

DIOCESE OF LEEDS



DIOCESAN BOARD FOR INSPECTIONS

SECTION 48 FINAL REPORT

THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

ST BENEDICT'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

A Voluntary Academy, Station Fields, Garforth,
LS25 1PS

School URN	108013
School DfE Number	383/3365
E-mail address	floodk02@leedslarning.net
Chair of Governors	Mr Chris Hunter
Headteacher	Mr Kieron Flood
RE Subject Leader	Mr John Woolley (from April 2013) Mrs Catherine Counce
Dates of Inspection	26 th – 27 th June 2013
Section 48 Inspector	Mrs Marie McClelland

INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS: how effective the school is in providing Catholic Education.

1

The above judgement on overall effectiveness is based on all the available evidence following the evaluation of:

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

OUTCOMES FOR PUPILS

1

THE PROVISION FOR CATHOLIC EDUCATION

1

LEADERS AND MANAGERS

1

Summary of key findings:

This is an outstanding Catholic primary school

- St Benedict's Mission Statement to provide 'a *Catholic Education that promotes the overall development of all members of the school community, enabling them to achieve their full potential*' is central to its work. This is a happy and welcoming place where effective partnerships with parents, parish and the wider community are very much in evidence.
- Outcomes for pupils are outstanding because the Catholic Life of the school is integral and all embracing. It contributes to the spiritual, moral and social development of pupils and enables them to feel safe and respected. They radiate a strong sense of belonging and articulate a deep pride in the school's charitable outreach, its impact on the local community and its on-going programme of improvements and refurbishment. The latter has made a significant difference to the learning environment, especially in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and in the new school library.
- The Headteacher, senior leaders and governors evince a clear vision for embedding current good and outstanding practice and securing further improvement. This vision is shared with a hard-working and dedicated staff team by means of comprehensive development/progress plans together with focused in-service training and support within a culture of mutual professional respect.
- The Parish Priest makes a significant contribution to the school's provision for Collective Worship especially in relation to the liturgical year. He is popular with children, parents and staff and he is a regular visitor to school.
- Progress and achievement in RE are outstanding because of the quality of teaching and learning. Children are encouraged and challenged to think about their faith and how their actions affect others. High quality resources promote interest and enjoyment in the subject and children concentrate and interact well with each other in lessons.

What the school needs to do to improve further.

School leaders have already identified and embarked on fine-tuned improvements to

- ◆ embed current excellent practice in teaching, learning and assessment, and to
- ◆ continue and extend the broader curriculum exploring other cultures

In addition to these on-going improvements, the school should also

- ◆ Include commentary on *RE* and *Catholic Life* in the *Annual Pupil Report to Parents*

Information about this inspection

The Inspection of St Benedict's Primary School was carried out under the requirements of the Education Act 2005, and in accordance with the Leeds Diocesan Framework and Schedule for Section 48 Inspections approved by the Diocesan Administrator of Leeds. The inspection reviews and evaluates how effective the school is in providing Catholic education. This process begins with the school's own self-evaluation and the inspection schedule follows the criteria set by the National Board of Religious Inspectors and Advisers (NBRIA 2012).

The inspector reviewed in detail the following aspects:

- The extent to which key issues for action identified in the previous Section 48 RE inspection have been addressed;
- The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school;
- How well pupils enjoy and achieve their learning in RE;
- How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship;
- The quality of teaching and how purposeful learning is in RE;
- The extent to which the RE curriculum promotes pupils' learning;
- The quality of Collective Worship;
- The accuracy of the school's self-evaluation system;
- The school's partnership activities, including home-school-parish links.

Over 1½ days, the inspector consulted and/or observed the following:

- Five sessions of Collective Worship (CW): Whole school; Key Stage 2; Yr4 Class-based; Nursery-based, and Staff Morning Prayer
- Six Religious Education (RE) lessons observed through the school: Reception and Years 1, 2, 3, 5 and 6.
- Samples and displays of RE-related work in all classrooms, corridors and shared areas as well as the quality of work in RE books of pupils from across the school.
- The views of staff, pupils, parents, governors, senior leaders and the Parish Priest.
- A range of documentary evidence including RE and CW policies, planning and assessment files, monitoring and evaluation records, the School Improvement Plan (SIP) and the SIP Progress Record, Governing Body minutes, written communications to and from parents, some albums of photographic evidence of special projects and themed work over the last two years.

Information about this school

- St Benedict's Primary is a Voluntary Academy with a 15 place Nursery and a current population of 230 pupils. 87% are baptised Catholics, 9% of other Christian faith and 1% of other faith communities. The school serves the parish of St Benedict, Garforth, and also, because of its good reputation, draws pupils from beyond the local catchment area.

