



**DENOMINATIONAL INSPECTION
REPORT**
(Under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005)

on

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

School: St. Clare's Primary School, A Catholic Voluntary Academy

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School URN: 138296

Headteacher: Mrs Louise Freeman

Chair of Governors: Mrs Sarah Noon

Inspectors: Mrs Helen White
Mrs Jean Connor

Date of Inspection: 16 October 2013

INTRODUCTION

The inspection of this school was carried out on behalf of the Bishop of Nottingham under Canon 806 of Canon Law and Section 48 of the Education Act 2005 in accordance with the Diocese of Nottingham Schedule for Section 48 Inspections. The inspection reviews and evaluates how effective the school is in providing Catholic education. The process begins with the school's own self-evaluation and the inspection schedule is in line with the criteria set by the National Board of Religious Inspectors and Advisers (NBRIA).

During the inspection, the inspectors observed 6 Religious Education lessons, 2 whole school Acts of Collective Worship and 3 classroom Acts of Collective Worship.

Meetings were held with the headteacher, the subject leader for Religious Education, a governor and the parish priest. Discussions were also held with pupils and parents.

The inspectors scrutinised a range of documents including the school's self-evaluation, assessment data for Religious Education, the school development plan, the Religious Education subject leader file, minutes from governing body meetings and evaluations of Acts of Collective Worship. Inspectors also examined the work in pupils' Religious Education books.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St. Clare's Catholic Primary School is situated in Coalville Leicestershire. It serves the local parish of St. Wilfrid's and those living in the surrounding villages.

The school has 201 pupils on roll of which 71% are baptised Catholics, 15% are affiliated to another Christian denomination, 3% are from other World Faith backgrounds and 10% are not affiliated to any religious group.

13% of all pupils are on the school's record of special educational needs with less than 1% of pupils having a statement. Attainment on entry to the school is broadly in line with expectations but below national expectations in Religious Education.

The school converted to academy status on 1 July 2012 and is part of the Blessed Cyprian Tansi Catholic Academy Trust along with four other Catholic primary schools and a Catholic secondary school.

The current headteacher has been in post since January 2013.

INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

2

CATHOLIC LIFE

1

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

1

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

3

KEY FINDINGS

- There are many outstanding features within the Catholic Life of this school. Staff, governors, parents and pupils are committed to supporting the school's Catholic ethos and maintaining the high standards. The school is a joyful and empathic community, living the Gospel values within its own, local and wider world community.
- Pupils are empowered to lead Collective Worship and this is embedded in the school. Pupils draw on their various skills and talents to embellish Collective Worship and make it accessible and meaningful to all ages.
- Standards of attainment in Religious Education, however, require improvement as monitoring and evaluation procedures are not yet rigorous or robust.

WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL NEED TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- Although work has been carried out to monitor and record aspects of Religious Education, this is not evaluative or sufficiently rigorous. Documentation needs to show evidence of the impact of strategies put in place in order to improve standards and accelerate pupil progress in Religious Education.
 - Senior leaders know where teaching in Religious Education is outstanding in their school and now need to provide opportunities to disseminate this good practice in order to ensure that the quality of teaching overall is more consistent across the school.
 - The work which has now begun on establishing a Committee for the Catholic Life of the school needs embedding and evaluation used to show the impact of this work.
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CATHOLIC LIFE

THE QUALITY OF THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

1

- The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school.
- The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school.
- How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school.

1

1

2

Pupils are very positive about their contribution to the Catholic Life of the school. They engage with the local and wider community in a variety of ways; food collection for the local Food Bank, fund-raising and building links with the community of the Bamenda Water Project. The chaplaincy team see their role as being supportive and setting a good example to pupils. They run extra-curricular opportunities for worship and reflection, for example, Rosary club, Stations of the Cross, Advent reflections and Meditation Club. Pupils aspire to be part of the team. During the inspection, it was noted that the behaviour of pupils was exemplary, including within whole-school Acts of Collective Worship. The small minority of pupils who demonstrate challenging behaviour is sensitively supported by staff.

The school is currently reviewing its Mission Statement to make it tangible and child-friendly. Displays around the school show the involvement of pupils in this process. The involvement of governors and staff in the current development planning process is evidence of all stakeholders having been consulted. The behaviour policy of the school is firmly rooted in Gospel values.

The learning environment is enhanced throughout the school with vibrant displays linked to Religious Education and the Catholic Life of the School. The chaplaincy team demonstrated their understanding of the use of artefacts to help pupils focus on the theme of 'I am the Vine' to outstanding effect through the use of visual aids, including a focus table with vines and summary of key words for pupils to take back to their classes to help address the question, 'how can I grow closer to Jesus?'

Leaders and managers within the school work together in promoting the Catholic Life of the school to good effect. Staff, governors and the parish priest are united in linking all aspects of school life to promote Catholic principles. The school has acknowledged the need to evaluate the monitoring processes already in place. To this end, it is in the process of setting up a Catholic Life Committee of the governing body. Recently, the Religious Education subject leader has been included as part of the senior leadership team, giving credence to the work involved.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

THE QUALITY OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

1

- How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship.
- The quality of provision for Collective Worship.
- How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship.

