

# NOTTINGHAM DIOCESAN INSPECTION REPORT ON DENOMINATIONAL EDUCATION

*SPRING 2009*



SAINT ELIZABETH'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL  
BELPER  
DE56 2JD

**Date of Inspection:** 24 March 2009

**(Section 48, 2005 Education Act)**

## SECTION 48 DENOMINATIONAL INSPECTION REPORT

<b>Name and address of School:</b>	<b>Saint Elizabeth's Catholic Primary School Matlock Road Belper Derbyshire DE56 2JD</b>
<b>Headteacher:</b>	<b>Mr B Lowe</b>
<b>Chair of Governors:</b>	<b>Mr R Hobson</b>
<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	<b>24 March 2009</b>
<b>Inspection Team:</b>	<b>Mr P Giorgio &amp; Mrs P Snowdon</b>
<b>URN &amp; DCSF Numbers:</b>	<b>URN: 112907 DCSF: 830 3513</b>
<b>Overall Grade Awarded:</b>	<b>2</b>

### **A. DESCRIPTION OF THE SCHOOL**

Saint Elizabeth's Catholic Primary School serves the parishes of Belper, Duffield and Ripley. The school was originally founded by the Franciscan Sisters and the school continues to maintain this link. There are currently 207 pupils on roll of whom 99 (47%) are baptised Catholic. 68 pupils (39%) are from other Christian denominations and 29 (14%) of pupils are non-affiliated. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is below average whilst the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of special educational needs, is above average. Attainment on entry to the school is judged to be below average however by the end of the Reception year pupils reach standards at least in line with, and often above the national average.

## **B. OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS**

### **How effective and efficient is the provision of Catholic education in meeting the needs of learners and why?**

Overall, Saint Elizabeth's is a good school with a number of outstanding features. The school's main strength is the quality of its Catholic life. It is evident that the school is truly a Catholic foundation and that its work is firmly rooted in Gospel Values. The Governing Body, Headteacher and staff all share this vision and work hard for the benefit of the pupils in their care. In turn – the pupils at Saint Elizabeth's develop a strong sense of being part of a vibrant Catholic community. The school's provision for community cohesion is good.

Since the last Section 48 denominational inspection in March 2006, the school has made good progress in a number of areas. This is due to the strong leadership of the Headteacher and support from the school's Governing Body and staff.

**GRADE: 2**

## **C. The capacity of the school to make further improvements and why.**

Saint Elizabeth's is very well placed to make further improvements. The school's Senior Management Team is united and committed to raising standards further. The Headteacher and staff receive strong support from the Governing Body and from the Franciscan Order of Sisters who play a vital role in the pastoral care of pupils.

On the whole, the school's self-evaluation was detailed and accurate however, in some areas it tended to be a little over generous in the grading given.

**GRADE: 1**

## **D. What steps need to be taken to improve the provision further?**

The school's many strengths far outweigh any areas for development. However, it is the view of the inspection team that the school now needs to address the area of standards in curriculum Religious Education. This will involve carrying out regular and rigorous scrutiny of pupils' books in order to ensure that all work in Religious Education is effectively tailored to pupils' individual needs so that all pupils are able to make maximum progress. It is also important for the staff and Governing Body to share an accurate understanding of the criteria by which to make judgements on standards.

## **THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL**

### **Leadership and Management**

#### **1. How effective are leadership and management in developing the Catholic life of the school?**

Overall, the Catholic life of the school is outstanding. The governing body fulfils its role in relation to the school's Catholic foundation very effectively and provides good direction of the school. The Headteacher has a clear vision and has made good progress since the last inspection.

It is evident that very good links exist with parents, the parish and the community to reinforce a high standard of care, guidance and support. A particular outstanding feature of the school is the involvement of the Franciscan Order of Sisters who play a key role in the care and spirituality of the children. The provision for chaplaincy features particularly highly at Saint Elizabeth's. The school is very effective in pursuing a vision whereby all pupils are valued by the staff. The morale of the staff is high.

**Grade: 1**

### **Collective Worship**

#### **2. How good is the quality of Collective Worship?**

The provision for prayer, collective worship and the liturgical life of the school are good. Two acts of collective worship were observed during the day of the inspection and these contribute well to the spiritual and moral development of pupils. Strengths were that pupils respond well, are enthusiastic and sing well! There was clear evidence that good opportunities are derived from the Liturgical Year, one act of collective worship focussed on the feast of the Annunciation. The children listened well, read from the Bible and were involved in the acts of worship as directed by the teacher or volunteer.

The school needs to concentrate on more child initiated activities acts of worship. Children could be given opportunities to plan, organise and lead worship.

