
**The Diocese of
Hallam
Section 48 Report**

**The Catholic Life of
the School and
Religious Education**

Diocese of Hallam



SECTION 48 INSPECTION REPORT

THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

St Thomas of Canterbury School

School URN	373314
Name of Chair of Governors	Father John Metcalfe
Name of Head teacher	Mr Andrew Truby
Date of inspection	12 th November , 2013
Section 48 Inspector	Mrs Delia Kay

“ An enthusiasm for the things of God”

Introduction

The Inspection of St Thomas of Canterbury Catholic Primary School has been carried out under the requirements of the Education Act 2005, and in accordance with the Diocese of Hallam Framework and Schedule for Section 48 Inspections as approved by the Bishop of Hallam.

The process of inspection in the Diocese of Hallam has been developed as an activity of the Church to support schools in further deepening the quality of Catholic education provided.

Description of the School

This is a smaller than average mixed school for pupils between the age of 4 and 11 years. It is a Catholic Voluntary Academy and a member of the Our Lady Seat of Wisdom Umbrella Trust [three primary Catholic Voluntary Academies]. The three separate academies have three separate governing bodies who work together to provide a distinctively Catholic Education for their pupils. The Umbrella Trust binds the schools together legally and provides challenge and leadership capacity, with the three leadership teams taking responsibility for the success of the three schools.

The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium is well below the average. However, the proportion of pupils supported at 'school action plus' or with a statement of special need is well above the average; including a number of pupils who are placed within 'resourced provision' to meet their multiple and complex needs and disabilities. The majority of pupils are from white British backgrounds and the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well below average.

The school exceeds the current government floor standards.

Type of School	A Catholic Voluntary Academy
Age profile of students	4 - 11
Number on roll	215
Number of students on Special Needs and Disabilities Register	SA = 4 SAP= 26 IR = 5
Number of students with a Statement of Special Educational Needs	10
Number of Catholics on roll	174
Number of Other Christian Denominations	18
Number of other Faiths	10
No religious affiliation	13
School Address	Chancet Wood Drive, Sheffield, S8 7TR
Telephone Number	0114 2745597
Fax Number	
Email	a.truby@st-tc.co.uk
School Website	www.st-tc.co.uk

SUMMARY JUDGEMENTS

OUTCOMES FOR PUPILS

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THE PROVISION FOR CATHOLIC EDUCATION

1

LEADERS AND MANAGERS

1

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS:

1

How effective the school is in providing Catholic Education.

The overall effectiveness judgement is based on all the evidence available.

- Outcomes for pupils,
- The provision for Catholic Education
- Leaders and Managers

Inspection Grades: 1 is Outstanding, 2 is Good, 3 requires improvement in order to be good, 4 is Inadequate

OUTCOMES FOR PUPILS

How good outcomes are for pupils, taking into account variations between groups.

The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life of the school.	1
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education.	2
How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship	1

Pupils make an outstanding contribution to the Catholic life of the school and participate enthusiastically in all opportunities the school offers them. There is an active school council which recently having sought the views of pupils, instigated the building of the new climbing wall. Pupils feel their views are listened to and respected. They are keen to be involved in the Fair Trade Coffee Bar each Friday and support a different charity each half term. They are also keen to use the newly refurbished chapel and reflective garden which provides a quality opportunity for the spiritual development for all pupils. Pupils say they feel safe and a member of staff has recently reintroduced Rainbows which supports pupils who are experiencing bereavement or loss.

The quality of learning in Religious Education ranges from good to outstanding. All pupils achieve good standards in written work while some work was judged to be outstanding. 'Pupil Premium' pupils are tracked carefully and most make good progress. In line with Diocesan recommendations for the introduction of the formal levels of attainment in Religious Education, staff continue to build their confidence and knowledge in accurately assessing pupils' work. Once these assessment procedures linked to the new Come and See programme have been embedded, pupils will have the opportunity to make accelerated progress to further strengthen attainment and ensure all children continue to make at least good progress.

Children say they enjoy Religious Education lessons because they are interesting. A group of children enthusiastically agreed that Religious Education was in their 'top 3' favourite subjects. In lessons children are on task and enjoy working collaboratively. They enjoy participating in 'Enquiry Led Learning' which has been adopted by the school and covers all areas of the curriculum - including Religious Education. Judaism was being taught during the Inspection week and the knowledge and understanding of this aspect of Religious Education was impressive.

Pupils' response to and participation in Collective Worship is outstanding. Carefully planned, lively Acts of Worship enable all children from a very early age to participate fully. They are given many opportunities to lead and take responsibility for Collective Worship across the school and also many opportunities for reflection both in Acts of Worship and in classroom situations, which helps them, appreciate and develop an awareness of God. The refurbished chapel is an outstanding environment for reflection and prayer.

