

DIOCESE OF NOTTINGHAM INSPECTION SERVICE



SECTION 48 INSPECTION REPORT

(Section 48, Education Act 2005)

St. Augustine's Catholic Primary School
Kesteven Road
Stamford
Lincolnshire
PE9 1SR

20th October 2011
(Autumn Term 2011)

URN: 120610

SECTION 48 DENOMINATIONAL INSPECTION REPORT

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| School: | St. Augustine's Catholic Primary School Kesteven Road Stamford Lincolnshire PE9 1SR |
| Headteacher: | Mrs Sue Hooley |
| Chair of Governors: | Mr Joe Scott |
| Date of Inspection: | 20 October 2011 |
| Inspection Team: | Mrs Anne Recchia Mrs Ellis Field |
| URN Number: | 120610 |
| Overall Grade Awarded: | 2 |

Description of the school

St. Augustine's Catholic Primary School is situated in the town of Stamford in the County of Lincolnshire. It is part of a hard Federation with English Martyrs at Oakham. The school serves the three Catholic parishes of St. Augustine's, Stamford, St. Gilbert's, Bourne and St. Guthlac's, Deeping St. James. There are 131 pupils on roll which makes St. Augustine's a smaller than average primary school. 36% of pupils on roll are baptised Catholic, 40% are from other Christian denominations and a further 24% have no religious affiliation. Most of the pupils are of white British origin with only a very small minority from different ethnic groups. There is a wide spread of attainment on entry but this is broadly in line with national averages. However, the majority of pupils enter school for the first time with little or no knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith. The proportion of children with additional learning needs is broadly in line with national averages. Since the last inspection, there has been a period of staff change which is now beginning to settle. The school houses a privately run pre-school nursery which also offers before and after school provision for pupils at the school.

Overall effectiveness

The overall effectiveness of the Catholic life of St. Augustine's School and its provision for community cohesion is good. Outcomes for pupils are good. Given the poor levels of religious literacy on entry to the school the pupils make good progress throughout their time at St. Augustine's. The school is aware of the need to challenge the more able pupils to achieve higher standards.

The Headteacher and School Leader both offer excellent role models for the staff and pupils and are enthusiastic in promoting the Catholic mission of the school. The Governors act effectively as 'critical friends' and have been proactive in promoting the school in the parishes.

The school provides good Catholic Education for its pupils. Pupils' spiritual and moral development is well catered for both in the Religious Education curriculum and the prayer and worship life of the school.

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| Overall effectiveness | Grade: 2 |
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What does the school need to do to improve further?

St. Augustine's School has made some good improvements since the last inspection and are keen to improve further. The school should focus on the following:

- Planning should be effectively differentiated to ensure all pupils are sufficiently challenged especially the high achieving pupils.
- Thorough analysis of data should be undertaken to allow the leadership team to have a clear overview of progress in Religious Education allowing them to plan more strategically in the future.
- Further develop the role of the prayer leaders to enable different forms of prayer to be introduced.
- Ensure that in Religious Education lessons, pupils are given the opportunity to record at more length their knowledge and understanding of the learning objective and reflect on its meaning.

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

The school's capacity for sustained improvement is good. The Headteacher's deep commitment to an excellent Catholic education sets the overall ethos of the school and she is now ably supported by the School Leader, who is also the RE Co-ordinator.

Despite significant barriers to progress in terms of high staff turnover and converting to a hard federation and all that this process entails, the school has made good progress since its last inspection. Many of the issues have been addressed effectively. However, high achieving pupils are still not suitably challenged in lessons. The leadership team have identified this issue and plans to address this form part of the current year's school improvement plan.

The RE Co-ordinator has used her leadership role to ensure a strong sense of mission throughout the school; a number of staff commented on the way in which she has united them as a team. The Parish Priest has an excellent understanding of where the school

needs to develop and plays an integral role in moving the school forward. The Headteacher and School leader have set in place a monitoring system which is now beginning to impact on overall standards in Religious Education.

