

# **DIOCESE OF PLYMOUTH**

Vicariate for Formation



Diocese of  
Plymouth

**Our Lady and St. Patrick's Catholic Primary School  
Fourth Avenue  
Teignmouth  
TQ14 9DT**

URN 113468

**Head Teacher: Miss Anne-Marie McIntosh  
Chair of Governors: Mr. Niall Finneran**

**Record of S48 Inspection  
20<sup>th</sup> June 2012**

## **Introduction**

The school was inspected by Ofsted in January 2012 and was judged to be 'satisfactory'. A new Section 48 Inspection process is currently being developed for use in diocesan schools. Pending finalisation of this process and as an interim measure, Bishop Budd has given his approval to a formal review to be conducted jointly by a diocesan officer and the school, to meet the requirements of Section 48 of the Education Act 2005. This document is a statement of the outcomes of that review, to be shared with governors, parents and other stakeholders.

This report identifies some of Our Lady and St. Patrick's key strengths and also areas of development to further strengthen the life and work of the school. The review covered a wide range of issues and as a process it sought to be creative and to support the school in its ongoing development as a Catholic community.

The review was conducted by Sarah Adams (Diocesan RE Adviser for Schools) working closely with the Head Teacher and the RE Leader. The outcomes of the review were agreed on the basis of:-

- Meeting with Head Teacher
- Documentation made available in school
- Observation of lessons
- Meeting with Parish Priest
- Participation in a whole school Act of Worship
- Meeting with the Chair of Governors
- Meeting with RE Leader

## **Strengths of the School**

### **Leadership**

Along with the governors of the school, the Headteacher and her recently established leadership team, are working hard to maintain and develop a strong Catholic ethos both within the school and also within the wider community. The Headteacher has a clear sense of vision and a genuine commitment to ensuring that the school authentically lives out its mission, 'to live, love and learn together in God's way'. Generally, relationships within the school are growing in a positive manner with adults committed to providing the very best for the children in their care. The senior leadership team and the Headteacher offer a strong lead in this respect.

Both the Headteacher and the RE Leader provide a high profile for the teaching of RE and its contribution to the educational mission of the Church. There is a strong commitment to ensuring that time allocated for RE lessons is in line with national expectations. The RE Leader works hard to support the staff and to identify training needs. Through consistent monitoring of lessons and planning the RE leader will be able to add to this support.

## **Religious Life**

The religious and spiritual focus of Our Lady and St. Patrick's School is central to the life of the school. Children and staff are encouraged and enabled to come together on a regular basis to pray, reflect and celebrate together. Children participate with enthusiasm and enjoy singing which they do very well. Gradually they are developing their capacity to be still and reflective. Older children enjoy the opportunities given to them to support the liturgies by playing percussion or providing technical assistance. Liturgies and assemblies are often joyful and educational, scripturally based and thoughtful. Currently adults tend to lead acts of worship. The opportunity for children to develop their own liturgical skills by helping to prepare and lead liturgies would greatly enhance the quality of their experience. At present not all of the adults in the school appreciate the significance of their presence and participation in acts of worship. Some INSET may help them to see how their contribution can serve to encourage and support the children, particularly in the way they model their own capacity to be still, reflective and respond appropriately.

The school takes pride in the way that it identifies itself as a Catholic school and displays in the hall and around the school are alive and colourful. Focal points in classrooms vary in quality. Some are clearly alive and interactive, with children able to contribute to them. However, this is an area that still needs to be developed so that there is consistency across the school to provide spaces within classrooms which reflect the prayer life of the class and which are child-directed.

The school has excellent links with the local Parish and the Parish Priest is not only a welcome visitor to the school but plays a significant role in helping the staff with the teaching of RE and celebrating the sacraments in school. Parishioners are regularly invited to the school to celebrate Mass and each month the school is invited to attend the Parish Sunday Mass as well on days such as Education Sunday and when there is First Holy Communion. The school and the Parish support one another through a joint Christmas Fayre and shared Advent Service.

