

# NOTTINGHAM DIOCESAN INSPECTION REPORT ON DENOMINATIONAL EDUCATION

Summer 2011



St. Charles Catholic Primary School  
The Carriage Drive,  
Hadfield,  
Derbyshire,  
SK13 1PJ

Date of Inspection: **Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> July 2011**

(Section 48, 2005 Education Act)

## SECTION 48 DENOMINATIONAL INSPECTION REPORT

<b>Name and address of School:</b>	<b>St. Charles Catholic Primary School, The Carriage Drive, Hadfield, Derbyshire. SK13 1PJ</b>
<b>Headteacher:</b>	<b>Mr Steven Williamson</b>
<b>Chair of Governors:</b>	<b>Mr Norman Garlic</b>
<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	<b>Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> July 2011</b>
<b>Inspection Team:</b>	<b>Mrs Anne Recchia and Mrs Helen Booton</b>
<b>23 URN &amp; DfS Number:</b>	<b>112902 830 3506</b>
<b>Overall Grade Awarded:</b>	<b>2</b>

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

St. Charles is a slightly larger than average primary school in the town of Hadfield, near Glossop on the Derbyshire border with greater Manchester, within the Catholic Diocese of Nottingham. It serves the parish of St. Charles with some children attending from Tameside.

The current number on roll is 220 with 57% baptised Catholics. 23% of children are from other Christian backgrounds and 19% of pupils have no religious affiliation. The percentage of pupils eligible to take a free school meal is below the national average. The proportion of children with special needs and/or disabilities is well below the national average; being 6.8% in total. The children from White British backgrounds are in the majority, with very few pupils being of other ethnic origins.

Early Years Foundation Stage provision is provided for children in the reception class with children entering school from a variety of locally based pre-school providers. At the end of year 6, the majority of pupils move on to the nearby Catholic Secondary School, St. Philip Howard with a small number choosing to attend elsewhere depending on their particular circumstances.

## **INSPECTION SCHEDULE**

### **B. OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS**

#### **Grade: 2**

St. Charles Catholic Primary School is effective in providing a good quality Catholic Education within a safe, caring environment.

The Catholic tradition of the school is clearly evident. The parish priest is a frequent and welcome visitor to the school, supporting the staff and nurturing the children in their spiritual formation. Dedicated teaching and support staff ensure that the Catholic nature of the school is clearly at the forefront of provision. The staff provide an excellent role model for the children, demonstrating strong, supportive relationships with one other.

The children are a credit to their families, to the school and to the parish community. Pupils are very happy at school; they are keen to do well and to make good progress. Standards in Religious Education are high and match achievement in English. Behaviour in and around school is exemplary and effective strategies are in place to resolve promptly, any issues should they arise.

The Governors are deeply committed and supportive of the school and attend a wide range of the events on offer. As the recently appointed members of the Governing Body become familiar with the roles and remits within their committee structure, an increased level of Governor involvement, challenge, and support will result in successful developments and school performance.

### **C. What does the school need to do to improve further?**

In order for the school to improve further, we recommend that St. Charles School seeks to:

- Develop a more strategic development plan that has the mission and aims of the school at its heart through rigorous monitoring and accurate, sophisticated analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the school.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning by continuing to develop the teachers' skills in levelling and setting challenging targets for future attainment.
- Develop further the children's experiences of people of different backgrounds, faiths and cultures.
- Effectively develop the skills of the pupils from an early age in the planning and leading of vibrant acts of collective worship.

## **D. The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

### **Grade: 3**

The school's capacity for sustained improvement is of a satisfactory standard.

Leaders and managers set high standards and have a clear vision for the school and its Catholic dimension. They are ably supported by an enthusiastic staff, who are willing to develop the school still further.

Systems effectively identify the strengths and weaknesses of the school. However, the school self-evaluation form tends to be a commentary on provision rather than a working document which can be used to develop the school strategically. The school has improved the planning process to include differentiation through planned activities but this is yet to be fully embedded throughout the school.

The Governing Body now has its full complement of members and is beginning to carry out its statutory monitoring role. This now needs to be more rigorous in order for the governors to serve effectively as critical friends and be part of the strategic planning cycle.

