

DIOCESE OF MIDDLESBROUGH

Inspection of Religious Education
Collective Worship
and
The Catholic Life of the School



School: Sacred Heart RC Primary School

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Headteacher: Mrs Carol Walker

Chair: Mrs Anne Hood

Date: November 12 & 13 2013

Inspector: Mr MJ Gallagher

INTRODUCTION

This inspection was carried out under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005.

The report of the inspection is produced for the Bishop of Middlesbrough (Code of Canon Law 804 and 806) and for the governors of the school. The Inspection reviews, evaluates and plans further improvements in the school's witness to the Catholic faith and Curriculum Religious Education. This process begins with the school's own self-evaluation. The Inspection schedule follows criteria set by the National Board of Advisers and Inspectors.

What Inspection Grades mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding Catholic school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a Catholic school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Requires Improvement	These features, though of adequate quality, require improvement to be good.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate Catholic school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Sacred Heart RC Primary School is housed in a three story Edwardian building, with limited outside space, situated near the centre of Middlesbrough on a street that was once the entrance to Middlesbrough football club. The locality is one of socio economic disadvantage with high levels of unemployment, large numbers of single parent families, refugees and economic migrant families. The majority of pupils are from a White British background with an increasing number from a range of ethnic backgrounds including Albanian, Asian, African, Philipino and Polish. Pupils enter the Nursery with attainment that is well below the national expectation. The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium (additional funding for pupils known in this school to be eligible for free school meals) is above average. The proportion of pupils supported through school action is below average while the proportion supported through school action plus and those with a statement of special educational needs is broadly average. 60% of the teaching staff and 72% of pupils are baptised Catholics.

INFORMATION ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The inspector observed 8 lessons, 1 Godly Play session and 2 Acts of Worship. Formal discussions were held with the Headteacher, Chair of Governors, Religious Education Subject leader, parents and school council, while informal discussions were held with teaching staff, support staff, pupils and caretaker. The Inspector considered all written information that was supplied by the school and the previous Section 48 Inspection Report from the Diocese. An informal meeting was also held with the recently appointed Parish Priest.

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Pupil Catchment:

Number of pupils on roll:	281 full time pupils+52 part – time Nursery pupils
Planned Admission Number of Pupils:	40
Percentage of pupils baptised RC:	72%
Percentage of pupils from other Christian Denominations:	10%
Percentage of pupils from other World Faiths:	9%
Percentage of pupils with no religious affiliation:	9%
Percentage of pupils with special needs:	13%
	(3 pupils with statements)

Teaching Staff:

Full-time Teachers:	14
Part-time Teachers:	1
Percentage of Catholic Teachers:	60%

Support Staff:

Full-time Classroom Support Staff:	16
Part-time Classroom Support Staff:	2
Percentage of Catholic Classroom Support Staff:	56%
Percentage of teachers with CCRS:	14%

Percentage of learning time given to R.E:

10% in all classes

Parishes served by the School:

Sacred Heart,
St Francis'
St Joseph's
Holy Name
St Thomas More

1. OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

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MAIN FINDINGS

Sacred Heart RC Primary School is an outstanding Catholic school.

Pupils enter the school with skills that are below national expectations but leave at the end of Year 6 with outcomes above national expectations. All pupils make good progress, despite the school having an above average proportion of pupils entering and leaving at times other than usual. Those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make very good progress.

Teaching throughout the school in Religious Education is outstanding; lessons are well planned and expertly delivered engaging all pupils. All adults, through teamwork and mutual support, are excellent role models for their pupils. Prayer and worship are central to the life of the school and the recent introduction of Godly Play is seen by pupils as a welcome addition.

The Headteacher has a clear vision of the school's mission in providing a Catholic education for pupils. She is supported in pursuing her vision by a skilful Religious Education subject leader, a supportive and challenging Governing Body and a committed teaching and support staff. Continual self evaluation and resulting plans ensure that the school is forever moving forward. School leaders are outward looking and value the support and guidance received through the diocesan moderation meeting and the Trinity Partnership. Relationships throughout the school are exemplary reflecting the Catholic Life of the school. Pupils are proud of their school; they appreciate the great variety of learning opportunities that the adults provide for them.