**Grade: 2**

## **Community Cohesion**

- 3. How effectively the school promotes community cohesion: inwardly (within the school); within the local faith community (parish and education communities); and the wider social, cultural and educational communities.**

The school's provision for community cohesion is good. The school's mission statement was developed by all and shared by all.

Within the local community, links are strong. The Franciscan Sisters provide excellent support, Father Michael celebrates Mass and Father Keogh visits the school approximately three times a year. The sacraments take place jointly between the school and the parish where Sister Marianne supports children with their preparation for First Holy Communion.

The school supports a range of charities throughout the year, such as CAFOD, Operation Christmas Child and Oxfam. The children generously give their time to raise money and support others less fortunate than themselves.

Saint Elizabeth's works effectively with other schools and transition links between schools are good.

There was some evidence in pupils' books that Judaism was studied but no evidence of multi-cultural displays which included children's work.

**Grade: 2**

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

### **Achievement and Standards**

- 4. How well do learners achieve?**

Whilst overall, pupils' achievement in Religious Education can be judged as 'good' taking into account relatively low attainment on entry – evidence from an analysis of pupils' books indicates that standards in Religious Education are only satisfactory. There does seem to be some discrepancy between teachers' assessment of pupils' work and the quality of work which is contained in their books. Here, teachers' expectations of pupils seem to be lower – which sometimes results in pupils' work being poorly presented and lacking in sufficient depth and rigour particularly at Key Stage 2. The range of tasks which pupils are set tend to be narrow and there is little evidence to suggest that pupils' work is differentiated by task although there was slightly more evidence of this from the beginning of the Spring Term. The school's own self-evaluation states that it hopes to move to a system of continuous assessment shortly. This should help to address the issue.

Pupils from the School Council spoke very positively about their school. They are proud that their school is a Catholic school. Their teachers and other staff in the school are always there to help them and systems such as the 'worry box' ensure that any issues are resolved quickly. Evidence from the inspection shows that pupil behaviour is outstanding and that they are encouraged to show care both to each other and to the wider community through a range of charitable activities.

**Grade: 2**

## **Quality of Provision for Religious Education**

### **5. How effective are teaching and learning?**

The quality of teaching and learning at Saint Elizabeth's ranges from good to outstanding. Where teaching is particularly effective, teachers use a range of strategies to develop pupils' understanding such as good quality questioning and interesting activities.

In the Foundation Stage, pupils are provided with opportunities to take part in a range of activities connected to the current topic of 'growing'. In a number of lessons, pupils take part in collaborative, group tasks which encourage discussion and debate. In a Key Stage 2 class, pupils were asked to apply thinking skills to the trial of Jesus.

The school's own evidence suggests that pupils take part in a wide range of activities within their work in Religious Education including drama and role play. Whilst all of these are important, it is equally important that pupils are encouraged to produce written work which is of high quality where appropriate. Evidence from pupils' books suggests that often, pupils do not respond to their teacher's comments. Again, the school's self-evaluation indicates that the practice of formative marking needs to be applied more consistently throughout the school. The inspection team would concur with this view.

**Grade: 1**

### **6. How well does the Religious Education curriculum meet the needs and interests of learners?**

The curriculum for Religious Education fulfils the requirements of the Bishops' Conference 'Curriculum Directory for Catholic Schools' to an outstanding standard. The diocesan approved 'Here I Am' programme is used throughout the school and topics are covered according to diocesan guidelines. Class timetables indicate that the school complies with the Episcopal requirement that 10% of the working week is devoted to Religious Education. Indeed, a number of other areas such as PHSE and circle time also make a very significant contribution to the broader curriculum for Religious Education and pupils' spiritual and moral development.

Through the 'themed learning' approach, teachers are able to make links in learning across a number of curriculum areas which include Religious Education. This approach, along with the recent introduction of 'thinking skills' throughout the school results in pupils being encouraged to think both ethically and morally. It is clear that pupils at Saint Elizabeth's are able to make strong links between what they are taught and how they are called to live.

The school has rightly identified the need to continue to develop provision for pupils to visit places of worship of other world faiths within its own self-evaluation.

**Grade: 1**

## **Leadership and Management**

### **7. How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners in Religious Education?**

The educational mission of Saint Elizabeth's is strong. The school is staffed appropriately. Staff work hard and there is a strong sense of 'team spirit'.

The school's coordinator for Religious Education has a good knowledge of the subject; she is devoted and hard-working. Since her appointment to the post two years ago, good progress has been made on the implementation of a whole-school assessment system. The coordinator provides a good level of support for staff and attends diocesan training when appropriate.