Further improvements in Religious Education will emerge with the promotion and development of target setting procedures. It will support the drive to ensure that pupils of all abilities, especially the more able, extend their learning and achieve at their optimal level. Detailed and accurate analysis of the pupils' achievement towards reaching challenging targets will further improve pupil outcomes. The provision of collective worship is yet to actively involve the pupils in the planning and leading of liturgies.

## **PUPILS**

### **GRADE: 2**

Standards of attainment in Religious Education at St. Charles' School are good. Children enter with average levels of religious knowledge and understanding and average levels personal and social skills. By the end of Key stage 2 the majority of pupils have reached their expected levels of attainment. Over 65% attain above expectations in both knowledge and understanding of religion and an ability to reflect on meaning.

Most groups of pupils make expected levels of progress, however, some high achieving pupils are not making the accelerated progress expected and should be given a greater degree of challenge in their work.

Most children are actively engaged in their lessons and show a positive attitude to their work. They are keen to do well and they enjoy their work in Religious Education. Work in the Foundation stage is well planned and allows children to investigate and understand religious beliefs and practices through play, drama, art and social interaction. By the end of this stage they are able to demonstrate a good understanding

of simple bible stories, religious rituals and practices. They demonstrate in their relationships with one another, a good understanding of right and wrong and can join in with many traditional prayers of the church.

Pupils in Key Stage 1 are able to produce work of a good standard. They show an appropriate understanding of the learning objectives and a growing ability to reflect on meaning and relate it to their everyday lives. Pupils are increasingly expected to work both cooperatively in groups and independently. The pupils are keen to articulate their understanding and knowledge of bible stories. Adult support is used effectively to ensure that pupils with learning difficulties complete their tasks successfully.

Key Stage 2 pupils are able to access information from a variety of sources including Information technology. They are able to use the Bible confidently and can, by the end of this stage, compare and contrast different extracts to gain a fuller understanding. Pupils report that they enjoy the more creative aspect of the subject, such as role-play and empathy work. More emphasis however, needs to be put on extended pieces of writing for the more able, to allow them to demonstrate a further in depth understanding and knowledge of the topic.

The school has set challenging targets for attainment in the future. Their predictions assume that all pupils will make at least two sub levels of progress every year. Currently this is not the case but should these optimistic targets be met, the pupils' progress and attainment would be outstanding.

Pupils clearly benefit from, and contribute to, the Catholic life of the school. They are considerate to one another and in their charitable giving, they show concern for those less fortunate, both locally and further afield. The school has developed a very effective pupil parliament with, for example, Ministers for Religious Education and Behaviour. Pupils take on responsibilities very diligently and their intervention on the playground and in the classroom has resulted in positive change. Pupils feel safe and secure that poor behaviour is effectively dealt with and that any form of prejudice will not be tolerated.

The children have a good sense of their own faith background and its importance in their lives. Their understanding of the beliefs and practices of people from other faiths and backgrounds is growing but would benefit from some face-to-face contact. Pupils actively participate in key celebrations in school throughout the liturgical year. They have a good knowledge of traditional prayers of the church but would benefit from a wider range of prayer styles. Pupils are able to compose their own prayers but still rely too heavily on adults to plan and prepare liturgies. Pupils do have the maturity and enthusiasm to plan, prepare and lead acts of collective worship. Consideration should be given to developing a systematic approach to allow the children to gain the skills to take a more active role in this aspect of the life of the school.

# LEADERS AND MANAGERS

## Grade: 2

Overall, leaders and managers are effective in developing the Catholic Life of the school to a good standard.

Staff and pupils at St. Charles have a high regard for this central aspect of school life. Leaders and managers ensure that spiritual and moral development remains a priority. They are keen to support staff in their personal and professional growth. Hence, personnel are encouraged to engage with quality staff development, diocesan initiatives and local partnership working; especially within their family of Catholic schools. In order to bring about further improvements, revisiting the mission statement and aims will enable all members of the community to have a sound understanding and commitment to the Church's mission in education.

Links with the local parish are good. The parish priest is very proactive in his role as Link Governor for Religious Education. Sacramental preparation has reverted back to taking place in curriculum time. This does not reflect diocesan advice or practice in general. It has implications with regard to equal opportunities for all and a full entitlement to the curriculum.

Leaders and managers have high expectations of themselves and indeed of the school. They conduct a range of monitoring activities relating to provision and outcomes. This now needs to become more systematic and robust, so that a subsequent searching analysis of the Catholic life of their school will provide leaders and managers with a sophisticated evaluation of provision and its impact. To this end, all involved in shaping the direction of the school realise that the self-evaluation processes in place need to evolve and provide a more strategic overview.

