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DIOCESAN BOARD FOR INSPECTIONS

CANON LAW 806 FINAL INSPECTION REPORT INCORPORATING SECTION 48

THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

ST MARY'S HORSFORTH CATHOLIC VOLUNTARY ACADEMY
Broadgate Lane, Horsforth, Leeds, LS18 5AB

School URN

139352

Date of S48 inspection and
OE grade

22nd -23rd February 2018
OE grade: Outstanding

E-mail address

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Chair of Governors

Mr Joe McDonnell

Executive Headteacher

Mr Peter Hughes

RE Subject Leader

Miss Philippa Dixon

Date and grade of last S48
Inspection

13th-14th March 2013
OE grade: Outstanding

Section 48 Inspector/s

Mrs Wendy Walsh

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 is the school in providing Catholic Education.

1

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

CATHOLIC LIFE

1

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

1

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

1

Summary of key findings:

This is an Outstanding Catholic school

- Dedicated leadership and governance display a deep commitment to implementing the Church's mission in education. They ensure that a wealth of opportunities are provided to help pupils, staff and families develop their own personal relationships with God.
- All associated with the school are encouraged and supported to live out the mission of the school, 'Happy together in God's family, we love, grow and learn'.
- Staff, pupils, the parish priest and governors are rightly proud of their school.
- The parish priest who is also the Religious Education (RE) governor provides outstanding support to the committed staff team and school community.
- Parents speak highly of the school and appreciate the 'sense of family' where 'each child is known and individual'.
- High quality Collective Worship is central to the life of the school and is a prayerful, relevant experience for all.
- Teachers generally have strong subject knowledge and overall teaching is mainly good with none that is inadequate.
- Curriculum provision is broadened through the planned study of other major faiths.
- The school benefits from collaborative working with the other schools in the Bishop Wheeler Catholic Academy Trust (BWCAT).
- The policy and provision for Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) has been reviewed by staff and governors recently in line with the new Diocesan policy.
- All areas from the last Section 48 inspection have been addressed.
- All canonical and statutory duties are fulfilled.

What the school needs to do to improve further

- Further improve the quality of teaching to outstanding by
 - Ensuring leaders make accurate judgements on the quality of teaching based on a range of robust evidence, not just pupil outcomes.
 - Using current assessment information to ensure pupils know the level they are working at, their target and what they need to do to achieve it.
 - Selecting the appropriate driver words and 'I can' statements to focus planning and teaching and so differentiate learning tasks accordingly.
 - Providing pupils with marking which identifies how well they are doing, what next steps they need to take to improve their work as well as regular opportunities to respond to high quality advice which moves their learning on.
- Enable the involvement of pupils of all ages in the planning and delivery of child led Collective Worship through a progressive programme of age appropriate expectations so that by Upper Key Stage 2 they can do so entirely on their own.

Information about this inspection

The Inspection of St Mary's Horsforth Catholic Voluntary Academy 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 Bishop 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 2017).

The inspection was carried out by one inspector over 2 days who reviewed in detail the following aspects:

- The extent to which the key issues for action identified in the previous Section 48 Inspection have been addressed.
- The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school.
- The quality of teaching and marking and how purposeful learning is in Religious Education
- How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education (RE).
- The extent to which the RE curriculum promotes learning for individuals and groups of pupils, to ensure maximum progress for all.
- The quality of Collective Worship (CW) and how well the pupils respond to and participate in it.
- The accuracy of the school's self-evaluation system
- The quality of the leadership and management, especially in the way they promote, monitor, evaluate and plan improvements to the provision of Catholic education at St Mary's.
- The school's partnership activities – including home/school/parish links.

