

**DENOMINATIONAL INSPECTION
REPORT (Section 48)**

on

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

School: Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School

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School URN: 112363

Headteacher: Mrs Sandra White

Chair of Governors: Fr Bernard Woods

Section 48 Inspector: Mrs Adrienne Delaney

Date of Inspection: 11th March 2011

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

Sacred Heart is an average sized Catholic Primary School situated near to the town centre of Barrow-in-Furness. It serves an area where unemployment, income deprivation and health deprivation rank in the top 5% nationally.

198 pupils are on roll, 35% of which are eligible for free school meals, which is well above the national average. There is a higher than average number of pupils with Special Educational Needs. Attendance figures are below the national average. The mobility of pupils is high with 16% of entrants arriving after the foundation stage. Attainment on entry to FS is well below age related expectations. The school has a good range of extra curricular activities and is in receipt of a number of awards.

FACTUAL INFORMATION

Pupil Catchment:

Number of pupils on roll:	199
Planned Admission Number of Pupils:	30
Percentage of pupils baptised Catholics	41%
Percentage of pupils from other Christian denominations:	27%
Percentage of pupils from other faith backgrounds:	1%
Percentage of pupils with no religious affiliation:	31%
Percentage of pupils from ethnic groups:	10%
Percentage of pupils with special needs:	31%

Staffing

Full-time teachers:	7
Part-time teachers:	3
Percentage of Catholic teachers:	66%
Percentage of teachers with CCRS:	30%

Percentage of learning time given to RE:

R	9.2%	Yr 4	11.3%
Yr 1	9.2%	Yr 5	10.6%
Yr 2	9.2%	Yr 6	10.6%
Yr 3	11.3%		

Parishes served by the school:

1.	Sacred Heart	71
2.	St Mary of Furness	5
3.	Our Lady of the Rosary, Dalton-in-Furness	3
4.	Holy Family	2
5.	St Pius X	1

The majority of Catholic pupils come from Sacred Heart parish, with several coming from the other surrounding parishes.

Overall Effectiveness

1

Capacity for sustained improvement

1

MAIN FINDINGS

Sacred Heart is an outstanding Catholic school. There is a shared and ambitious vision that promotes high expectation for all its members. It is a community where all are welcomed, valued and affirmed. The Catholic mission of the school underpins all of school life and leaders and managers are committed to continuous improvement. All priorities for improvement since the last inspection have been fully addressed. Rigorous self-evaluation enables the school to celebrate its strengths and address areas where improvement is needed. Excellent relationships, at all levels, and good communication are key strengths of the school.

Pupils are happy to attend Sacred Heart and their attitude to learning is good. They are well supported in their learning by the additional adults in school who help ensure that their progress is good. Although attainment is just below expectation the progress made by pupils, from below average starting points, is very good. This reflects the school's drive to improve standards in Religious Education which is at the heart of the school development plan. Pupils benefit from the many opportunities to contribute to the Catholic life of the school that are offered to them. They participate in and lead prayer and liturgical celebrations well. They also have good skills in preparing prayer and Collective Worship. The promotion of the pupils' spiritual and moral development is outstanding.

The provision for Catholic education is outstanding. Teaching overall is very good. Planning is focussed and detailed, enabling good learning and achievement. Assessment, monitoring and tracking are thorough so that pupils' learning journey is consistently under review: this ensures that progress is good. The quality of Collective Worship is outstanding with pupils responding and participating well. They behave with due respect and reverence and demonstrate a growing understanding of their role in leading and planning acts of worship. The promotion of pupils' spiritual and moral development is outstanding.

The headteacher, assisted by her dedicated Religious Education subject leader, has a very clear vision of Religious Education and the Catholic life of the school. Their overview is clear and they are committed to ensuring that improvements are made by using rigorous self-evaluation. Good professional development ensures that the needs of all the staff are met. It is evident that members of staff share the school's vision in delivering good teaching and learning in Religious Education and in promoting the Catholic life of the school. The leaders and staff support each other in this

aim. The chair of governors knows the strengths of Sacred Heart School and understands the areas for improvement and the challenges it faces. The governing body is active in its monitoring role. The school is outstanding in the many partnerships that it has made with outside agencies, services and providers ensuring wellbeing and smooth transitions for its pupils. Leaders and managers actively seek to ensure that community cohesion is good and provide pupils with a variety of opportunities to share dialogue with people whose backgrounds may be different from their own.