Community cohesion at St. Charles is promoted to a satisfactory standard. Staff and pupils have an inclusive vision, recognising and valuing the range of similarities and differences within the school community. Relationships within the community are good and there is a common sense of belonging. Parents are encouraged to engage with the opportunities that the school offers and speak favourably of the pastoral care provided by the school.

The school community at St. Charles is mindful of how it can support the poor and needy both locally and globally. To this end they engage with fundraising initiatives for CAFOD, the Good Shepherd Appeal and the Samaritan Purse. Whilst the religious education curriculum includes some study of other world faiths, there is scope for improvement and this has been recognised by the leadership team.

Leaders and managers use monitoring data to evaluate the school's performance in Religious Education to a good standard. The standards in the subject are generally good and there is evidence that they are improving. The head teacher works in partnership with a member of staff to ensure that a range of school self-evaluation activity is undertaken in order to bring about further improvements in both provision and outcomes.

Although, the recently introduced system of assessment is still at an early stage, staff are gaining confidence in using it. The accuracy and reliability of the levelling of work will improve over time. Assessment data has started to be tracked systematically over a longer period of time in order to gain a more accurate view of the progress of all groups. Thus, the school has begun to introduce target-setting procedures so that learners have a clear grasp of the next steps in their learning and a challenging incentive to work productively. Diagnostic marking consistently applied across the key stages will also ensure that learners are provided with clear guidance on how to improve the quality of their work.

The governors of St. Charles School provide effective challenge and support for the Catholic dimension of the school to a satisfactory standard. Members of the governing body are increasingly gaining first-hand experience of the day-to-day life of the school. They engage with parents and pupils and respond appropriately to emerging issues. They meet with key personnel and have started to participate in focused monitoring activities, as well as continuing to visit the school on a more informal basis. There is a range of skills and expertise available to support and challenge the school as it goes forward. Consequently, in partnership with the head teacher and senior staff, the governing body is now in a position to implement a robustly planned programme of monitoring and evaluation. By developing rigorous and systematic mechanisms of their own, governors can more effectively discharge their canonical and statutory duties and identify strategic priorities, thus making a highly significant contribution to the work and the Catholic dimension of the school.

## **PROVISION**

### **Grade: 3 Satisfactory**

Overall the provision for the promotion of Catholic Education at St. Charles' Catholic School is satisfactory. The quality of teaching ranges from satisfactory to good with the majority being good. Lesson planning is good and is linked to the assessment of pupils' prior learning. Most teachers plan for differentiated tasks during lessons and use teaching assistants well to support groups in their learning. In lessons that are good the more able children are given tasks that challenge their thinking and understanding. This however is not consistent throughout the school. Children requiring additional support tend to engage with more creative activities to support their skills and knowledge in Religious Education

Most teachers show a good level of subject knowledge and are able to inspire children in their learning. For all teachers including those not of the Catholic faith there is a good system of in house and Diocesan training which has addressed the issues of assessment and curriculum development effectively. The coordinators are very approachable and offer good support. There is however, some evidence to show that on occasions pupils' misconceptions are not tackled effectively. A more careful scrutiny of books and observations of lessons would correct this over time.

Teachers use a range of styles and activities to engage and motivate the children. They use questioning well to assess understanding and to ensure that learning is consolidated. In some of the best lessons, teachers use questioning to extend the

understanding of the pupils. New technology is used effectively to support teaching and to engage the pupils in their learning. A more creative approach to the curriculum is beginning to develop which uses cross-curricular links with other subjects.

Other adults are deployed effectively during the main part of lessons. They could however be better used during the introduction and plenary sessions to encourage children to participate more and access the content and learning objective of each lesson.

In most lessons observed the learning objective was made clear, and tasks were devised to achieve those objectives. However, the use of driver words would provide clear detailed steps for improvement. They would encourage children to really concentrate on the main purpose of the lesson and understand how to develop their work further.

The school tracks the progress of the pupils effectively. Teachers are becoming more confident in accurately assessing levels of attainment. This process has been refined over time and is now used to forecast future attainment. Target cards are used in some classes but this tends to be whole class targets rather than individual or group targets. The school is now at a point where data can be used more effectively to plan tasks and targets for both individuals and for groups. It should seek to develop this further.

