

NOTTINGHAM DIOCESAN INSPECTION

REPORT ON

DENOMINATIONAL EDUCATION



April 26th 2007

SAINT MARY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL
Beaconsfield Street
Hyson Green
Nottingham.
NG7 6FL

(Section 48, 2005 Education Act)

SECTION 48 DENOMINATIONAL INSPECTION REPORT

Name and address of School:	Saint Mary's Catholic Primary Beaconsfield Street Hyson Green NOTTINGHAM NG7 6FL
Headteacher:	Mr J K McGowan
Chair of Governors:	Mrs M Shanahan
Date of Inspection:	26 th April 2007
Inspection Team:	Mr John Honey
URN & DCSF Numbers	URN: 122778 DCSF: 892 3313
Overall Grade Awarded:	1

A. DESCRIPTION OF THE SCHOOL

Saint Mary's is an average sized primary school. It serves the Catholic population from the parishes of St. Mary's Hyson Green and St. Paul's Lenton. In its admissions policy the school welcomes applications from families of other faiths. The school therefore has a multi-cultural dimension that very much reflects the richness and diversity of the local community. Of the 267 pupils on roll 137 (51.3%) are baptised Catholics, 63 (23.6%) are from other Christian denominations, 59 (22.1%) from other World Faiths and 8 (3%) have no specified religious affiliation.

The school serves an area of significant deprivation but also attracts pupils from more affluent backgrounds. There are 54 (20%) pupils with a free school meal entitlement that is above the national average. The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic groups and those speaking English as an additional language are well above average. The school population is continually changing and the school has recently admitted children from Poland, India and Zimbabwe.

The number of children identified as having learning difficulties is, at 21(7.9%), below the national average. Standards of attainment on first admission are below average.

INSPECTION SCHEDULE

B. OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

How effective and efficient is the provision of Catholic education in meeting the needs of learners and why?

	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
	1			
<p>Saint Mary's is effective and efficient in the provision of Catholic education at an outstandingly high level. The reasons for this high level performance are several, but chief among these is the quiet, single minded determination of the Headteacher. The priest, governors and staff all share his vision so the whole school works together towards the same aims. The Catholic life of the school is very firmly the basis for everything that happens. Acts of Worship seen were excellent and powerful experiences for children. Some assessment of these occasions takes place by the school but consideration should be given as to how best this could be formalised. A greater range of community prayer will also enhance worship for all. This is already planned. The school is outstandingly successful in its provision for community cohesion. Standards in Religious Education are very high because teaching and learning are outstandingly good. Steps taken to promote improvement since the last inspection have been extremely successful.</p>				

c. The capacity of the school to make further improvements and why.

	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
	1			
<p>Saint Mary's has shown an outstanding capacity to improve over the last few years. There is a firm resolve not only to maintain the current high performance but to improve still further. This should be well within the school's capacity because accurate self-assessment is securely established. A shared climate of honesty and confidence between staff enables frank, developmental comment to be both offered and received positively. This is motivated by a determination to constantly offer the best possible Catholic education to the children on roll. New staff are very successfully inducted into the school. Leadership at all levels is outstandingly good and not afraid to make brave decisions.</p>				

D. What steps need to be taken to improve the provision further?

The school's very many strengths far outweigh areas for development. To build on this strong position the school is encouraged to:

- complete and introduce the planned school prayer book which will embrace prayers from the Catholic tradition and also those from other faiths in order to enhance yet further collective worship and community inclusion for all;
- consider and adopt ways to more formally evaluate Acts of Worship.

THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

Leadership and Management

1. How effective are Leadership and Management in developing the Catholic life of the school?

	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
	1			
There is outstandingly good leadership at all levels. It is extremely effective in promoting the Catholic life of the school as the basis on which the whole school operates. Everyone in the school contributes towards creating a strong sense of spiritual purpose. The focus is on promoting high standards and the fullest personal development of each individual child. The key motivator in this process is the Headteacher. He has a crystal clear vision of what a Catholic faith school should be in a multi-cultural area. He has been outstandingly successful in creating a whole staff team to deliver that vision on a day by day basis. The parish priest and Governing Body give excellent support and add momentum. The part time Chaplain provides a highly valued and effective additional dimension. Links with parents and parish are superb. Morale in the school is extremely high. The result is that children flourish and commit themselves wholeheartedly to the school's education and formation mission.				

