

NOTTINGHAM DIOCESAN INSPECTION REPORT ON DENOMINATIONAL EDUCATION

SPRING 2011



SAINT MARY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY
Gladstone Street
GLOSSOP
Derbyshire
SK13 8NE

Date of Inspection: 13th April 2011

(Section 48, 2005 Education Act)

SAINT MARY GLOSSOP URN 112901 DfE 830 3505.doc

SECTION 48 DENOMINATIONAL INSPECTION REPORT

Name and address of School:	Saint Mary's Catholic Primary School Gladstone Road Glossop Derbyshire SK13 8NE
Headteacher:	Mr Simon Groarke
Chair of Governors:	Dr Andrew Mee
Date of Inspection:	13th April 2011
Inspection Team:	Mrs Anne Recchia Mr Bryan Lowe
URN & DfS Number:	112901 830 3505
Overall Grade Awarded:	2

A. DESCRIPTION OF THE SCHOOL

Saint Mary's Catholic Primary School is a smaller than average school with 143 pupils on roll. Numbers have fluctuated over time and at present the school is running below its net capacity. It is located in the town centre of Glossop in North West Derbyshire. The school serves the parish of St Mary's and the surrounding locality. Its school population comprising 53% Catholic, 29% other Christian, around 1% other World faiths and 18% of children have no religious affiliation. The proportion known to qualify for a free school meal is higher than in most schools. The attainment on entry to the school is generally just below levels expected but a large proportion enters the school with little or no faith background. This is according to baseline assessments taken on entry.

Almost all pupils are from white British backgrounds, with only 9.5% from different ethnic groups. The proportion of pupils with additional needs including those with a statement of special educational needs is just below average. Most pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 transfer to the local Catholic secondary school.

INSPECTION SCHEDULE

B. OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

St. Mary's Catholic Primary is a good school. The outcomes for pupils, the provision for Catholic Education and the effectiveness of leaders and managers are all good. It is well led by the Headteacher and senior management team who put the welfare and care of all pupils as a priority. Pupils' spiritual, moral, ethical and social education is effectively developed in this caring and inclusive school.

Pupils make good progress from a relatively low starting point and leave St. Mary's with skills, knowledge and understanding at least in line with national expectations. There is little variation between different groups of learners. Pupils are given equal opportunities to learn and are well supported by knowledgeable and compassionate teaching and support staff.

The Headteacher and Religious Education Coordinator have a clear vision for the school and are aware of its strengths and areas for development. The monitoring of Religious Education is good and is developing.

The monitoring and evaluation of the Catholic Life of the school is at present informal and needs to be put on a more formal footing so that leaders and managers (including governors) can evaluate more accurately how the Catholic Life of the school impacts on the pupils.

GRADE: 2 .. Good

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

At St Mary's Catholic Primary School, the strengths of the school far outweigh the areas for improvement. However, all good schools recognise the need for further improvement. We recommend therefore, that:

- Governors develop their own more rigorous system of monitoring and evaluating both Religious Education and the Catholic Life of the school so that they are well placed to challenge and support the school in the future.
- Leaders evaluate the information gained from monitoring activities to inform future planning.
- Assessment data is used to set targets for pupils so that they are aware of the next step in their learning.
- Opportunities are developed for pupils to gain face to face experience of people from ethnic and faith backgrounds different to their own.

D. The school's capacity for sustained improvement

The school has made good efforts to address the issues raised in the last inspection. Teachers have become more confident in levelling pupils' work as a result of well targeted in service training. The tracking of pupil progress has consequently become more accurate and can now be used to tailor work to the age and ability of the pupils. Formative marking has been established in some year groups but is not a consistent feature of assessment across the whole school.

A Strategic Development Committee has been established by the Governors that meet regularly to monitor the progress of the school development plan. Their remit should now include the monitoring of the Catholic life of the school to address fully one of the main issues raised in the previous inspection.

The school makes good effort to enhance the pupils' experience of Acts of Collective Worship by involving those of other faith or no faith background. Considering the ethnic and religious mix of the school population this is not easy and the school have ensured visitors from different faiths and cultures and visits to places of worship form part of the regular curriculum provision.

The Self Evaluation Form was vague and imprecise in parts and needs to be a closer reflection of the accurate monitoring and evaluation taking place in the school. In this way appropriate priorities for Catholic Life and Religious Education can be identified to secure further improvement.

Leaders and Managers are ambitious for the school and have worked hard to raise standards and enhance the Catholic identity of the school. As a result the school has a good capacity for sustained improvement. Pupils thrive in the caring environment created by the staff.

