

**DENOMINATIONAL INSPECTION
REPORT (Section 48)**

on

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

School: St John's Catholic Primary School

Address: Breck Road
Poulton-le-Fylde
Lancashire
FY6 7HT

Telephone Number: 01253 883690

Email address: head@poulton-st-johns.lancs.sch.uk

School URN: 119631

Headteacher: Mrs Gillian Hodgson

Chair of Governors: Mrs Angela Hartley

Section 48 Inspector: Mr Gerard McKeivitt

Date of Inspection: 11 November 2013

The inspection report is produced for the Rt. Reverend Michael Campbell O.S.A., the Bishop of Lancaster (c.f. Code Canon Law, 804, 806), and for the Governing Body of the school (Education Act 2005, Section 48). 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.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St John's Catholic Primary School is a smaller than average voluntary aided school situated in Poulton-le-Fylde, Lancashire. The school mainly serves the parish of St John the Evangelist Catholic Church in Poulton-le-Fylde in an area of low socio-economic needs. There are currently 207 children on roll of which 153 (75%) are baptised Catholic, 33 (15%) are from other Christian denominations, 13 (6%) are from other faith backgrounds and 8 (4%) have no faith affiliation. The school has below the average number of pupils with special needs (9%) and a low number of pupils receive free school meals (10%). The number of teachers who have achieved the Catholic Certificate for Religious Studies (CCRS) is high. At the end of Year 6 a low number of pupils attend St Mary's Catholic College in Blackpool and Cardinal Allen Catholic High School in Fleetwood.

FACTUAL INFORMATION

Pupil Catchment:

Number of pupils on roll:	207
Planned Admission Number of Pupils:	30
Percentage of pupils baptised Catholics	75%
Percentage of pupils from other Christian denominations:	15%
Percentage of pupils from other faith backgrounds:	6%
Percentage of pupils with no religious affiliation:	4%
Percentage of pupils from ethnic groups:	11%
Percentage of pupils with special needs:	9%

Staffing

Full-time teachers:	8
Part-time teachers:	1
Percentage of Catholic teachers:	78%
Percentage of teachers with CCRS:	63%

Percentage of learning time given to RE:

R	10 %	Yr 4	10 %
Yr 1	10 %	Yr 5	10 %
Yr 2	10 %	Yr 6	10 %
Yr 3	10 %		

Parishes served by the school:

St John the Evangelist
English Martyrs

Overall Effectiveness

1

Capacity for sustained improvement

1

MAIN FINDINGS

St John's Catholic Primary School provides an outstanding level of Catholic education and is highly respected within its community as a caring and stimulating environment which truly promotes its mission 'to be a positive force in the life of the Church' by creating a community where 'the Gospel principles of Jesus are present.' The acting headteacher, staff and governing body rigorously strive to fulfil this mission so that everyone can reach their full potential within this happy and secure learning environment.

Most pupils come into the school with a baseline assessment that is broadly average for their age yet with a low baseline of religious understanding and experience. However in recent years pupils have made excellent progress so that by the end of the Key Stage 2 they are operating at above the national levels of attainment. This excellent progress can be attributed to the consistent use of its assessment and monitoring procedures and to the high standards expected from its staff and pupils.

The school's provision for Catholic education is outstanding. Teaching and learning in Religious Education are at least good and often outstanding which enables the majority of pupils to make excellent progress. Staff are deployed effectively to meet the varying needs of its pupils and all groups of learners, including pupils with special needs, make good and often outstanding progress.

The school successfully promotes a stimulating, calm and productive learning environment which is adapted to suit the needs of its learners. Pupils are aware of the high standards expected from them and respond positively to the support and guidance given to them. As a result the pupils' behaviour in and around school is excellent, they care for each other and are eager to participate and learn in their lessons.

The quality of Collective Worship has a considerable impact on the spiritual, moral and social development of the pupils. The staff and pupils work hard to support each other and to promote moments of peace and calm within the busy day to which all pupils respond in a meaningful and appropriate manner. Pupils from an early age are given opportunities to be proactive in Collective Worship, from taking part in role play to illustrate Bible stories, to fully planning and leading acts of worship.

Leaders and managers in the school make a highly significant impact on the provision for Catholic education for the pupils in its care. The governing body plays a very active role in supporting and challenging the school to continually improve its provision for RE. The school has the strong support of parents as reflected in the very positive parent questionnaire responses.