What the school needs to do to improve further

- **To continue to raise standards in Religious Education by:**
 - Furthering opportunities for pupils to celebrate cultural diversity and to understand the faith and cultural backgrounds of other communities.
 - Ensuring that there is a greater consistency across the school in providing more appropriate tasks enable pupils to reach higher levels of attainment.
 - Ensuring a consistent approach to quality marking and feedback so that pupils know how to improve.

PUPILS

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

1

Pupils at Sacred Heart enter school at well below average starting points. However, all pupils make very good progress in Religious Education throughout the Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Pupils are eager to achieve and they apply themselves well during lessons due to very good teaching and high expectations. They have a very well developed sense of religious literacy and their knowledge and skills are in line with expectations. By seeking views and listening to the pupil voice, leaders seek to ensure that they know what the pupils enjoy. This has led to pupils taking action in considering what they can do themselves to help their wider Catholic community in, for example, celebrating the Eucharist more fully. Pupils can discuss their faith with confidence and demonstrate a mature spirituality.

Pupils make an outstanding contribution to the Catholic life of the school and they, in turn, derive much benefit from it. Pupils' attitudes to RE are generally positive, as indicated by their responses to questionnaires about RE and Collective Worship. They are happy to participate in activities and to take on responsibilities within the classroom and also in the wider

community. Older pupils speak about their responsibility to look after the younger pupils and they can also discuss the importance of caring for others in the local and global community. Pupils who have Special Educational Needs, and those who join the school at dates later than the Foundation Stage, make good progress, as do pupils new to England and those for whom English is an additional language. Effectively deployed support staff contribute to this progress. Pupils have a developing understanding of their own spiritual and religious beliefs and those of people from faith backgrounds different from their own. Their sense of justice, consideration and kindness to others is apparent in the very positive relationships that are demonstrated within the whole community of Sacred Heart School. One pupil responded to a class discussion by talking about "being a part of the kingdom with kingdom values, such as faith and justice."

Pupils' response to Collective Worship is very good, as is their participation in it. They are eager to take an active part in prayer, liturgies and acts of worship. Older pupils demonstrate well developed skills in planning and preparing liturgies. They have an excellent understanding of seasons and feasts and the older pupils can use scripture, ICT, artefacts, hymns, drama and music to enhance acts of worship. Staff encourage and model good acts of worship in class. Collective Worship contributes positively to the spiritual and moral development of the pupils at Sacred Heart. The pupils' spiritual development is outstanding.

LEADERS AND MANAGERS

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

1

The school's leaders and managers promote the Catholic life of the school very well. The Catholic ethos underpins all aspects of school life and the Catholic mission of the school is lived out by the whole community. The headteacher demonstrates great commitment and is an inspiration to the school community. Rigorous self evaluation and thorough analysis and monitoring result in well targeted planning. Actions are taken that lead to improvement in all aspects of the Catholic life of the school. Leaders and managers work very closely with the parish priest whom the pupils see as a friend of the school. Staff training and induction are given high priority so that all members of staff understand the vision and ethos of the school and thereby contribute to its success. Pupils also show understanding of their school's mission and ethos and actively support it.

Monitoring and evaluation of the provision of Religious Education is good. The headteacher and the Religious Education subject leader effectively ensure that monitoring, assessment and tracking systems are in place and that outcomes for pupils are good in terms of their teaching and learning,

and their progress. The Religious Education subject leader supports the staff who seek her assistance in all matters of Religious Education. She keeps them well informed and inspires high expectations that impact on continuous improvement.

The work of the governors is outstanding. Governors effectively challenge and support the Catholic life of the school. They demonstrate understanding of the identified areas for development. The RE governor has a very thorough understanding of school improvement. Governors have accessed appropriate training and are well informed in matters relating to Religious Education and the Catholic life of the school. They have been actively involved in drawing up the School Development Plan and have contributed to sections related to Religious Education. Governors discharge their statutory and canonical duties confidently and competently and are actively involved in all aspects of school life. They share positive relationships with staff, parents and pupils. The parish priest, who is also the Chair of Governors, spends one full day a week in school.

The high level of commitment and dedication of the headteacher ensures that there are many partnerships with providers, services and organisations. She actively seeks out ways that will enhance pupils' Catholic learning and that will enable them to develop and grow in their understanding of their own spirituality. Partnerships with other schools, with the parish and local communities result in a keen awareness of the needs of others.