GRADE: 2 Good

PUPILS

How good outcomes are for pupils, taking particular account of variations between different groups

Outcomes in Religious Education for children at St Mary's are good with standards of attainment at a satisfactory level. Children enter the school demonstrating levels slightly below those expected in religious literacy but quickly develop knowledge and understanding in Religious Education and are generally in line with expectations by the end of Key Stage One. By the end of Key Stage Two the majority attain expected levels with a minority exceeding the expected levels.

The majority of children make good progress with no significant differences between groups of children. Progress is best where teachers' consistently provide 'next step' comments on children's work and where learning is challenging, involving high levels of independence and initiative.

Role-play and drama in Religious Education is a real strength of the school and makes a significant contribution to children's learning and progress.

When off task behaviour by children with additional needs is displayed, it is dealt with a high level of understanding and skill by teaching assistants. Both teachers and teaching assistants give children high quality learning opportunities with differentiated activities, thus enabling pupils to make good progress.

The extent to which children contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school is good. Children fully respect and are proud of the Catholic tradition of St Mary's. They have good links with their parish church and are fully involved in the children's Sunday Mass, some as musicians and some as altar servers. They support parish events enthusiastically. Meetings for the sacramental programme are run jointly between St Mary's and All Saints and are very successful. They facilitate opportunities for the two churches in the parish of Glossop to unite.

Religious Education and liturgies, play a major role in children's personal development. A group of children were able to say how the story of the prodigal son taught them how to reflect on their own lives and enabled them to be more forgiving themselves. Children's behaviour in class is excellent; they support each other, have good relationships with teachers and other adults, enjoy their work and are growing into confident and independent learners. Children organise their own fund raising events to support a range of local, national and international causes; CAFOD and Fr David's Dream being just two examples.

Children demonstrate respect and reverence when they pray and they fully engage with opportunities for individual prayer. Children sing enthusiastically during whole school acts of worship accompanied by a group of school musicians. They are given time to reflect and join in community prayers showing genuine sincerity and concern for others. Children's spiritual and moral development is significantly enhanced as a result of all these experiences.

Children are able to plan and prepare liturgies themselves and do so with enthusiasm, maturity and confidence. The older children are becoming skilled in the use of scripture, religious artefacts and hymns and the younger ones are able to savour moments of awe and wonder.

GRADE: 2 Good

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 promote the provision for the Catholic life of the school to a good standard. The Headteacher and senior staff make prayer and worship an integral part of the day and that it is accessible to all. Leaders and managers take account of the views of parents and pupils. "Fr. David's Dream" was set up as a result of consultation, it now forms an important part of the children's charitable giving and community cohesion within the school. The school improvement plan for 2010/11 sets appropriate targets for the development of the Catholic dimension of the school. These now need to be thoroughly evaluated to determine the impact on pupils.

Community cohesion within the school is good. Relationships are positive and this leads to a good working atmosphere where children can learn together. The school plays a pivotal role in bringing the two parishes together during the Sacramental programme. The Headteacher and other members of staff play important roles within the parish community and the school has a high profile as a result of this. The Parish priest is responsible for four parishes in the area and as a consequence is not as present in the school as he would like to be. The school engages with other schools in the area through sport, joint in-service training and religious celebrations. Good links exist with the local Catholic secondary school making transition at the end of Key Stage Two smooth and stress free for the pupils. Links with other faiths and communities are developing. Pupils have been given the opportunity to visit the places of worship of other faiths and have welcomed visitors from backgrounds different to their own. The school acknowledges that this is an area for development and understands that this should not just be an "add on" to the curriculum but provide real life experiences for the children.

Monitoring of the Catholic Life of the school is mostly informal and effective evaluation of this is still at an early stage. The Governors have formed committees with aims appropriate to a Catholic School and have a link governor for Religious Education. They review policy documents on a regular basis. However, their work seldom involves the formal monitoring and evaluation of the school's Catholic identity. The Head teacher's report to Governors focuses mainly on the progress and attainment in core subjects other than Religious Education but does report on the ongoing Catholic life of the school. There now needs to be more of a holistic view on how the school functions as a Catholic School by developing a careful and consistent monitoring and evaluation programme.