During the inspection:

- The inspector observed five lessons of which one was a joint lesson observation with the executive head teacher.
- The inspector observed four acts of CW, one of which was a joint observation.
- A selection of pupils' workbooks were scrutinised along with tracking information to show pupil attainment and progress were analyzed.
- Meetings were held with the executive head teacher, the chair of governors, the current RE subject leader accompanied by the previous post holder, the parish priest who is also the RE governor, two parents and a group of pupils.
- Minutes from governor meetings, headteacher reports and presentations to governors were examined.
- Displays in classrooms and around the school as well as photographic evidence of activities throughout the liturgical calendar year which show the special themed work which has taken place were viewed.
- A range of documentation covering the Catholic Life of the school and RE was considered.

Information about this school

- Horsforth St Mary's is a single form entry Catholic primary school which serves the parish of Our Lady of Kirkstall.
- Since the last S48 inspection (March 2013), a number of significant changes have taken place at the school. The school has converted to voluntary academy status within the Bishop Wheeler Catholic Academy Trust (BWCAT). St Mary's is a Teaching School with the feeder Catholic high school. The school was awarded Teaching School status in March 2014 and is the lead school for School Direct. The headteacher is now the executive headteacher; there is a new head of school (acting), assistant headteacher and RE leader.
- The school has a published admission number (PAN) of thirty pupils. Currently there are two hundred and four pupils on roll.
- Ninety nine per cent of the pupils are Catholic; one per cent have no religious affiliation.
- The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals (3%) is significantly below the national average of 24%.
- Eight per cent of the pupils are on the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) register which is well below the national average of 13%. These pupils are supported at school level with no pupil (0%) having an Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP) which again is well below the national average.
- There are eight full time equivalent (fte) teachers and four part time teachers. Seven teach RE. Three teachers hold the Catholic Certificate of Religious Studies (CCRS) qualification.
- The school works in active partnership with the other schools within BWCAT, other trusts and schools involved with its Teaching School work.
- The RE leader regularly attends diocesan training and trust events to share good practice with colleagues.
- The school facilitates/hosts wraparound care by an outside provider and a range of after school activities.

Full report - inspection judgements

CATHOLIC LIFE

The Catholic Life of the school is outstanding

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| The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school. | 1 |
| The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school | 1 |
| How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision of the Catholic Life of the school | 1 |

- Pupils value and actively participate in the Catholic nature of the school. As a pupil said to the inspector, 'We learn to love God and do what He would like us to do.'
- The school mission statement, 'Happy together in God's family, we love, grow and learn', is a clear and inspiring expression of the educational mission of the Church which is lived out by all members of the school community.
- The children can explain what the mission statement means and can give examples of this in action. As a result, they are alert to the needs of others and seek justice for all within and beyond the school community. As a pupil explained, "We get missions each week- for example if someone is lonely we go and play with them." They also generously fundraise for a variety of causes such as Macmillan Cancer, CAFOD and The Good Shepherd Appeal.
- Pupils appreciate the school's chaplaincy provision, taking leadership roles and actively participating in opportunities provided by the school, such as visits to places of worship and retreats. Pupils in Year 6 have acted as prayer sponsors to the pupils in Year 3 who are preparing for their First Holy Communion. They then go on a day retreat to Ampleforth Abbey where they spend time together. Through this, the pupils gain a deeper understanding of their faith as they have the chance to experience it both in Year 3 as children who have just made their Holy Communion and in Year 6 as children who are approaching the end of their primary school experience and who have acted as prayer sponsors throughout the year. This allows them to fully reflect on their journey of faith during their time at St Mary's.
- Through the School Council, pupils feel that their suggestions are taken on board and contribute to the school's evaluation of its Catholic Life and its child- friendly mission statement.
- There is a strong sense of community at all levels, evidenced in the high quality relationships that exist between members of the school community. Staff promote high standards of behaviour and are exemplary role models for pupils.
- The school is a calm and welcoming place to be with the school environment clearly reinforcing its mission and Catholic identity through a range of quality displays and professional signage.

