown by all members of staff enhances the prayer life of pupils.

St Catherine's Catholic Primary School is a community of faith where every member of that community is working together with a shared Christ centred purpose and vision.

# SUMMARY OF INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

**Key for inspection grades:**

Grade 1 **Outstanding**      Grade 2 **Good**      Grade 3 **Satisfactory**      Grade 4 **Unsatisfactory**

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The school's capacity for sustained improvement</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>PUPILS How good outcomes are for pupils, taking particular account of variations between different groups</b>	<b>2</b>
• how well do pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education?	1
❖ 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	1
❖ pupils' attainment in RE	2
• to what extent do pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school?	1
• how well do pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship?	1
<b>LEADERS AND MANAGERS How effective are leaders and managers in developing the Catholic Life of the School?</b>	<b>1</b>
• how well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school and plan improvement to outcomes for pupils?	1
• how well leaders and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for RE and plan for improvement to outcomes for pupils?	1
• the extent to which the governing body provides effective challenge and support for the Catholic dimension of the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory and canonical responsibilities met?	1
• how well leaders and managers develop partnerships with other providers, organisations and services in order to promote Catholic learning and well being?	2
• how effectively leaders and managers promote Community Cohesion?	1
<b>PROVISION How effective is the provision for Catholic Education?</b>	<b>1</b>
• the quality of teaching and purposeful learning in ?	1
• the effectiveness of assessment and academic guidance in Religious Education?	1
• the extent to which Religious Education curriculum meets pupils' needs?	1
• the quality of Collective Worship provided by the school?	1