



**DENOMINATIONAL INSPECTION
REPORT**
(Under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005)

**THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL
AND
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

School: St. Patrick's Catholic Primary School

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School URN: 122819

Headteacher: Mrs Jane Smedley

Chair of Governors: Mr Ken Daly

Inspectors: Mrs Jane Monaghan
Mrs Anne Recchia

Date of Inspection: 5 December 2013

INTRODUCTION

The inspection of this school was carried out on behalf of the Bishop of Nottingham under Canon 806 of Canon Law and Section 48 of the Education Act 2005 in accordance with the Diocese of Nottingham Schedule for Section 48 Inspections. The inspection reviews and evaluates how effective the school is in providing Catholic education. The process begins with the school's own self-evaluation and the inspection schedule is in line with the criteria set by the National Board of Religious Inspectors and Advisers (NBRIA).

During the inspection, the inspectors observed 6 Religious Education lessons and 2 Acts of Collective Worship.

Meetings were held with the headteacher, the subject leader for Religious Education, governors and the parish priest. Discussions were also held with pupils and parents.

The inspectors scrutinised a range of documents including the school improvement plan, tracking information, policies, monitoring information and the professional development file. Inspectors also examined the work in pupils' Religious Education books.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St. Patrick's is an average-sized primary school which serves the families within the parish of St. Patrick's and St. George's, Mansfield. 51% of all pupils are baptised Catholics with a further 30% from other Christian denominations, 2% are from other faiths and 17% have no religious affiliation.

The proportions of pupils who come from minority ethnic backgrounds or who speak English as an additional language are average. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also below average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium which provides the school with additional funding for children in Local Authority care, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and for pupils from service families is below average.

The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics. The current headteacher was appointed on a temporary basis in April 2013. Her appointment was made permanent in June 2013.

INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

1

CATHOLIC LIFE

1

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

1

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

2

KEY FINDINGS

- St. Patrick's is an outstanding school where its Catholic mission and vision is shared and actively promoted and practised by both staff and pupils. The headteacher and leadership team are highly motivated and committed to implement plans that ensure pupils' academic, spiritual, moral and social knowledge and skills are developed effectively. Pupils are able to contribute positively to the school's ethos and values showing a growing awareness of the impact that their faith has on their lives.
- Collective Worship is central to the life of the school, it is valued by pupils and staff alike and as such - is outstanding. The development of pupils' skills in planning and leading liturgies is having a very positive effect on their moral and spiritual development. The headteacher and lead teacher for Religious Education are excellent role models and provide support to all for the effective delivery of Collective Worship.
- Religious Education is good overall. Pupils achieve standards which are good by the end of each key stage. Given their very low starting point on entry, pupils make at least good and sometimes outstanding progress in Religious Education. Teaching is at least good and is often outstanding. Over-cautiousness on the part of some teachers can, however, at times lead to pupils spending too much time 'consolidating' learning which can reduce the amount of challenge in lessons and hampers progress.
- The school's leadership team has a very accurate picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses through thorough monitoring and evaluation. They plan improvements in a systematic and effective way to improve provision and outcomes for pupils.

WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL NEED TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- To increase the level of challenge consistently in Religious Education lessons for all groups of pupils so that learning is not only consolidated but that it is built upon and extended effectively thereby accelerating attainment and progress further.
 - To continue to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of scripture especially at Key Stage 2.
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CATHOLIC LIFE

THE QUALITY OF THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

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

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The contribution that pupils make and the benefits that they receive from the Catholic Life of the school is outstanding. Pupils are at the centre of the school's vision and mission and pupil voice is a high priority. They take full advantage of the many and varied opportunities provided for their personal and spiritual development and they have a tangible and deep sense of belonging to a strong, 'gospel centred' community. Pupils take their responsibilities seriously within vibrant groups such as the liturgy and chaplaincy teams. The mission and ethos of the school is a strength which informs all aspects of school life. Pupils can discuss their own faith at a spiritual level with confidence. The school emblem of a shamrock with 'loving, caring and sharing' as its three offshoots displays the mission of the school in visual form and helps pupils to understand their religious backgrounds. Pupils have a sense of vocation recognising their gifts and those of others. They respond to the needs of their neighbours, locally and in a world-wide context as evidenced in the school's Ghanaian project. Pupils show compassion to others and they are eager to talk about their fundraising for local and parish projects and how it will benefit the recipients.