The Governing Body is proactive in ensuring that the school remains faithful to its Catholic mission and plays a key role in monitoring and evaluating standards. Together with the leadership team, they are also effectively maximising the ability of both schools in the federation to benchmark performance, share good practice and take a strategic approach towards staff appointments that will benefit both schools. The foundations are now securely in place to ensure a strong Catholic ethos and to drive up standards.

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| The school's capacity for sustained improvement | Grade: 2 |
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| <p style="text-align: center;">PUPILS How good outcomes are for pupils, taking particular account of variations between different groups</p> |
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Observations by the inspection team confirmed the school's baseline analysis that the majority of children start below age related expectations in Religious Education. The children in key stage one make good progress and as a result, by the end key stage one their attainment is broadly in line with expectations. Throughout key stage two this progress is sustained and built upon and as a result attainment by the majority of pupils at the end of key stage two is good.

Pupils were able to demonstrate a very high level of understanding, for example, Year 2 pupils were able to talk confidently about the signs and symbols of baptism and their meaning. Year 5 pupils were able to link Psalm 23 to previous learning on the signs and symbols of baptism and confirmation. Year 6 pupils were confident in expressing how the sacraments of baptism and confirmation should impact on their behaviour both at a local level, in terms of the school and local community, and at a global level, through the work of CAFOD.

Written work was well presented and in most classes there was strong evidence of developmental marking. The written work in Year 2 provided exemplary practice in terms of both content and developmental marking. The inclusion of children with severe learning needs was notable, for example, one of these children was invited to act out the role of the priest in a 'baptism'. There were some examples of longer and more detailed pieces of writing in some classes but this was not evident elsewhere. More sustained pieces of writing would provide a level of challenge for the most able pupils and would allow them to demonstrate their in depth knowledge and understanding of the topics covered in the Religious Education scheme.

A sense of belonging to a welcoming community pervades the school and is reflected in the good behaviour of the pupils and the caring attitudes they show towards one another. There is a strong sense of pupils' ownership in the school. Prayer Leaders, Sports Ambassadors and School Councillors have a high profile in the school. Working walls are not only evident in the classrooms but also in the public display areas, on one wall, for example, pupils are invited to write to God about what they wonder.

Prayer leaders ensure that prayer is central to all they do. In Year 5, for example, prayer leaders confidently reminded the children about the need for quietness and respect as they led their end of day worship. Prayer leaders also welcomed the younger children into the whole school act of worship.

Pupils respond and participate well in the school's collective worship. They show reverence and respect when needed and sing joyfully and with confidence. The pupils have a good understanding of religious seasons and participate enthusiastically in traditional prayers of the Church and are able to create their own informal prayers. They should now investigate different forms of prayer to enhance their experience of communicating with God.

Effective use is made of the 'Statements to Live by' programme. Use of these resources is evident in all the classrooms and pupils are invited to interact through posters and artefacts with these displays. A conversation with various groups of pupils revealed that pupils felt that Gospel Values underpinned the life of the school. They were able to articulate the value they place on the Catholic life of the school and its impact on their lives.

Year 6 pupils run their own tuck shop to supplement the cost of their residential visit to the 'Briars' The Pupil Council talk spontaneously about the way in which their Religious Education lessons not only taught them about their own faith but about other faiths, such as Sikhism. They were aware of their responsibilities to the local and global community and frequently devise their own fund raising activities to support local and global charities such as CAFOD and the Heart Foundation. Due to the input of the Parish Priest, many of the children now feel confident in choosing appropriate liturgical colours and artefacts for displays and acts of worship.

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| How good outcomes are for pupils, taking account of variations between different groups | Grade: 2 |
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LEADERS AND MANAGERS

How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic life of the school and plan improvement to outcomes for pupils

Leaders and managers at all levels promote, monitor and evaluate the Catholic life of the school to a good standard. The Headteacher and the Religious Education Coordinator, who is also the School Leader, are deeply committed to the school's Catholic mission. The spiritual and moral development of the pupils is given a high priority and is developed through the broad and balanced Religious Education curriculum. Good provision is made for the pupils' education in sex and relationships reflecting the teachings of the Catholic Faith.