- The school converted to academy status in November 2012 as part of the Bishop Konstant Catholic Multi Academy Trust (CMAT). CMAT comprises two secondary and six primary schools. Two governors and the headteacher are on its board of directors.
- Attainment on entry to Nursery and Reception over the last three years is broadly in line with the national average. The numbers of pupils at School Action+ and with Statements of Special Educational Needs (SEN) are just above the national average. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is significantly below the national average.
- The school is divided into six classes of discrete year groups + a Reception and a Nursery class in EYFS.
- Staffing includes nine full time teachers + twelve support assistants. Of the eight staff teaching RE, three have the CCRS and one is currently completing it. Six staff have undertaken the *Catholic Foundation Stones* programme and there is a waiting list for the next scheduled session. Three teachers (including the RE Co-ordinator and the SENCO) and one support assistant are on maternity leave since April 2013.
- The current Headteacher has been in post since April 2011 and the Deputy Headteacher since September 2012. They are *interim* SENCO and *interim* RE Co-ordinator respectively since April 2013. The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) comprises Head, Deputy, RE Co-ordinator, + Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 Leaders. The RE Co-ordinator met twice - voluntarily on her maternity leave - with the inspector to share information about her leadership of RE.

Full report - inspection judgements

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils are outstanding

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.	1
How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship.	1

- It is evident from pupils' general self-esteem, their excellent behaviour and confident sense of belonging that St Benedict's is an outstanding school. They are enthusiastic to articulate their love of school and its colourful logo, its range of playground improvements, cheerful displays in shared areas and classrooms, and its pupil-inspired themed library.
- A spontaneous *guided tour* by some older pupils revealed a deep pride at ways in which parents, pupils and staff had collaborated to share ideas and talents in effecting improvements in school over time. They could readily decide on '*We must be the change we wish to see in the World*' as a favourite maxim from among many key osmotic displays around the school. Pupils' understanding of the constituents of *ethos* was also palpable in their enthusiasm to showcase the new library and their own appreciation and experience of it.
- Response to Collective Worship (CW) is mature and reverent and pupils participate joyfully. Their involvement in the prayer and liturgy of the school is a feature of experience from their earliest years resulting in discernible year-on-year growth in religious literacy, gesture and familiarity. The display in the hall of pupils' answers to 'how do we follow the call of Jesus?' included the thoughtful precept '*Recognise and know how lucky you are!*'
- Strong links between school staff and parish catechetical workers enable meaningful connections between Sunday worship and daily life at school. Prayers being composed by Reception pupils, for instance, on 'what is special about Sunday' were

already destined to be read out at 'children's liturgy' in church at the weekend. The whole-school *Wednesday Word* (CW) prepares pupils for a better understanding of the Mass themes for ensuing Sundays. In the Autumn Term, Yr2 pupils enjoy the baking sessions with the Parish Priest in preparation for Harvest Festival. Additionally, each class has a list in its dedicated prayer area of named parishioners seeking prayers, so that *all pupils* can enjoy a sense of involvement in the life of the parish.

- Tracking records over six years (and recently uploaded to the more accessible *Colour By Number* system) show progress in RE is good for all pupils and outstanding in many year groups. Opportunities to learn through drama, play, art work, dance and singing extend pupils' knowledge, enjoyment and reflection on religious themes. This broader curriculum is an enduring priority in the SIP with very positive implications for enriching personal spirituality. Art work in Yr5 relating to resurrection scenes, for instance, evoke some thoughtful and poignant narratives and they contribute to an arresting display in the church foyer.
- Leaders and managers are committed to the value of special focused curriculum days like '*Where Is God?*' to provide further help towards exploring and nurturing a personal spirituality.
- The learning needs and progress of all pupils and pupil groups are identified by systematic *Colour By Number* tracking records and there is pleasing evidence of growing confidence in pupil self and peer assessment. Pupil feedback in the February 2013 questionnaire contends that RE lessons help '*us to know what we should do and how we need to help others*'. It is enthusiastic about lessons that include '*analysing actions and emotions in the scriptures*' as well as using i-pads for finding biblical references.