1

1

2

The work of the pupils' chaplaincy team is an outstanding feature and significantly enhances the Collective Worship within the school. During the whole-school Act of Collective Worship observed by inspectors, great respect was evident throughout, from the calm, purposeful atmosphere set, processing in with The Word, to engaging all present in listening and responding to 'how can we grow closer to Jesus?'. Meditation sessions and classroom Acts of Worship are routine features throughout the school. Pupils confidently respond and participate. Pupils speak positively about the work of the chaplaincy team, which is now embedded within the school and many aspire to be part of this team.

The quality of provision for Collective Worship is another outstanding feature and central to the life of the school. The use of artefacts, IT, displays, music and the 'Let Us Pray' resource enable pupils and staff to allow participation in Acts of Collective Worship to be fulfilling and spiritual experiences that are real and meaningful to all. Time is devoted in lessons for prayer throughout the day and there are many extra-curricular opportunities throughout the year for prayer to take place. A member of staff supports the chaplaincy team in its work, enabling the team to meet both within and outside of curriculum time. Team members are keen to give their free time to creating well-resourced and researched whole-school Acts of Collective Worship, as well as leading group worship such as the Rosary sessions during the month of October. These sessions are well attended by pupils.

Leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship to good effect. The school has identified in its development plan, from previous evaluations, the need to introduce particular etiquette within Collective Worship. The parish priest's involvement with the school in developing the quality of Collective Worship is to be commended. He shares his expertise as both a liturgist and musician to promote good practice and to introduce the desired protocols of Collective Worship both at school and at church. He is the Religious Education governor and also supports the Collective Worship Co-ordinator in the monitoring of this important aspect of school life.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

THE QUALITY OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

3

- How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education.
- The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education.
- How well leaders and managers (including governors) monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education.

3

2

3

The achievement of pupils is not consistent across the school as evidenced by pupils' books and the school's assessment tracking data for Religious Education. In some lessons observed, however, accelerated progress of pupils within lessons was observed which was outstanding. These pupils are challenged by the teachers, through the use, for example, of personal targets, thus enabling them to attain higher standards. The school's data shows that by the end of Key Stage 1 in 2012, the majority of pupils attained average levels in Religious Education and no pupils attained above average. Of the 2013 end of Key Stage 1 cohort, a large majority reached average attainment in Religious Education, with no pupils attaining above average. With two years' end of Key Stage 2 data showing a minority of pupils attaining average levels and very few pupils attaining above average, achievement requires improvement. The school needs to improve the number of pupils attaining Level 4 at the end of Key Stage 2. The school has identified, through analysis, that pupils are often passive learners in lessons and senior managers and governors plan to address this.

Of the six lessons observed during the inspection, the quality of teaching was inconsistent, however, outstanding practice was seen in some classes which means that the quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Where lessons were outstanding, the pace set was challenging. Skilled questioning by the teachers was used to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding and engage their interest, for example, when learning about the Sacrament of Confirmation. In outstanding lessons the variety of tasks set was well matched to pupils' abilities using appropriate resources, for example, the video of Father Colin on Baptism. Pupils were able to articulate their learning concisely and accurately. Teachers' knowledge was used to good effect and reference to previous learning was used to build cohesion across themes. Another feature of outstanding lessons was the quality of assessment within lessons and in pupils' books that set future targets and directed pupils to make better than expected progress. Where lessons required improvement, too much emphasis was placed on re-capping previous learning, teacher questioning was not sufficiently challenging and teachers' aspirations for pupils' attainment were not high enough in order to raise standards.

Leaders and managers are hard-working and committed to raising standards in Religious Education. With the advent of the Religious Education subject leader becoming a member of the senior management team, the quality of teaching and learning in Religious Education will have a sharper focus. Already, the deputy headteacher and Religious Education subject leader have undertaken some Religious Education lesson observations together, which will inform their professional dialogue. The governor for Religious Education has also completed some learning walks with staff so that he is clear about what constitutes good practice.

There now needs to be a focus on evaluating the evidence from their monitoring. Specific targets should be made in order to bring about improvement in the teaching and learning of Religious Education so that the impact of any changes is measurable. Teaching over the past year has become more targeted and focused, enabling pupils to know how to improve and make accelerated progress, however, this now needs to be embedded further across the school.

WHAT INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS MEAN

Within the report, the following grades are used:

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Requires improvement
Grade 4	Inadequate

In the context of the whole school, the overall effectiveness grades have the following meaning:

Grade 1	Outstanding	The school is a highly effective Catholic school. Pupils' needs are exceptionally well met.
Grade 2	Good	The school is an effective Catholic school. Pupils' needs are met well.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	The school is not yet a good Catholic school, it is not inadequate however, there are aspects that require improvement.
Grade 4	Inadequate	There are features in need of urgent and immediate attention. The school is not meeting the basic minimum requirement for adequacy. The school will receive a monitoring visit within twelve months.