Capacity for sustained improvement

The school demonstrates an excellent capacity for sustained improvement through the strong leadership of the acting head teacher, the RE subject leader, staff and the governing body. Since the last inspection the school has shown that a consistent assessment and tracking system is fully in place for all pupils appropriate in-service training is in place for new staff and pupils' work is moderated both internally and externally. Morale is high at all levels of staff, they demonstrate a shared commitment to ensuring that these strategies move the school forward and continue to raise standards of attainment in RE for all pupils.

What the school needs to do to improve further

- To continue to refine its assessment procedures in order to ensure that all groups of learners continue to make very good progress and to raise attainment even further.
- To provide appropriate induction for the new governors in order to make a full and active contribution to the Catholic life of the school.

PUPILS

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

1

Inspection confirms the school's judgement that the standards of attainment and the progress of learning in RE are outstanding.

Over the past two years attainment data shows that there has been continued improvement in attainment at the end of the Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.

St John's has in place a baseline assessment system which confirms that most children enter the Reception class with a low understanding and experience of religion despite having broadly average age related expectations in other areas. However by the end of the Foundation Stage most pupils, given their starting points, have made very good progress and by the end of Key Stage 1 pupil attainment in RE is above national expectations. This trend continues and by the end of Key Stage 2 attainment is well above national expectations in RE. This shows the excellent progress and attainment made by the majority of learners across the key stages.

Most pupils attain high standards in knowledge and understanding of religion (AT1) and in an ability to reflect on meaning (AT2) in all key stages. At the end of Key Stage 2 the vast majority of pupils attain the expected Level 4 with 30% of pupils attaining Level 5.

The excellent progress of pupils can be attributed to the improved and consistent monitoring of progress and attainment for all learners. This information allows the school to put in place the expertise and resources needed to enable all groups of learners to make at least good progress. Pupils with special needs are very well supported by teaching assistants who work hard to meet their needs through a range of strategies such as small group work and in-class support. As a result special needs pupils make at least good progress and the majority achieve age related expectations at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2.

Pupils make an outstanding contribution to the Catholic life of the school. They are able to speak with great confidence about their beliefs and views and are able to link this to the teachings of Jesus and other key religious figures. They value and respect the Catholic life of the school and their engagement with it; for example older pupils were eager to express how they enjoy supporting younger pupils in planning and taking part in class worship. They take full advantage of the opportunities for personal development that the school has to offer and this contributes greatly to the excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural education in school.

Pupils from the earliest age engage in a variety of acts of worship to which they respond with a sense of reverence, thoughtfulness and empathy towards others. An observed whole school act of worship about Remembrance Day showed that pupils listen to each other respectfully and act with integrity in moments of public and private prayer. An observed Lunchtime Liturgy showed that pupils were able to respond positively to private meditation and even the youngest pupils were able to interpret meaning from a Gospel passage. The pupils also show a good knowledge of traditional prayers from our Catholic faith tradition and are able to contribute their own thoughts and prayers. The contribution of Collective Worship is evident in the way the pupils treat each other in their excellent behaviour and relationships with each other. This makes a considerable contribution to the spiritual, social and moral development of the pupils.

LEADERS AND MANAGERS

How effective leaders and managers are in developing the Catholic life of the School

1

The school judges leadership and management of the school to be outstanding and inspection confirms this.

The acting headteacher is the driving force of the whole school community and has the zeal and determination to inspire everyone to achieve their full potential. The school is deeply committed to promoting its mission to create a community where 'the Gospel values of Jesus are in evidence.' The acting headteacher is supported by the school leadership team and staff who work hard to establish a culture of high expectations in RE. As a result pupils have a great understanding of the school's mission; they share its purpose and are actively involved in shaping and supporting it.

The very effective RE subject leader has a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and actions are in place to refine assessment strategies throughout the school in order to raise pupil attainment even further.

The governing body make a very good contribution to the Catholic life of the school and they discharge their statutory and canonical duties effectively. All governors are involved in the school's established self-evaluation programme and in formulating the school improvement plan. Governors have the responsibility to monitor and evaluate a specific area of the improvement plan and as such the RE governor is very aware of the school's attainment in RE and its areas to develop in the future. The governing body is confident in its role as 'a critical friend' and provides a high level of challenge for the school in order to bring about necessary improvements. The recent election of new governors will provide the

governing body with a fresh opportunity to reaffirm its role for the benefit of the Catholic life of the school.