The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school is outstanding. Governors, staff and managers have high expectations and a shared vision with regard to the school's Catholic Mission. The learning environment is conducive to promoting Catholic Life at all levels and there are many examples in photographic evidence and displays of pupils' work to support this. Outstanding relationships exist between all members of the school community. Staff are effective role models and children are confident in expressing their feelings to them. Policies are clearly linked to the school's mission and are tailor-made to suit the needs and circumstances of the pupils. The recently reviewed behaviour policy by staff, pupils and governors has resulted in fewer instances of negative behaviour. St. Patrick's 'Golden Book' celebrates Catholic Life. Staff begin their meetings with prayer and there are high expectations for moral and ethical behaviour.

Leadership and management are outstanding in promoting provision and evaluating verbally the impact of the Catholic Life of the school. The parish priest, governors and other members of the parish give of their time generously in service to the school. Links with the parish community are flourishing with pupils and staff being a positive presence in parish life. Developing the Catholic Life of the school is viewed as a core leadership responsibility. Governors regularly undertake monitoring visits and discussions. These are followed by clear, decisive action and target setting for improvement. This will be further enhanced through a systematic programme of written outcomes and plans are in place to document this area. Families hold the school in high regard, comments such as, 'my child is very settled and loves coming to school' and 'the school's ethos is firmly rooted in the gospels' are among many positive responses given by parents and carers.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

THE QUALITY OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

1

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

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St. Patrick's is a vibrant worshipping community where pupils' response to and participation in Collective Worship is outstanding. Opportunities for both formal and spontaneous prayer, music, dance and silence engage pupils' interest and enthusiasm. From Early Years through to upper Key Stage 2, the appropriate use of all elements of liturgy enable pupils to develop knowledge, skills and understanding about the liturgical year very well. Pupils from different faith backgrounds are valued and encouraged to share their beliefs with others. Display is used to very good effect as evidenced in the 'Year of Faith' displays. The symbolism of 'journey' and 'footsteps' becoming closer to God is instrumental in developing the prayer life of the school. Pupils and in particular, the liturgy team are proactive in leading the school community in Acts of Worship. From the earliest years, pupils have ownership of this and as a matter of course, are proficient and effective in delivering inspirational Acts of Worship.

The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school is outstanding. The Acts of Collective Worship at the beginning of the day set the scene and are revisited in classroom delivery. However, staff must be alert to the fact that gathering for Collective Worship and the teaching of Religious Education as a discrete academic subject should not be confused. There is a clear distinction between the two and in order for both of these areas to be outstanding, this needs to be addressed as a matter of urgency. The parish priest is a welcome presence in the school, supporting and leading Acts of Worship and visiting classes. There is close contact with the parish children's liturgy group where similar themes are used to enhance the pupils' experience of liturgy.

The headteacher and lead teacher for Religious Education are excellent role models and provide support to all for the effective delivery of Collective Worship. In order to address the over-reliance of the leadership team in leading Collective Worship, the lead teacher has used her role to good effect. She leads and organises staff training so that colleagues receive first class input in spiritual and liturgical formation. The headteacher and senior leadership team members attend training sessions at diocesan level and avail themselves of opportunities to engage the expertise of the diocesan primary adviser for Religious Education. Governors attend Acts of Worship; they review and evaluate development in this area as a priority. All aspects of leadership have been instrumental in developing a culture of receptivity to Collective Worship with the result that pupils and indeed, the whole school community have experiences which are outstanding.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

THE QUALITY OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

2

- How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education.
- The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education.
- How well leaders and managers (including governors) monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education.

