

**DENOMINATIONAL INSPECTION
REPORT (Section 48)**

on

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

School: The Blessed Sacrament Catholic Primary School

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School URN: 119604

Headteacher: Mrs J Butterworth

Chair of Governors: Mr A Spencer

Section 48 Inspector: Mrs J Hampson

Date of Inspection: 15th November 2010

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

The Blessed Sacrament is a large Catholic Primary School, with 396 pupils on roll, of whom 213 are baptised Catholic, 72 are from other Christian denominations and 105 pupils have no religious affiliation. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above average. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is similar to most schools. Of these pupils a small number are learning English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average, as is the proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs. A higher proportion of pupils than the national average joins or leaves the school at times other than the usual starts in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The school mainly serves the parish of The Blessed Sacrament but also draws pupils from the Preston parishes of St Joseph, St Maria Goretti, St Teresa, St Anthony, St Ignatius, St Clare as well as St Mary Brownedge, St Catherine Leyland and St Mary Fernyhalgh. At the end of year six, almost all pupils transfer to Corpus Christi Catholic Sports College, with a small minority transferring to St Cecilia's Catholic High School and Christ The King Catholic High School. A few go to non-Catholic schools.

FACTUAL INFORMATION

Pupil Catchment:

Number of pupils on roll:	396
Planned Admission Number of Pupils:	60
Percentage of pupils baptised Catholics:	54%
Percentage of pupils from other Christian denominations:	18%
Percentage of pupils from other faith backgrounds:	1%
Percentage of pupils with no religious affiliation:	27%
Percentage of pupils from ethnic groups:	10%
Percentage of pupils with special needs:	26%

Staffing

Full-time teachers:	15
Part-time teachers:	5
Percentage of Catholic teachers:	70%
Percentage of teachers with CCRS:	35%

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:

1.	The Blessed Sacrament	311	3.	St Maria Goretti	26
2.	St Joseph's	28	4.	Others	28

Overall Effectiveness

2

Capacity for sustained improvement

1

MAIN FINDINGS

The Blessed Sacrament is a very good Catholic school. There is good self-evaluation and outstanding leadership at all levels. There is a clear vision for this fully inclusive Catholic school and this is shared and understood by everyone in the school community.

Pupils clearly enjoy coming to school and are proud to be team players in "Blessed Sacrament United". They engage well in lessons and have positive attitudes to learning. They make good progress in Religious Education from low starting points and attainment, at the end of all key stages, is satisfactory.

The school provides a good Catholic education. Teaching and learning in RE are good, meeting the needs of most pupils and enabling them to make good progress.

Pupils make an outstanding contribution to the Catholic life of the school and they benefit greatly from this.

The level of pupil participation in prayer and in the liturgical life of the school is good; pupils respond with respect and reverence in Collective Worship. The promotion of spiritual and moral development in the school is good.

Leadership and management of the school are outstanding and staff are well supported by a very effective governing body. All leaders have a clear sense of direction in curriculum RE and are committed to raising standards.

Parents are very supportive of the school and value the links with the parish and with the wider community.

The School's capacity for sustained improvement

All priorities for improvement since the last inspection have been addressed.

The headteacher, senior leaders and governors have total commitment to the ethos and mission of Catholic education. The high quality professional

development for all staff has ensured an understanding of and commitment to the Catholic ethos across the whole school. Rigorous and accurate self-evaluation leads to clear challenging targets and appropriate priorities.

What the school needs to do to improve further

- Further develop the tracking of pupil progress in RE, to include the baseline information.
- Ensure that marking of pupils' work is consistent across the school, relating to learning objectives and showing pupils how to improve.
- The RE subject leader should continue to support staff in planning assessment tasks which are matched carefully to the levels of attainment and therefore enable children to reach the higher levels.

PUPILS

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

2

Pupils enjoy Religious Education. They are keen to do well and are interested and enthusiastic about their learning. They discuss their faith with confidence and can talk about how religion, belief and spirituality impact on their lives.