The leadership team excel at promoting community cohesion at school, parish, local, national and international levels. This school takes every opportunity to equip its learners with the necessary skills to be fully active citizens in the future. The parish priests from St John's and English Martyrs are frequent visitors to the school and the pupils regularly organise and attend a Family Mass and Lenten Masses at the parish church. The pupils visit local old peoples' homes to sing carols and take part in local events such as the Remembrance Sunday Parade. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of other world faiths is catered for by visits to a local synagogue, links with a local multi-ethnic school and taking part in a whole school One World Week. Pupils also participate in a range of charity activities at a national and international level such as running a Fairtrade shop, fundraising for CAFOD and Christian Unity as well as sponsoring the education of four children in Pakistan.

This is a school that is highly respected within its community and this is reflected in the very positive parent questionnaire response; as one parent stated, 'My child is very happy at school which I feel is due to the Christian way of kindness and caring for each other.'

PROVISION

How effective the provision is for Catholic Education

1

Inspection finds that the quality of provision for its learners is outstanding. The school has in place robust strategies which enable it to judge that the quality of teaching which is at least good and often outstanding. This is effective in ensuring that pupils are consistently interested in their learning and make excellent progress given their starting points.

The school uses a cross curricular approach to teaching and learning in order to fully engage the needs and interests of its learners. In an observed Year 6 lesson about 'Justice' excellent use was made of computer technology, such as iPads, to fully engage the pupils to research key historical figures such as Mother Teresa and Martin Luther King. The teacher was highly skilled at asking appropriate yet probing questions to engage and challenge the different abilities of learners. The additional support given by the teaching assistants also enables groups of pupils, in particular pupils with special needs, to make at least good progress. Pupils are highly enthusiastic and motivated learners who respond purposefully to the learning opportunities given to them. The quality of relationships amongst the staff and pupils is exemplary and as such has a significant impact on the quality of provision provided.

The school's self-evaluation cycle employs a range of strategies, for example lesson observations and book scrutinies, to ensure each pupil is given every opportunity to reach their full potential. Pupils are very aware of the high standards expected of them through their use of challenging targets which are monitored and reviewed in their books. In addition to this, consistent and effective marking strategies (WWW- what went well & EBI- even better if) are employed to provide the pupils with the necessary next step advice to improve even further.

The school environment plays a considerable role in producing an effective teaching and learning culture. As soon as you enter the school it is obvious that this is a school which is visibly proud of our Catholic faith tradition as evident in the use of high quality display and artefacts. In addition to this each class has its own altar as an area of focus.

The quality of Collective Worship plays an important role in meeting the needs and interests of its learners. Prayer is given a high priority in the life of the school and pupils are actively involved in all areas of Collective Worship. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 delight in working with their Year 6 Liturgy Leaders to plan acts of worship and by the end of Key Stage 1 pupils are beginning to plan and lead worship for their class. At the end of Key Stage 2 they have full ownership in planning and leading class worship as is evident in the class Liturgy Folders for all classes. In addition to this the pupils particularly enjoy the opportunities given to them to respond to private prayer and reflection such as in Lunchtime Liturgy and Rosary Prayer Meetings.

The provision for Collective Worship has a considerable impact on the high quality of relationships and the spiritual, social and moral development of the whole school community.

SUMMARY OF INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Key for inspection grades:

Grade 1 **Outstanding** Grade 2 **Good** Grade 3 **Satisfactory** Grade 4 **Unsatisfactory**

Overall effectiveness	1
The school's capacity for sustained improvement	1
PUPILS How good outcomes are for pupils, taking particular account of variations between different groups	1
• how well do pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education?	1
❖ the quality of pupils' learning and their progress	1
❖ the quality of learning for pupils with particular learning needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
❖ pupils' attainment in Religious Education	1
• to what extent do pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life of the school?	1
• how well do pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship?	1
LEADERS AND MANAGERS How effective are leaders and managers in developing the Catholic life of the School?	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?	1
• how well leaders and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education and plan for improvement to outcomes for pupils?	1
• the extent to which the governing body provides effective challenge and support for the Catholic dimension of the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory and canonical responsibilities met?	1
• how well leaders and managers develop partnerships with other providers, organisations and services in order to promote Catholic learning and well-being?	1
• how effectively leaders and managers promote Community Cohesion?	1
PROVISION How effective is the provision for Catholic Education?	1
• the quality of teaching and purposeful learning in Religious Education?	1
• the effectiveness of assessment and academic guidance in Religious Education?	1
• the extent to which Religious Education curriculum meets pupils' needs?	1
• the quality of Collective Worship provided by the school?	1