The Religious Education coordinator is enthusiastic and inspiring. She has led the drive to improve standards in Religious Education and as a result, teachers are clearer and more confident in the levelling of pupils' work. She has a good grasp of how well the subject is taught and the areas for development through her monitoring of pupils' work, tracking attainment and progress and through observations in the classrooms. Outcomes for pupils are good due to effective planning and development of the curriculum and prayer life of the school. Well targeted support and training has resulted in an improvement of standards and a growing awareness amongst the staff of their role in the spiritual, religious and ethical development of the pupils.

GRADE: 2 Good

PROVISION

How effective is the provision in promoting Catholic Education?

The Standard of teaching in the school is good, it promotes purposeful learning and enjoyment. Teachers have good subject knowledge and plan creative lessons that engage the learners. Prior learning is developed within lessons and is built upon to extend pupils' learning. Generally, differentiation is by support and outcome; however, the teachers are knowledgeable about the level of attainment of their pupils and measure the outcome of tasks accordingly. Good use is made of technology to engage the pupils and develop their knowledge and understanding. Teachers adapt their teaching styles effectively in order to sustain pupils' concentration and motivation. Drama is used very effectively to assess pupils understanding and increase their enjoyment of Religious Education.

Teaching Assistants and other adults are extremely well directed; they share and discuss lesson plans with teachers before the lesson and are highly skilled in focusing and helping children to learn.

The school has developed a good tracking system to measure the level of pupil progress. This now needs to be taken a step further through careful analysis and evaluation of the data in order to inform future planning. Target setting is developing in some classes but now needs to be more firmly embedded throughout in order to inform pupils of the next step in their learning. Marking in some classes goes some way to achieving this but this is not widespread and mostly serves to affirm pupils' attempts rather than moving learning on.

The Religious Education curriculum meets the Bishops' Conference requirements. The school follows the "Here I Am" programme of work and adapts this to meet the needs of the pupils well. Collaboration with other schools, engaging especially in – in service training, has allowed the teachers opportunities to share good practice and develop confidence in the levelling of work. The school provides many opportunities for children's personal development including extra curriculum activities, visits and responsibility for tasks in classrooms and around school including house teams, the organising acts of worship, the ECO council recycling bins and children running the tuck shop.

The school meets the spiritual needs of the pupils through good Acts of Collective Worship. The themes of prayer and worship are consistent with the Catholic nature of the school and its population. Efforts have been made to introduce pupils to the celebrations of other faiths. Prayer and worship is given a high profile in the school and much effort is made to include all children taking into account their age and ability. Pupils are becoming increasingly equipped to plan and lead prayer and worship.

Teachers are good role models for pupils as they are seen praying together with the children. Parents are encouraged to attend masses and acts of collective worship and are asked on occasions to review the schools' provision. Other monitoring activities have taken place but not on a regular or formal basis. The school is aware that this now needs to be done so that accurate information can inform planning for the future and determine the effectiveness of any planned developments.

GRADE: 2 Good

Common grading scale for all inspection judgements

Grade 1 Outstanding

Grade 2 Good

Grade 3 Satisfactory

Grade 4 Inadequate

INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

Leave this judgement until the end. Then transfer your grades from for the 3 overarching judgements into the boxes below and make the overall effectiveness judgement, the modal grade of these 3 judgements.

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

PUPILS

<p>How good outcomes are for pupils, taking particular account of variations between different groups</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Please use the modal average of the judgements 2), 3) and 4) to inform judgement 1)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Judgement 6) informs judgement 5) and finally Judgements 1) and 5) inform the main judgement - with 1) carrying most weight.</p>	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1) how well pupils progress and enjoy their learning in Religious Education 	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2) <i>the pupils' standards of attainment in Religious Education</i> 	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3) <i>the quality of pupils' learning and their progress</i> 	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4) <i>the quality of learning for pupils with particular learning needs and / or disabilities and their progress</i> 	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5) the extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life of the school 	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6) <i>how well pupils respond to and participate in the school's collective worship</i> 	2

LEADERS AND MANAGERS

<p>How effective leaders and managers are in developing the Catholic life of the school</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Judgement 2) informs judgement 1).</p> <p style="text-align: center;">The modal average of judgement 1), 3) and 4) inform the main judgement.</p>	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2) <i>how effectively leaders and managers promote community cohesion</i> 	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3) how well leaders and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education for improvement to outcomes for pupils 	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 	3

PROVISION

How effective the provision is in promoting Catholic education Judgement 2) informs judgement 1). The modal average of judgements 1), 3) and 4) inform the main judgement.	2
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>	3
3) the extent to which the religious Education curriculum meets pupils' needs	2
4) the quality of Collective Worship provided by the school	2