The provision for Catholic Education is outstanding

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

- Provision for Catholic Education is outstanding. Excellent subject knowledge and teaching skills are used very effectively to challenge and inspire pupils as learners in RE. Support provided by teaching assistants is a key strength in helping to motivate and sustain pupil concentration. Six staff have already undertaken the *Catholic Foundation Stones (CFS)* programme and there is a 'waiting list' for the next scheduled session. Comments on the impact of CFS are very positive.
- *The Way, the Truth and the Life (TWTL)* resource forms the basis of curricular RE but it is adapted and supplemented to meet the needs of St Benedict's pupils. High quality resources, including technology, are used very effectively to optimise learning.
- The RE Co-ordinator has worked hard to enable colleagues to set appropriately challenging work in RE. She monitors her subject regularly through lesson observations, work scrutiny and professional dialogue with colleagues. Her work on linking *driver words* to levels of attainment has improved assessment techniques since the last inspection. Book scrutiny confirms that marking is formative: peer marking by pupils is learning from that model. Details of pupil targets in RE, however, need to be included in the Annual Report to Parents to maximise parental support, at home, for the subject.
- The quality of teaching and learning is mainly outstanding with other lessons being good. In the best lessons a range of teaching styles and challenges is used and key skills development is integral. Nursery pupils could exhibit very good listening skills because their teacher was such a good role model. From an early age, pupils are enabled to

ponder on and assimilate scripture stories. Referring, for instance, to the paralysed man who was let down through the roof, a Yr2 pupil explained: '*Jesus just did his powers and the man walked!*'. In the Yr 5 lesson on other world faiths, high levels of pupil enthusiasm and interest were shown in questioning and reflecting on what prompts different lifestyles and beliefs. Yr6 pupils recognised that the gifts of the Holy Spirit manifest themselves in everyday situations even in people who may not believe in God.

- Collaboration with other schools within the *Wakefield & Out-of-District Partnership* provides further enrichment experiences for pupils and staff to mix with others as fellow-learners in: '*More Than Dance*', Advent Puppet Workshops, Lenten Art Workshops, Global Theme Week and the Celebration of Catholic Education. Discussions with the SLT confirms this creative curriculum and links with other cultures is an enduring priority in the SIP.
- Working with agencies including CAFOD, the Anti-Bullying Alliance, Development Education Centre and others, provides practical training for pupils to grow in respect, tolerance, and understanding and to become attuned to creative solutions.
- Collective Worship is outstanding and central to the life of the school. All staff participate and many are highly skilled in helping pupils to plan and deliver quality worship. 'Statements to Live By' are used throughout the school and form the focus of class-based and Key Stage CW. Wednesday's Whole School CW focuses on the '*Wednesday Word*' and prepares pupils for the Mass themes for the following Sunday. Pupils have a wide repertoire of prayer styles, hymns and gestures. They know that CW gives them a mission and a message.
- The major events of the liturgical and academic year are celebrated through the Eucharist. A timetable for class Masses and major liturgical and academic celebrations is agreed at the start of the school year with the Parish Priest and, during Lent, a weekly early morning Mass is held in the school hall to which families and the wider community are invited.
- Friday Assemblies are especially appreciated by parents as a time when they can savour the variety of rewards and praise used across the school. This is also a time to socialise with other parents and talk over light refreshments.

The Leadership and Management are Outstanding

How well leaders, governors and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Catholic Education and plan and implement improvement to outcomes for pupils.	1
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- Since the last inspection, there has been a new head, new deputy and a new governing board under a new Chair. Their range of professional and practical expertise and training is an asset to the strategic leadership of the school as is their commitment to the Church's mission in education.
- The Headteacher has extensive experience of school leadership and a very clear vision for this school, ably supported by the school leadership team. He leads by example. Parents, staff and governors confirm his strengths as *playground ambassador* and as Christian leader who promotes respect for each individual and their contribution to the good of the school.
- Leaders, governors and managers are diligent in selecting staff who will uphold the school's mission, values and standards. There is regular provision of updated training in matters of Child Protection and Health and Safety. Access to *Catholic Care* and other professional bodies promotes the wellbeing of all pupils. The SRE programme *All That I Am* is taught in Yr5 & Yr6 with parental and governors' approval.

- The special contribution of support staff to the Catholic Life of the school is held in high esteem, especially their willing involvement in partnership curriculum days and in the *Catholic Foundation Stones* programme.
- RE is extremely well resourced in terms of staffing, physical resources, capitation, and curriculum time when compared with other core subjects. Links with Leeds Trinity yielded expert help and access to a Good News app & i-pads for use in RE work. The RE Co-ordinator is passionate about her subject and acts as a source of expertise and encouragement for colleagues. As interim RE leader, the deputy head is similarly inspiring and supportive. Standards and rates of progress are known and pursued with the same vigour as other core subjects.
- Relationships between school staff and parish catechists are proactive especially in relation to joint preparation of children for first sacraments. Parents of the newly baptised receive letters of welcome and interest from the school. Induction systems for new school parents include an invitation to picnic together with staff on the school grounds and to attend a CW session led by older pupils. Parents comment appreciatively on this early bonding opportunity.
- Governors act as critical friends to the head and SLT through their links as class governors, their involvement in various sub-committees and the termly SIP Progress Report.
- All canonical and statutory responsibilities are fulfilled.