- Pupils show a deep respect for themselves and others as being unique because they are created in God's image. The behaviour of almost all pupils is exemplary. They show an ability to listen and to give thanks as well as the need to forgive and be forgiven appropriate to their age.
- The school provides extensive opportunities for the moral and spiritual development of all pupils and staff through both pupil and staff retreats.
- All staff are fully committed to the Catholic Life and educational mission of the school which is reflected in how they participate in school activities such as staff retreats and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) opportunities for Religious Education. As such the chaplaincy provision is exemplary in supporting and promoting the Catholic Life of the school.
- Pastoral programmes such as Mindmate and RSE are planned, mostly well taught and reflect Catholic teachings and principles.
- Clear policies and procedures are in place, which provide high levels of pastoral care to pupils at times of need. The school is equally attentive to the pastoral needs of members of staff through individual meetings with the parish priest.
- The school's leadership is deeply committed to the Church's mission in education, the development of which is viewed by leaders and governors as a core leadership responsibility and is given a high priority on the school improvement plan and at governor meetings.
- As leaders, the governing body leads by example in its consistent emphasizing of the Catholic Life as a school improvement priority. Governors make a highly significant contribution, they are highly visible and actively involved, ensuring pupils are always at the heart of what they do.
- Self-evaluation involves regular monitoring and analysis which leads to planned improvements including CPD focusing on the Catholic Life of the school which occurs frequently and is engaging, well planned and effective. As a result, staff understanding of the school's mission is outstanding. They share its purpose and are keenly and actively involved in shaping and supporting it.
- Parents and carers are very supportive of the school's mission which St Mary's has harnessed to develop successful strategies, such as sacramental and liturgical workshops, for engaging with almost all parents and carers to the obvious benefit of pupils and the school community.
- St Mary's also works in close partnership with the parish priest and assistant priest to support pupils becoming proactive caring members of the parish. An example of this is the school's involvement in the parish based 'Live Simply' project which is promoted by sharing information on newsletters and encouraging the children to follow the examples set by the parish. As a result, the pupils have looked into ways of being more eco-friendly, for example having monitors to turn off lights when rooms are empty.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Religious Education is

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| How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education | 1 |
| The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education | 2 |
| How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education | 1 |

- Pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is outstanding with the percentage of pupils achieving level 5 being particularly high. Almost all groups of pupils make good progress in each key stage.
- Pupils are religiously literate and so are able to use their knowledge, understanding and skills to reflect spiritually, and to think ethically and theologically. As a result, most pupils are aware of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life.
- Teachers follow the Diocesan approved Religious Education programme, 'The Way, the Truth and the Life' (TWTL). They plan their lessons using the Diocesan guidelines which they adapt to include more creative elements. It is clear that the pupils really appreciate this approach. In Year One a group of pupils enjoyed using role play to retell the story of when Jesus called the first disciples to follow Him whilst their peers used visual prompts to produce a written recount. Year Five pupils worked collaboratively to link a religious term to its definition.
- Overall teaching is mainly good with none that is inadequate. Pupils approach their lessons with interest and enthusiasm and behaviour in lessons is good because most pupils enjoy Religious Education.
- Teachers generally have strong subject knowledge and in Year Six the class teacher used skillful questioning to tease out pupils' understanding of how the disciples might have felt at the Transfiguration.
- However, differentiation is often by outcome. Where teaching is strongest, teachers use assessment information effectively to match pupils' tasks to their abilities to move them on in their learning.
- The quality of Religious Education is good because pupils enjoy and are influenced by their Religious Education lesson. They are keen to do well and to improve their knowledge and understanding and make good or better progress. Pupils' books evidence a good quantity of work, range of learning tasks and a good standard of attainment. The quality of marking and constructive feedback is generally good but is not consistent between classes. However marking does not always allow pupils to have clear understanding of how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve.
- Good quality resources, including other adults are used effectively to optimise learning for most pupils.
- Religious Education is taught using creative approaches which engage pupils and ensure they achieve and enjoy their lessons. In Reception, the teacher retold a parable using Godly Play to bring the story alive. The follow up focus group activity with photographs helped the pupils to understand how they should try to be kind and how

they could apply this in their own lives. Areas of provision now need to be developed to provide a range of RE related learning activities both indoors and outdoors to ensure 10% of the teaching time is dedicated to RE.