Collective Worship

2. How good is the quality of Collective Worship?

	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
	1			
The Eucharist, worship and prayer are totally central to the life of the school. Acts of Worship engage all children and indeed staff. All showed deep thought and heartfelt response. Whole school and class worship is planned very well around the 'Here I Am' topics and the liturgical calendar. Evaluation of worship could be developed further. There was excellent use of scripture and of children, not only as readers or actors but as dancers too. Children gathered in an air of expectancy and departed in song.				
The inclusion of all children from all faith backgrounds is outstandingly successful. All staff constantly make references to their God and their holy book. When the planned children's prayer book is introduced to reflect all faith traditions in the school the quality of community prayer will be enhanced. Children understand the differences of faith so well, value them and live easily with them. Both parish priest and chaplain make powerful and highly influential contributions to the school community. Collective worship makes an outstanding contribution to the spiritual and moral development of children.				

Community Cohesion

3. **How effectively the school promotes community cohesion: inwardly (within the school); within the local faith community (parish and education communities); and the wider social, cultural and educational communities.**

	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
	1			
<p>The school is effective in promoting community cohesion to an outstandingly successful level. Its achievement sets a standard to which all schools should aspire. Governors are determined to promote community cohesion and encourage management in school to constantly seek improvement. Within school there is high level concern, respect and hospitality for everyone. Each individual's spiritual identity and personality is respected. Children live their school life in this environment so learn together to recreate it themselves. Particular provision is routinely made to celebrate the key religious events of other faiths. There is high level involvement of the school in the immediate locality, within the city and beyond. Children therefore are accomplished communicators with inquisitive minds. Parents from all backgrounds respond to the school very positively and feel very involved and valued. Groups from the neighbourhood use school facilities often free of charge.</p>				

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Achievement and Standards

4. **How well do learners achieve?**

	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
	1			
<p>The standards achieved by children in Religious Education are outstandingly high. On first admission to school, achievement is below the national average but by the time of secondary transfer achievement is above the national expectation. The standard of achievement in Religious Education matches standards in other core subjects. All children, including those with learning difficulties make very good progress. There is no difference between the achievement levels of different groups of children. Improvement can be seen at all stages and there is no evidence of improvement stalling at any point. It is also clear that children enjoy their work and gain considerable pleasure from Religious Education. They learn to appreciate how fundamental to their lives a religious commitment is. Children's behaviour both in class and during less rigidly supervised occasions is outstandingly good. Their contribution to their school and their community is excellent.</p>				

Quality of Provision for Religious Education

5. How effective are teaching and learning?

	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
	1			
<p>Children thrive as a result of the teaching in Religious Education. There are innovative approaches used and an emphasis on experiential learning as well as the academic. Some of this results from comments made previously by the children themselves. There was excellent co-ordination across the school, as exemplified by the focus in all classes on the energy taken by the Disciples at the feast of Pentecost. One class experienced this phenomenon through dance and movement in the hall, while another had a similar experience through an action hymn and a game in the classroom. Consequently, children thoroughly enjoy Religious Education and make excellent progress. Staff are passionate about their teaching of Religious Education and determined to make it relevant for the children. There is very good support for children with learning difficulties but not so much evidence was seen of additional challenge to higher attaining children. Excellent use is made of ICT in lessons.</p>				

6. How well does the Religious Education curriculum meet the needs and interests of learners?

	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
	1			
<p>The Religious Education curriculum at Saint Mary's is outstandingly successful in meeting the needs and interests of the children. The curriculum provides excellent opportunity for them to investigate and reflect on the impact Religious Education should have on their daily life. It enables them to think spiritually and morally and to question deeply – sometimes uncomfortably for those expected to answer. The curriculum well meets the requirements of the diocese whilst at the same time being hugely responsive to local circumstances. It makes an immense contribution to the children's spiritual and moral development. The respect they learn to have for other faiths and cultures is at an outstandingly high level. All children, irrespective of prior attainment or background, have equal access to the Religious Education curriculum. It is very much enjoyed by the children and they themselves consider it fundamental to the Saint Mary's experience. Pupils feel real pride in their school.</p>				

Leadership and Management

7. How effective are Leadership and Management in raising achievement and supporting all learners in Religious Education?