There have been a number of changes in Parish Priest over the past few years. Although this has not impeded the school in realising its mission within its boundaries it has hindered its development within the Parish. The present Parish Priest has very recently joined the Parish but is keen to support the school in its mission.

What the school needs to do to improve further:

- Continue to support the Religious Education leader in monitoring and evaluating standards in Religious Education.
- Develop a positive working relationship with the new Parish Priest so that the excellent work in the school can be extended to the Parish.
- Continue with the already outstanding work in the provision for all groups within the school.

2. PUPILS

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How good outcomes are for pupils, taking into account of variations between groups.

The pupils of Sacred Heart are very proud of their school, they are aware of the efforts their teachers make to provide them with stimulating lessons and they appreciate the care and moral guidance they receive. Pupils are conscious of the high standards of behaviour throughout the school and recognise that the school is a very safe place to be. When asked what changes they would like to see made to make the school better, one replied, 'None, its' perfect' another, 'Make the school day longer' and a forlorn, 'Maybe some grass'. All pupils know that the school's work is based on its Mission Statement and can give examples of how the Mission is lived during the school day. All groups within the school make very good progress in Religious Education. This is due, not only, to the excellent teaching but also to the targeted support for those pupils who need it. This was evident in the Year 6 class where pupils, whose needs were very demanding because of complex emotional issues, made excellent progress through skilful teaching and support. Pupils use the 'I Can Statements' to assess their own work and point to the next steps in their learning.

Pupils enjoy their Religious education lessons but are aware that issues raised can be challenging. One Year 6 pupil stated, 'It's not easy, you have to think about things before you come up with an answer'. An able group of Year 6 pupils were challenged with finding out how different people served God e.g. Desmond Tutu; they had to research the person, finding out what was special about them, they then had to join with another group and make connections with their allocated subject before finally presenting their findings to the class. They carried out their task successfully, with minimal guidance from the teacher and fed back efficiently using PowerPoint, ad-libbing rather than reading from their slides. Teachers make the lessons in Religious Education interesting and challenging for all pupils by, use of a variety of teaching styles; skilled questioning and the effective use of ICT. Pupils' work, marked by teachers based on the success criteria used in lessons, is an important aid to pupils' learning.

Collective Worship is central in the life of the school; pupils participate reverently, respectfully and enthusiastically. Pupils are skilled at planning and delivering their own acts of worship; they were able to explain the elements necessary for an effective act of worship, how they went about allocating these elements to their peers for delivery and how the choice of appropriate scripture was crucial. Pupils are expected to take turns in planning and leading class worship to encourage them to put their learning into practice.

The learning environment is attractive and stimulating with prayer corners and displays in each classroom highlighting the school's Catholic nature. The display in the Hall on 'Remembrance' was very moving and used so effectively by the reception teacher during her Assembly to pray for those family members who had died.

• The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life of the school	1
• How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education	1
• How well do pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship	1

3. PROVISION

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How effective the provision is for Catholic education

Teaching is consistently of the highest standard providing stimulating lessons that engage and motivate all pupils. Teachers and pupils are supported by a very talented team of Teaching Assistants who, through their skilful questioning, enable all pupils to make very good progress. Teaching is supported by a well planned Religious Education curriculum; individual plans show differentiation and challenge for all groups. Information Technology is used very effectively, by all teachers, to enhance their teaching and is an important element in facilitating pupil progress. Pupil tracking shows that all pupils make good progress with those joining the school at an early age making excellent progress. The high mobility of pupils leaving and joining the school affects the overall picture of pupil attainment making it appear less effective than it actually is.