Areas for improvement have been accurately highlighted and effective plans are in place, which are based on good monitoring and evaluation of the Catholic life of the school. The Governors are confident in their role as critical friend and undertake regular monitoring visits to ensure they are well informed and are able to have a strategic overview of the school. They have taken part in, and effectively used, in service training on the Catholic dimension of the school and how to monitor and evaluate it.

Leaders and managers promote community cohesion to a good standard. Relationships within the school are very positive and supportive. Pupils are able to talk freely to teachers and classroom assistants about their concerns and through the school council, prayer leaders and sports ambassadors are given a clear voice in the day to day running of the school. Some concerns were raised by the children regarding midday supervision, these are being addressed by the senior leadership team.

The Parish Priest is a weekly visitor to the school and plays an active part in the religious development of the children. His recent input into developing an understanding of the Mass with the children has been particularly effective. The promotion of the school in the parishes is good, although efforts to attract more Catholic families to St. Augustine's have been difficult due to distance and transport issues. Governors' work in this area is admirable.

The school is located in a semi-rural area where the pupils have little day-to-day contact with people of other faiths and cultures. Efforts to address this with visiting speakers and dedicated enrichment days have been popular with the pupils and have been successful in broadening pupils' knowledge and understanding of other faiths. Links with the local schools and residential visits to the Briars further develop community cohesion. The school makes good use of sporting and artistic links with other local schools to foster friendships and share good practice. Pupils support local, national and international charities and have a good awareness of the needs of others less fortunate than themselves. The school takes part in municipal activities in Stamford, in November for example they made their own prayer poppies to place on the war memorial.

The Headteacher and School Leader are both committed to the induction of new teachers to a Catholic school and on-going in service training for all teachers. They have made full use of training provided by the Diocese in this respect. The impact of this can be seen in the confidence of teachers in assessing pupils' learning and their growing subject knowledge. The teaching and non-teaching staff of the school are aware of the Catholic life of the school and actively contribute and engage with it. Only 50% of the

teachers in the school are Catholic. Good mentoring and support is given to teachers new to the profession and new to the Catholic faith. The Religious Education Coordinator is well aware of the on-going need to ensure that these teachers are well informed and their plans accurately reflect the teachings of the Church.

The senior leadership team effectively monitor the teaching and learning at St. Augustine's School. Good systems are in place to track the progress of pupils' attainment effectively. The school improvement plan for the coming year accurately assesses the strengths and weaknesses of the school and plans for improvement are robust and achievable. However, a more strategic approach to the evaluation of data needs to take place to effectively inform planning not just in the short term but also in the future.

Leaders and managers provide a good quality and range of opportunities for pupils' personal and spiritual development. Pupils are able to articulate their views about the distinctive nature of the school and are proud to belong to St. Augustine's Catholic School.

Parents' views are sought regularly and they are kept well informed through the Head teacher's newsletter, annual reports and consultations. The most recent survey of parents' views indicated the majority of parents felt the teaching and learning was good and met the needs of their children.

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| How effective leaders and managers are in developing the Catholic life of the school | Grade: 2 |
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| PROVISION How effective the provision is in promoting Catholic Education |
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The overall quality of teaching is good. The vast majority of the lessons observed were good or better. Where teaching is less than good and teachers are less experienced, there is a good support network of team planning and mentoring aimed at achieving high standards. Teachers' subject knowledge is generally good, however, care should be taken to ensure that teachers new to teaching and the Catholic faith are confident about the subject matter they are teaching and the vocabulary they are using.

Planning is closely linked to attainment targets and in some cases is well differentiated to meet the needs of all pupils. This good practice needs to be disseminated to all classes. The School's Religious Education curriculum is enriched through imaginative and well planned strategies that capitalize on expertise in and beyond the school.

Lessons are brought to life through art and drama and other cross curricular links. This ensures that pupils are consistently interested in their learning and that they make good progress. Year 6 pupils for example, were able to show the impact of the sacrament of confirmation on their daily lives and actions through drama. In Year 5, a short video and listening to Psalm 23 being sung was used as a launch pad to initiate discussion.