## **Teaching in RE**

In the past two years the school has adopted 'God Matters' as a strategy for teaching RE. Teachers feel positive about the approach and teaching is often creative and exciting. Following an interim visit in October 2011 at the request of the Headteacher and since OFSTED, the quality of RE teaching has developed and is making sound progress. A number of lessons were observed, during which it was possible to see how teachers have taken on board previous recommendations.

Lessons were well-planned, creative and challenging. Learning objectives were evident and teachers made a point of checking how children were progressing by recapping on previous learning and providing opportunities for on-going evaluation throughout the lesson. In one lesson in particular the teacher had chosen to explore with the children how they might compare and contrast their understanding of the Land of Egypt and the Promised Land. They were doing this through art, having already considered in detail the story of Moses. By developing the children's art skills the teacher was also helping them to look more closely at the story and acquire a

deeper understanding of its significance. Children were comfortable talking about their work and accepting guidance.

Generally the children are positive about the teaching they have in RE. They speak highly of the variety of approaches used by teachers and highlighted the opportunities they have for drama, art, hot-seating and the use of ICT in RE. When asked about their learning children were articulate and informative. Equally they demonstrated their capacity to think about and apply their learning to their own life experience.

Over-all teachers were able to demonstrate confidence in their own knowledge of the subject and select appropriate activities. In some lessons differentiation had been carefully built into the activities and there was great encouragement for the children to extend their own thinking. This was less so in other lessons and identified a need for some attention to be given to this when planning.

At present the focus in RE tends to lie in AT1 and here the knowledge and understanding of the children is well-developed. It is important now for the school to consider in more depth how they develop their lessons to ensure that AT2 also plays a significant role in the teaching of RE. Drawing on the expertise within and beyond the school will support this aim.

### **Pastoral Life of the School**

The pastoral life of Our Lady and St. Patrick reflects the desire of the community to live in accordance to its mission statement. High expectations of the children ensure that they know how to behave and relate to their peers and adults. Relationships between children and staff are generally positive and reflect the Catholic ethos of the school, to love and to serve one another. This is a warm and friendly school where children enjoy the presence of visitors and welcome them openly.

The children are encouraged to participate in a wide range of activities to serve the wider community. Supporting CAFOD is central to the charitable work of the school and the children have developed a sound insight into the work of the charity. The school has been very proactive in making sure that the children learn about as well as raise money for CAFOD. During Lent the children not only raised money for the water-aid project but they participated in an act of carrying heavy buckets of water around the playground to help them appreciate the hard way of life that children have in other parts of the world when they have to walk for miles just to get water and before they go to school.

In addition to the work the children do for CAFOD, they also involve themselves in many other activities. These include charity work for the NSPCC, the local Devon Air Ambulance; a local homeless charity is the recipient of the children's Harvest Festival products and the children also support the Old Veterans and the Poppy Appeal. The school participates in many Diocesan events including celebrations such as the CAFOD 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Mass and supports local homes for the elderly where they go to entertain the residents by singing and bringing them music.

All of these activities help to develop in the children a strong sense of moral responsibility and a desire to reach out to the wider community.

### **Areas of Focus for Development**

The school's mission as a Catholic School would be further enhanced by focusing planned development in the following areas:

1. To develop the liturgical life of the school in all its facets so that children become more involved and are enabled to develop their own liturgical skills. This would include: focal points, prayer in the classroom and well-structured and devised school liturgies.
2. To develop the teaching in school to ensure that planning for progress includes AT2 and consistency across classes when it comes to monitoring and recording progress.

### **Conclusion**

Over-all, Our Lady and St. Patrick's is a healthy school, conscious of its role within the mission of the Church, rooted in Catholic values and living them out with integrity. It is a school where children feel welcomed, nurtured and respected. The governors desire that everyone in the school recognises and believes that they are valued members of the school community with a contribution to make to the mission and ethos of the school.

On a personal note I would like to thank everyone for their time during this visit and for the positive contributions that everyone, including the children, made to ensure that I enjoyed my visit. I look forward to continuing to support the school on its journey.

Sarah Adams  
June 2012