- In the observed lesson in Year Four, the class teacher provided a variety of learning experiences which used time effectively to maximize learning. Pupils were encouraged to actively participate in the retelling of Palm Sunday which kept all pupils engaged. Differentiated learning tasks supported pupils to make links between the story and beliefs about Jesus.
- Leaders and governors ensure that Religious Education has full parity with other core curriculum subjects including professional development, resourcing, staffing and accommodation. They ensure that at least the required amount of curriculum time is given to Religious Education in each key stage though this is not always evident in books.
- The curriculum leader for Religious Education has a clear vision for teaching and learning and a good level of expertise to improve the quality of teaching and learning to be at least consistently good, with much that is outstanding.
- Leaders conduct a range of monitoring activities relating to provision and outcomes in Religious Education but they need to ensure that judgements on the quality of teaching are based on a range of evidence not just pupil outcomes to ensure that judgements are accurate and robust.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

Collective Worship is Outstanding

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| How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship | 1 |
| The quality of provision for Collective Worship | 1 |
| How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship | 1 |

- Collective Worship is central to the life of the school for all pupils and forms the heart of every school celebration. Praying together is part of the daily experience for all pupils and staff.
- Collective Worship has a clear purpose with the themes chosen for worship reflecting a deep understanding of the Church's mission in education and the liturgical season. There are many reminders of this in the beautiful displays throughout the school.
- From their earliest days in the school, high expectations are set by the staff with regard to pupils' behaviour in CW. Staff are excellent role models for pupils in their adult led CW which enables pupils to experience high quality experiences of the Church's liturgical year. Pupils are able to reflect in silence and join in community prayer appropriately and with confidence.
- The Key Stage 1 CW led by the assistant headteacher engaged pupils' interest through the use of props to retell the story of the Good Shepherd and supported them to reflect on the message from that gospel in their own lives by fundraising to help others during

the season of Lent. Pupils in Year Three were observed by the inspector participating well during their teacher led CW that focused on caring for others as God would expect especially during Lent.

- Almost all pupils have an excellent understanding of the Church. By the end of Key Stage 2, they are able to prepare acts of Collective Worship, which fully reflects this understanding.
- In Year Five, two pupils confidently led their class in a reflective, well prepared CW which they had planned with the support of the class teacher. Most of their peers were obviously uplifted by this worship opportunity.
- A group of Year Six pupils demonstrated to the inspector how they regularly plan and lead CW for another year group with a degree of independence. They spoke about how they plan and lead acts of worship based on a reading given by the class teacher. These pupils displayed confidence in their use of scripture, religious artefacts and liturgical music along with both traditional and contemporary approaches to prayer. Their worship was really appreciated by the Year Four class.
- However, the school now needs to create a progressive programme of age appropriate expectations to ensure the involvement of pupils of all ages in the planning and delivery of child led CW so that upper Key Stage 2 pupils are able to plan and lead acts of worship entirely on their own.
- Leaders have a thorough knowledge of the church's liturgical year, its seasons, rites and symbols; as a result Collective Worship is delivered in a way that is relevant to pupils.
- The RE leader regularly updates the staff on any diocesan wide developments to promote or enhance liturgy and has provided high quality training and support.
- There is a clear policy for Collective Worship which is monitored and evaluated regularly. Liturgical and spiritual formation is considered a priority for all staff and they have accessed CW training.
- Staff also pray together on a regular and frequent basis and have opportunities for their own spiritual development through retreats and reflective time together. This spiritual time is an essential part of their on-going formation as leaders of CW.
- CW is well resourced and all classrooms have a CW focal point with quality resources appropriate to the liturgical season.
- The school actively involves parents, carers and governors in CW experiences in a way that attracts and facilitates attendance and they comment on how much they appreciate the welcoming community the school offers when they are invited to join in acts of worship in school and in church.