	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
	1			
Leadership and management at Saint Mary's is outstandingly successful in raising achievement and in supporting all children in Religious Education. The subject leader and her assistants have a passionate concern for their subject and firmly believe in its central role in the school's work. Excellent support is given to new colleagues who quickly come to embrace the ethos of the school. A rigorous but strongly developmental programme of monitoring lessons is well established and very effective. In-service training has a high priority. Teaching Assistants too are encouraged to participate in lesson delivery and they do so with great expertise. Childrens' opinions are valued highly and through conferencing and other routes regular feedback is collected and responded to. Assessment of children's work is established and examples of their work are in record books. Exercise books are excellent and work in them is very important to the children.				

Common grading scale for all inspection judgements

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

How effective and efficient is the provision of Catholic education in meeting the needs of learners and why?	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the overall effectiveness of the Catholic life of the school and its provision for community cohesion; 	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the overall effectiveness of the provision for the Catholic Religious Education curriculum, its main strengths and areas for development 	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the effectiveness of steps taken to promote improvement since the last inspection 	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the capacity to make further improvements 	1

THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

How effective are leadership and management in developing the Catholic life of the school?	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> how well the governing body fulfils its role in relation to the school's Catholic foundation 	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> how effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction which promotes high quality care and education and leads to improvement 	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the quality of the leadership of the Headteacher and senior staff in leading and developing the Catholic life of the school 	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> how effectively leadership at all levels in the school promotes learners' spiritual and moral development 	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the impact of the involvement of the local priest and Chaplaincy on the work of the school 	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> how effectively the leadership promotes relationships and communication with key partners in education 	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> how effectively the Catholic life of the school is monitored and evaluated 	2
How good is the quality of Collective Worship?	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the quality of the provision for prayer, Collective Worship and liturgical life of the school and its frequency 	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> learners' response to the school's provision 	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> how effectively the provision is planned, monitored and evaluated 	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> how well the liturgical life, prayer and Collective Worship contributes to the spiritual and moral development of the learners 	1
How effectively the school promotes Community Cohesion?	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> how effectively leadership at all levels promote community cohesion within the school 	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the efforts of the school to promote community cohesion with the wider Catholic faith and education communities 	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> how well does the school work in partnership with the wider education, cultural and social communities 	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the inclusive nature of the provision for prayer, Collective Worship and the liturgical life of the school 	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> how far the Religious Education curriculum promotes community cohesion 	1

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

How well do learners achieve in Religious Education?	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> learners' success in achieving challenging targets and learning goals, with trends over time and any significant variations between groups of learners 	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the standards of learners' work 	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> learners' progress relative to their prior attainment and potential, with any significant variations between groups of learners 	1

• the extent to which learners enjoy their work	1
• the behaviour of learners	1
• learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
• the extent to which learners' contribute positively to the school and broader community in the school.	1
How effective are teaching and learning in Religious Education?	1
• how well teaching is used to meet learners' needs and curriculum requirements	2
• the suitability and rigour of assessment in planning, monitoring and informing learners' progress	1
• the diagnosis of, and provision for, additional learning needs	1
• the involvement of parents and carers in their children's learning and development	1
How well does the Religious Education curriculum meet the needs and interests of learners?	1
• the extent to which the Religious Education curriculum matches learners' aspirations and potential, building on prior attainment and experience	1
• how far the Religious Education curriculum meets external requirements and is responsive to local circumstances	1
• the extent to which the curriculum in Religious Education contributes to the spiritual and moral development of the learners	1
• the extent to which the Religious Education curriculum contributes to learners' enjoyment and achievement	1
How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners in Religious Education?	1
• how effectively whole school and subject leadership in Religious Education lead and support their staff	1
• how effectively performance in Religious Education is monitored and improved through quality assurance and self-assessment	1
• how well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve their potential	1
• the adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are well taught	1
• the adequacy and suitability of specialist equipment, learning resources and accommodation	1
• how effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve high standards	1
• The extent to which governors discharge their responsibilities	1