Pupils are increasingly involved in assessing their own work. Evidence of self-assessment strategies being used throughout the lesson to support learning include: traffic light symbols, laminated cards showing the pupils' level of understanding and some developmental marking that encourages the pupils to think more deeply. This good practice should now be disseminated to every class.

The Religious Education Curriculum meets the needs of pupils to a satisfactory standard. It ensures that the children are taught the skills and knowledge to make progress and develops their spirituality and morality well. The curriculum is well matched to the needs of the pupils and to their interests. It provides adequate preparation for the next stage in their lives. The school should ensure that 10% of all curriculum time is devoted to Religious Education. They should also ensure that the long term planned curriculum should cover all topics set out in the Here I Am Programme. Pupils in Year 3 are prepared for the sacraments of Reconciliation and Communion very well but this preparation takes place in school, in time which should be devoted to the curriculum laid down by the Government and the Curriculum Directory. Pupils in these sacramental programmes are therefore disadvantaged. Sacramental programmes should be taught out of curriculum time in the future. The school has developed its own Sex and Relationship Programme, which is used in the later stages of Key Stage 2. Consideration should be given to reviewing this in the light of new publications and programmes recommended by the Diocese.

The quality of collective worship provided by the school is satisfactory. It reflects the Catholic nature of the school and has the Eucharist at its heart. Teachers accept responsibility for leading prayer and for involving the children in its delivery. Pupils are encouraged to participate in masses and other liturgies, but for the most part these are planned and led by teachers and other adults. Pupils are very capable and are becoming more skilled in planning their own liturgies. The school is aware that this is an

area for development and one which should include skilling pupils from an early age. Parents are made welcome at masses and liturgies and say how much they enjoy them. Pupils are taught many of the traditional prayers of the church. There is however, an over reliance on these and pupils would now benefit from experiencing different forms of prayer and vibrant acts of worship.

Efforts are made during world faith weeks to provide learning opportunities for children to encounter the beliefs and customs of other faiths. This provision could be further enhanced with first hand experiences with people from different faith backgrounds through visits to other places of worship and communities and through visitors to school.

Resources in the school are well used and serve to develop the Catholic identity and nature of the school. Pupils seeking to have moments of silence and reflection use the recent development of the Peace Garden very well. Vibrant displays and religious icons are evident around the school; care is taken in most classes to make these accessible to the children. Efforts have been made since the last inspection to improve the learning environment with refurbishment of classrooms and the outside space.

**Common grading scale for all inspection judgements**

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

## INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

### OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

How effective is the school in providing Catholic education ?	<b>2</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• how good are the outcomes for pupils, taking particular account of variations between different groups</li> </ul>	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• how effective leaders and managers are in developing the Catholic life of the school</li> </ul>	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• how effective is the provision in promoting Catholic education</li> </ul>	3

### PUPILS

How good outcomes are for pupils, taking particular account of variations between different groups	<b>2</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1) how well pupils progress and enjoy their learning in Religious Education</li> </ul>	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2) <i>the pupils' standards of attainment in Religious Education</i></li> </ul>	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3) <i>the quality of pupils' learning and their progress</i></li> </ul>	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4) <i>the quality of learning for pupils with particular learning needs and / or disabilities and their progress</i></li> </ul>	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 5) the extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life of the school</li> </ul>	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 6) <i>how well pupils respond to and participate in the school's collective worship</i></li> </ul>	2

### LEADERS AND MANAGERS

How effective leaders and managers are in developing the Catholic life of the school	<b>2</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1) 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</li> </ul>	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2) <i>how effectively leaders and managers promote community cohesion</i></li> </ul>	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3) how well leaders and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education for improvement to outcomes for pupils</li> </ul>	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4) the extent to which the governing body provides effective challenge and support for the Catholic dimension of the school so that areas for development are tackled decisively and statutory and canonical responsibilities are met</li> </ul>	3

### PROVISION

How effective the provision is in promoting Catholic education	<b>3</b>
1) The quality of teaching and how purposeful learning is in Religious Education	2
2) <i>the effectiveness of assessment and academic guidance in Religious education</i>	2
3) the extent to which the Religious Education curriculum meets pupils' needs	3
4) the quality of Collective Worship provided by the school	3