Leaders and managers are committed to the promotion of community cohesion. Well informed governors have identified areas on which to work in order to maintain this vision. The school is a community that has a clear, shared vision and that results in a strong sense of belonging. Pupils learn and play cooperatively and can be seen actively supporting each other within the class and during less structured times. Leaders and managers respect and celebrate differences and similarities of faith and culture. This is demonstrated in the way that pupils speak positively about people from other faiths and cultural backgrounds. Parents are supported in their children's education through the posting of Religious Education targets on the school's website and by weekly liturgical guidance. The results of regular parental questionnaires are acted upon. The student council has been active in consultations with school and parish in matters of Catholic practice. Many children are members of the parish youth club that is run by a teaching assistant who is also a parish catechist. Pupils also help with ministries such as altar serving and choir membership. The school does much to promote inclusion and celebrate diversity by arranging services with Catholics who have joined the parish from other countries. For example a Philippine style May Procession (*Flores De Mayo*) was arranged and openly celebrated in the town in 2009. Involvement with CAFOD projects, sponsorship and fundraising for other charities ensures that pupils are developing their understanding of global issues and their sense of the common good. The school has plans to link with

other schools in order to ensure that pupils are able to experience and understand other world faiths and cultures. Religious Education at Sacred Heart does much to promote attitudes of respect and tolerance for people of all faiths or those who have none.

PROVISION

How effective the provision is for Catholic Education

1

The quality of teaching and learning in Religious Education is outstanding. Teachers employ a variety of teaching styles in order to deliver good quality teaching. This results in maintenance of the pupils' interest and enables them to make good progress. Good subject knowledge, effective questioning techniques, employment of collaborative learning, and skilled use of ICT all ensure that pupils are well motivated and enjoy their lessons. Teachers plan well, have high expectations, deliver with pace and have regard for pupils' learning styles. Support staff demonstrate understanding of pupils' needs in Religious Education and teachers deploy these staff members effectively. Differentiation and appropriate levels of challenge are emerging across the school and are embedded in some classes. This needs to be further embedded so that all pupils make the progress of which they are capable. Staff development is appropriately identified so that staff skills and confidence are improved: this ensures that pupils are inspired, engaged and achieving well.

The school's assessment and monitoring procedures are very good. They give a clear and accurate picture of pupils' progress and attainment. Tracking systems for Religious Education have been successfully incorporated into the whole school assessment system ensuring that different groups of pupils achieve well. Information from this method of tracking enables teachers to set targets for improvement. Pupils' skills of self assessment are being developed. Pupils are provided with oral and written feedback. The use of written feedback and next step marking in RE are in the early stages of development.

The Religious Education curriculum meets the needs of pupils and is enriched through a variety of well planned and imaginative strategies including the use of drama, art, ICT and good quality resources. Visitors to the school and visits to places of interest harness the interest of pupils and motivate them in their learning experiences. The Religious Education curriculum provides good opportunities for the pupils' spiritual and moral development. The curriculum meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales fully.

The quality of Collective Worship at Sacred Heart is outstanding and is given high priority. It is fully inclusive and ensures the needs of all pupils are met. During an act of Collective Worship, the work of all pupils was

celebrated and all were engaged in reflection and song. Prayer is central to the life of the school. The prayer room is a demonstration of the school's commitment to its centrality. The popularity of the prayer room is demonstrated by the need for a timetable. In the words of one pupil, "We like to pray at Mass and in the prayer room". Pupils regularly attend the school's open and voluntary prayer group and are adept in writing their own prayers within lessons and for liturgies. Older pupils also choose prayers from the school prayer book. Pupils are given the experience of many types of religious service and liturgies and these impact positively on pupils, parents and the parish. These experiences are all very public demonstrations of the ethos of the school.

SUMMARY OF INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Key for inspection grades:

Grade 1 **Outstanding**

Grade 2 **Good**

Grade 3 **Satisfactory**

Grade 4 **Unsatisfactory**

Overall effectiveness	1
The school's capacity for sustained improvement	1
PUPILS How good outcomes are for pupils, taking particular account of variations between different groups	1
• how well do pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education?	1
❖ the quality of pupils' learning and their progress	1
❖ 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
LEADERS AND MANAGERS How effective are leaders and managers in developing the Catholic life of the School?	1
• 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?	1
• how effectively leaders and managers promote Community Cohesion?	2
PROVISION How effective is the provision for Catholic Education?	1
• the quality of teaching and purposeful learning in Religious Education	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