Appropriate teacher intervention into group discussions clarified understanding and led the dialogue towards a higher level of understanding. Year 2 pupils were able to present explanations about the signs and symbols of baptism to a 'mystery guest' who wanted to find out about them. As a result, all pupils were actively and enthusiastically engaged, and discussion between pupils revealed a very high level of understanding. Notable in Year 2, the children's written work reflected a very high level of understanding and challenge for the higher ability pupils and this is something that senior leadership team is keen to disseminate.

A Governor commented, after observing staff INSET on two occasions, that staff were becoming more confident to voice their views and that they made valuable contributions to discussion. The contrast and development had been marked over the period of a year. This has led to improvements in developmental marking in the children's books and more confidence in assessing pupils' attainment.

The school has detailed and accurate information on pupils' attainment and progress. A more thorough analysis of this data needs to be undertaken now to identify strengths and tackle areas of underachievement swiftly. This will lead to more challenging targets being set for those high achieving pupils who are able to attain at the highest level. Self-assessment is still at an early stage but signs that this is being used to improve pupils' work and tackle any misconceptions are evident in some classes.

Extra-curricular activities are varied and have a good take up. The recent art projects are linked to religious themes and include input from pupils, parents and Governors. The class 'Angel Project' has been a particularly powerful tool to engage parents in their child's learning.

Acts of collective worship are given a high profile in the school and celebrate the Catholic identity of the school through scripture, prayer, links to the Religious Education curriculum and the Church's seasons. Parents are welcomed to whole school acts of collective worship as staff and pupils pray together. There are good opportunities for children to take part in formal and informal prayer. The school has provided training and support to enable pupils to become increasingly skilled in the planning and leading of collective worship. Provision is made to ensure pupils are aware of different faiths and religions. They have been provided with some first-hand experience of the Sikh faith which has had a positive impact on the pupils. Links to the local Parishes are good. Pupils worship in the local church at least once a term and parishioners are welcome to attend Mass in school.

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| How effective the provision is in promoting Catholic education | Grade: 2 |
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| Common grading scale for all inspection judgements | |
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| Grade 1 | Outstanding |
| Grade 2 | Good |
| Grade 3 | Satisfactory |
| Grade 4 | Inadequate |

Inspection Judgements Summary

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| Overall effectiveness – How effective the school is in providing Catholic education. | 2 |
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| How good outcomes are for pupils, taking particular account of variations between different groups. | 2 |
| How effective leaders and managers are in developing the Catholic life of the school. | 2 |
| How effective the provision is in promoting Catholic education. | 2 |
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| How good OUTCOMES are for pupils, taking particular account of variations between different groups. | 2 |
| How well pupils progress and enjoy their learning in Religious Education. | 2 |
| Taking into account: | |
| <i>pupils' standards of attainment in Religious Education;</i> | 3 |
| <i>the quality of pupils' learning and their progress;</i> | 2 |
| <i>the quality of learning for pupils with particular learning needs and/or disabilities and their progress.</i> | 2 |
| The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life of the school. | 2 |
| How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship. | 2 |
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| How effective LEADERS AND MANAGERS are in developing the Catholic life of the school. | 2 |
| How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic life of the school and plan improvement to outcomes for pupils. | 2 |
| How effectively leaders and managers promote Community Cohesion. | 2 |
| How well leaders and managers at all levels monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education and plan for improvement to outcomes for pupils. | 3 |
| The extent to which the governing body provides effective challenge and support for the Catholic dimension of the school so areas needing development are tackled decisively and statutory and canonical responsibilities met. | 2 |
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| How effective the PROVISION is in promoting Catholic education. | 2 |
| The quality of teaching and how purposeful learning is in Religious Education. | 2 |
| The effectiveness of assessment and academic guidance in Religious Education. | 3 |
| The extent to which the Religious Education curriculum meets pupils' needs. | 3 |
| The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school. | 2 |