PROVISION

How effective the provision is for Catholic Education

The quality of teaching and how purposeful learning is in Religious Education.	2
The extent to which the Religious Education curriculum promotes pupils' learning.	1
The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school.	1

Teaching observed ranged from good to outstanding. Of the four lessons observed during the Inspection, two were judged to be good and two outstanding. A recent monitoring report carried out by a Headteacher colleague from the Umbrella Trust of schools and the Religious Education Co-ordinator, confirms that not all teaching at present is outstanding. Religious Education subject knowledge of the teachers is given a high priority, which gives confidence and clarity to teaching. All members of staff are given a book on the Mass as part of their induction. Pupils are on task during lessons and behaviour is exemplary. They say they enjoy coming to school and engage with the exciting learning opportunities on offer. Support staff are used effectively to enhance and extend learning. ICT is used effectively and confidently by pupils and a range of high quality resources are also available to enhance learning. There was a range of good and outstanding work observed in the children's Religious Education books. Parents said they are often surprised and delighted at the Religious Education knowledge their children demonstrate and enjoy further discussing topics with them. However, they would welcome more information prior to the introduction of new topics.

The Religious Education Curriculum is outstanding and fully meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference of 10% of teaching time. The new Come and See programme has been enthusiastically adopted by the school and teachers have been well supported by the Religious Education Co-ordinator, as well as colleagues from the Umbrella Trust to bring about improvements in teaching and monitoring. In Year 5 & 6 it was observed that pupils were encouraged to reflect on their learning and understand the next steps needed to bring about improvement.

The quality of Collective Worship is outstanding. Liturgy is at the heart of school life and takes priority on the timetable. Pupils assist in the preparation of assemblies and participate with enthusiasm. In the outstanding assembly observed, pupils read clearly, managed the whiteboard presentation and played musical instruments. There was a real sense of participation and belonging. Statements of Belief are used successfully to promote the spiritual development of the children. The high standard of music and singing by the children is a particular feature of Collective Worship and this makes a significant contribution to the quality of celebration. The Parish Priest, also the Chair of Governors, plays an important role in the religious life of the school and regularly says Mass for the school community. Parents and carers always feel welcome to attend.

LEADERS AND MANAGERS

How effective the provision is for Catholic education

How well leaders, governors and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school and plan and implement improvement to outcomes for pupils.	1
How well leaders, governors and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education and plan and implement for improvement to outcomes for pupils.	1

The Leadership and Management of the school is outstanding. The exceptionally well written School Evaluation Document shows an excellent understanding of where the school is, in its development of Religious Education, and gives realistic and clear direction for the future. The Headteacher and leadership team demonstrate a deep commitment to the Church's mission in education through their hard work and the example they set. Performance objectives for all teachers are ambitious and include an underpinning Catholic ethos objective. The Religious Education Co-ordinator readily supports less experienced colleagues. A great strength of the school is having the opportunity to work alongside exceptional leaders from the other two schools in the Umbrella Trust, to develop Religious Education and the spiritual life of the school. This enables an opportunity to share expertise and further develop good practice in teaching and learning in Religious Education.

There is a strong partnership between leaders in the school and the Governors, which helps the Governors to fulfil their role effectively. This link could be further developed to include the monitoring of Collective Worship. Governors undergo training to improve their effectiveness. Governors listen to the 'parent voice' in the school which is much appreciated by parents.

This final section draws together all the evidence and judgements made in the preceding sections

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

How effective the school is in providing Catholic Education	1
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The effectiveness of the school in providing Catholic Education is outstanding.

It is a warm welcoming community, where Catholic values are lived out by staff on a daily basis. The Governors, Headteacher and Senior Leaders have worked successfully to establish themselves as an Academy within the umbrella trust and this is impacting positively on the excellent quality of Religious Education provided.

The school's mission statement is at the heart of all activity and reflects the Catholic mission of spreading the teachings of Jesus. There is an evident culture of love and respect, where achievement is celebrated, mistakes are allowed and weakness is supported.

Through the support of CAFOD, children recognise and respect the different circumstances and needs of others and realise that they can make a valuable contribution to improve the lives of the needy in the world. The Gospel value of loving one another underpins the work of the school.

The school has a good reputation within the community with Year 6 national test results improving year on year. This is a school that is not complacent but strives to improve the quality of the education for all its pupils.

In the Self Evaluation Document the leadership team has accurately identified the next steps in the development of Religious Education but the following should be added.

What the school needs to do to improve further:

- Continue to ensure that assessment is embedded to provide accurate tracking data.
- Ensure that Governors monitor Collective Worship throughout the school.
- Ensure that parents are informed about what their children are learning in Religious Education.