It is clear that Religious Education is rightly regarded as a 'core' area of the curriculum and that it is given high priority – this is also reflected in the school's budgetary allocation for the subject. In order to develop further, the school now needs to ensure that its monitoring has a more direct impact upon the overall quality and standard of pupils' work in Religious Education and that the school's management team and Governing Body share an accurate understanding of standards in Religious Education both within the school and also within the wider context.

**Grade: 2**

### **Common grading scale for all inspection judgements**

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

### OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

<b>How effective and efficient is the provision of Catholic education in meeting the needs of learners and why?</b>	<b>2</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the overall effectiveness of the Catholic life of the school and its provision for community cohesion;</li> </ul>	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the overall effectiveness of the provision for the Catholic Religious Education curriculum, its main strengths and areas for development</li> </ul>	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the effectiveness of steps taken to promote improvement since the last inspection</li> </ul>	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the capacity to make further improvements</li> </ul>	1

### THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

<b>How effective are leadership and management in developing the Catholic life of the school?</b>	<b>1</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>how well the governing body fulfils its role in relation to the school's Catholic foundation</li> </ul>	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>how effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction which promotes high quality care and education and leads to improvement</li> </ul>	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the quality of the leadership of the Headteacher and senior staff in leading and developing the Catholic life of the school</li> </ul>	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>how effectively leadership at all levels in the school promotes learners' spiritual and moral Development</li> </ul>	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the impact of the involvement of the local priests on the work of the school</li> </ul>	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>how effectively the leadership promotes relationships and communication with key partners in education</li> </ul>	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>how effectively the Catholic life of the school is monitored and evaluated</li> </ul>	1
<b>How good is the quality of Collective Worship?</b>	<b>2</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the quality of the provision for prayer, Collective Worship and liturgical life of the school and its frequency</li> </ul>	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>learners' response to the school's provision</li> </ul>	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>how effectively the provision is planned, monitored and evaluated</li> </ul>	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>how well the liturgical life, prayer and Collective Worship contributes to the spiritual and moral development of the learners</li> </ul>	1
<b>How effectively the school promotes Community Cohesion?</b>	<b>2</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>how effectively leadership at all levels promote community cohesion within the school</li> </ul>	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the efforts of the school to promote community cohesion with the wider Catholic faith and education communities</li> </ul>	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>how well does the school work in partnership with the wider education, cultural and social communities</li> </ul>	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the inclusive nature of the provision for prayer, Collective Worship and the liturgical life of the school</li> </ul>	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>how far the Religious Education curriculum promotes community cohesion</li> </ul>	2

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

<b>How well do learners achieve in Religious Education?</b>	<b>2</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>learners' success in achieving challenging targets including qualifications and learning goals, with trends over time and any significant variations between groups of learners</li> </ul>	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the standards of learners' work</li> </ul>	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>learners' progress relative to their prior attainment and potential, with any significant variations between groups of learners</li> </ul>	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the extent to which learners enjoy their work</li> </ul>	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the behaviour of learners</li> </ul>	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</li> </ul>	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the extent to which learners' contribute positively to the school and broader community in the school</li> </ul>	2
<b>How effective are teaching and learning in Religious Education?</b>	<b>1</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>how well teaching is used to meet learners' needs and curriculum requirements</li> </ul>	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the suitability and rigour of assessment in planning, monitoring and informing learners' progress</li> </ul>	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the diagnosis of, and provision for, additional learning needs</li> </ul>	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the involvement of parents and carers in their children's learning and development</li> </ul>	1
<b>How well does the Religious Education curriculum meet the needs and interests of learners?</b>	<b>1</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the extent to which the Religious Education curriculum matches learners' aspirations and potential, building on prior attainment and experience</li> </ul>	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>how far the Religious Education curriculum meets external requirements and is responsive to local circumstances</li> </ul>	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the extent to which the curriculum in Religious Education contributes to the spiritual and moral development of the learners</li> </ul>	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the extent to which the Religious Education curriculum contributes to learners' enjoyment and achievement</li> </ul>	1
<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners in Religious Education?</b>	<b>2</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>how effectively whole school and subject leadership in Religious Education lead and support their staff</li> </ul>	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>how effectively performance in Religious Education is monitored and improved through quality assurance and self-assessment</li> </ul>	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>how well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve their potential</li> </ul>	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are well taught</li> </ul>	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the adequacy and suitability of specialist equipment, learning resources and accommodation</li> </ul>	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>how effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve high standards</li> </ul>	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The extent to which governors discharge their responsibilities</li> </ul>	1