Religious Education is fundamental to the work of Sacred Heart School; it permeates every aspect of the school's life and is evident in the relationships and attitudes of everyone in the school. A governor described it as a wheel with the school's Mission Statement as the hub and everything the school does are the spokes coming from the hub. Parents commented on the positive effect that the Religious Education curriculum has on their children and they, as parents, at times were humbled by their children's mature attitude to situations encountered outside school. This is achieved through meticulous planning by staff, working collaboratively, to deliver learning experiences building on prior learning, of the highest quality, so that all pupils can achieve their full potential as learners and people. The Religious Education curriculum at Sacred Heart School is delivered through the 'Come and See' programme, meets the external requirements of the Bishop's Conference and is responsive to diocesan circumstances.

Collective Worship is central to the school's work; pupils are skilled at planning and delivering assemblies. They know what needs to be included and are proficient in selecting appropriate scripture to suit the chosen theme. The diverse backgrounds of pupils are used by school leaders to enrich the experiences of all. For example, when studying Islam the teachers make use of the pupils of that tradition to help the others to see the similarities with Christianity and to respect the differences; and on the feast of Eid parents supplied the staff with traditional food at lunchtime in appreciation of their work. Godly Play has recently been introduced to the pupils to extend their knowledge of scripture and complement their Religious Education lessons. A discrete area has been established for the delivery of Godly Play sessions, it is well resourced and staff have received appropriate training.

The provision for the Catholic Life of the school has the highest priority; the learning environment is very attractive, well ordered and clearly of a Catholic nature. The school rightly focuses the children's attention on three charities in a year, one worldwide, through CAFOD, one National and one local. Pupils are involved in choosing the charity; they explained how they supported a local foodbank by having their own collection point in school. Behaviour among all pupils is outstanding, as are relationships between pupils and adults. Parents are very supportive of the work of the school. One parent spoke in praise of the recently introduced 'Come and See' programme, that she could see its positive effect on her children at home.

• The quality of teaching and how purposeful learning is in Religious Education	1
• The extent to which the Religious Education curriculum promotes pupils' learning	1
• The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school	1
• The quality of provision for the Catholic life of the school	1

4. LEADERS, MANAGERS AND GOVERNORS

How effective Leaders, Managers and Governors are in developing the Catholic life of the school

Leaders, managers and governors of Sacred Heart are fully committed to the school's Catholic mission and to the spiritual and moral development of its pupils. The inspirational headteacher is ambitious for the success of her pupils, both academically and spiritually. This is apparent in the efforts made by her to create a stimulating and exciting learning environment, in developing harmonious working relationships among staff and pupils having high expectation for pupils' achievement and behaviour. Because of this inclusive leadership style, staff and governors support the headteacher in leading the school. All adults are committed to the school and are constantly seeking ways to make improvements to further enhance the opportunities for their pupils to develop.

The work of the new Religious Education Leader builds on the excellent work of her predecessor and contributes to the excellent standards achieved in Religious Education by pupils. Systems for tracking, monitoring and evaluating the teaching and learning in Religious Education are well established and used effectively to support teaching. Liturgical celebrations, daily prayer and reflection are at the heart of the life of the school.

Governors are actively involved in promoting the school as a Catholic community. They know what happens in the school. Each class has a governor assigned to it, governors attend assemblies and acts of Worship, and the nominated governor for Religious Education meets regularly with the Religious Education subject leader and the headteacher to discuss the curriculum. Governors receive reports termly from the headteacher detailing the spiritual life of the school, developments in Religious Education and the standards achieved in teaching and learning.

Complacency is a word not found in the vocabulary of Sacred Heart School. School leaders are well aware of the ever changing world of education and continually raise their game to meet these challenges because they want to ensure that their pupils are best prepared for the future. They have addressed all the issues from the previous Religious Education inspection and it was evident that good progress was already being made in addressing the issues raised in their recent Ofsted inspection

To this end the school's capacity for improvement is judged to be outstanding.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How well leaders, managers and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic life of the school, including collective worship, and plan improvement to outcomes for pupils 	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How well leaders, managers and governors monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education and plan for improvement to outcomes for pupils 	1