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Pupils are passionate about Religious Education. They talk enthusiastically about their experiences in lessons and value the support given to them by their teachers and support staff. Most pupils concentrate well in lessons and are rarely off task. The adults in the classroom quickly address any incidents of disaffection in a very positive way and as a consequence, teaching and learning proceeds at a good pace. Most pupils work cooperatively in pairs and groups and develop the ability to work independently from an early age. A very large majority of pupils, on entry to the school, have little knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith. As a result of outstanding teaching, pupils make rapid progress in the Foundation Stage where they quickly learn simple prayers of the Church, listen attentively to bible stories and show in the varied activities provided for them, that they can retell stories, show a growing awareness of the needs of others and use what they have learnt to build positive relationships with their peers and the adults around them. This outstanding progress continues to the end of Key Stage 1 where a very large proportion of the pupils reach a level in Religious Education that is in line with national expectations. A large majority of these pupils exceed those age related expectations. Progress tends to slow slightly in Key stage 2 due to the increasing demands of the curriculum to use scriptural knowledge and understanding to make links and give reasons for those links. The introduction of the new 'Come and See' Religious Education programme is beginning to address this issue and is having a positive impact on pupils' attainment. Standards across all key stages are good with no recognisable difference between groups of pupils. As a result of accurate feedback from teachers and the introduction of the 'footsteps' target cards, pupils are aware of the levels they are working on and the next steps needed to achieve at a higher level. They are beginning to respond to marking and in some instances, evaluate their own work. Aspirational targets in the school improvement plan and evidence of progress towards these in the pupils' books, show that attainment in Religious Education is improving over time.

The majority of teaching in Religious Education is good or better with some examples of outstanding practice especially in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. Where there is outstanding teaching in Key Stage 2, all pupils are challenged to take the next steps in their learning through well targeted questioning and positive marking strategies based on accurate assessment. Teachers have the ability to assess pupils' work well against the national Levels of Attainment but in a minority of cases, they lack the confidence to increase the level of challenge so that learning is not only consolidated but built upon and extended further. Teachers have a high level of subject knowledge and passion for teaching Religious Education. They use both human and physical resources well to maximise learning. There is a very positive climate for learning throughout the school; pupils' good work is celebrated

and the motto 'Mission Possible' is a tangible sign of the school's high expectations for its pupils and the capacity for further improvement.

Leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Knowledge to an outstanding level. Self-evaluation is firmly based on the results of systematic monitoring of teaching and learning. This leads to well focused development plans that accurately identify areas for improvement and offer realistic targets and time frames to realise ambitious plans for the future. The subject leader (who is also a lead teacher of Religious Education for the Diocese of Nottingham) and headteacher work together effectively and are valued by teachers and support staff. The lead teacher models best practice effectively and develops the skills and expertise of staff through dialogue, coaching, training and day to day support. As a result, teaching and learning is consistently good with a good proportion being outstanding. The governing body is well informed and supportive. Governors act well as 'critical friends' to the school - asking appropriate and searching questions, monitoring standards and ensuring that the school offers value for money.

WHAT INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS MEAN

Within the report, the following grades are used:

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Requires improvement
Grade 4	Inadequate

In the context of the whole school, the overall effectiveness grades have the following meaning:

Grade 1	Outstanding	The school is a highly effective Catholic school. Pupils' needs are exceptionally well met.
Grade 2	Good	The school is an effective Catholic school. Pupils' needs are met well.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	The school is not yet a good Catholic school, it is not inadequate however, there are aspects that require improvement.
Grade 4	Inadequate	There are features in need of urgent and immediate attention. The school is not meeting the basic minimum requirement for adequacy. The school will receive a monitoring visit within twelve months.