Learning and progress in RE are good overall. From very low starting points, pupils make good progress in Foundation Stage and through Key Stages 1 and 2.

Data shows that some pupils, including those with additional needs, make very good progress. There is little variation in the amount of progress made between boys and girls.

Standards of attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 were low in 2010. However, current assessment information and pupils' work show that across the whole school, standards of attainment in both knowledge and understanding of religion (AT1) and an ability to reflect on meaning (AT2) at the end of Key Stage 2 are broadly average.

Pupils make an outstanding contribution to the Catholic life of school. They are able to talk with confidence about their understanding of the Catholic life of the school and their engagement with it. They are able to refer confidently to the teachings of Christ when discussing life in school. For

example, one pupil talked about the importance of forgiveness in school, reflecting that Jesus asks us to forgive 'not 7 times but 70 times 7.'

Pupils understand the importance of treating others with respect and talk about having a relationship with Jesus in school.

Music plays a key role in the prayer life of The Blessed Sacrament School and pupils participate joyfully. Pupils act with reverence and are keen to participate in the many different types of worship offered at school. They show respect for everyone in the school and understand that some pupils have different beliefs and attitudes to spirituality.

Pupils throughout the school are given opportunities to contribute to and to lead acts of Collective Worship. They do this with confidence because they are well-supported by staff. They are able to use information and communication technology (ICT) and music effectively to support reflection. An observed act of Collective Worship showed that pupils have a good knowledge of traditional prayers and other forms of prayer.

LEADERS AND MANAGERS

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

1

Leaders and managers are very good at promoting Catholic values and principles. The Catholic mission of the school is at the heart of all school life and pupils' spiritual and moral development is central to the school's vision.

The headteacher and chair of governors have worked tirelessly together to promote an excellent vision for the school, as a living gospel, a true witness to faith. This vision is communicated clearly to all stakeholders, ensuring a common purpose. This impacts on the excellent relationships in school.

The School Development Plan, which includes plans for Religious Education and Collective Worship and the 'Fit for Mission' action plan set clear priorities for improvement. These plans are regularly monitored and evaluated by school staff and by the governing body.

The monitoring and evaluation of provision for RE are good. The headteacher and Religious Education subject leader have effectively ensured that monitoring, assessment and tracking systems are in place and that they are impacting positively on pupils' learning, progress and standards. For example, evidence from monitoring shows that the introduction of a creative curriculum has supported the teaching of AT2 in RE, well and has resulted in improved attainment.

The Religious Education subject leader has identified the need to include the information gathered from baseline assessments in the pupil tracking information.

The outstanding work of the governing body is a strength of the school. Governors provide very effective challenge and support; they are very proactive, highly involved in the Catholic life of the school and make a significant contribution to the school's work, for example leading Inset for all staff members on community cohesion and the future direction of the Catholic school in the 21st century.

Governing body meetings include a cycle of review, analysis, evaluation and future planning on all aspects of the Catholic life of the school. Through this cycle, governors are fully aware of the strengths and areas for development in school.

The school has developed a variety of partnership activities which impact on pupils' achievement and well-being and on the Catholic life of the school. Governors work very closely with staff to ensure that links are strong with the parishes, other Catholic schools, the Diocese and other organisations.

The promotion of community cohesion is outstanding. The headteacher has ensured inclusion of all is a central goal and a shared vision. As a result, there is a common sense of belonging amongst staff and pupils and all have a high regard for the Catholic life of the school. The curriculum is planned to meet all pupils' needs and thus to ensure equal opportunity for all. The introduction of a creative curriculum in school has provided additional opportunities for pupils to learn about other world faiths and cultures. Governors recently conducted a review of community cohesion at the school and they carried out analysis of the information gathered. This led to the introduction of a new policy and areas for development were added to the school improvement plan. A parish development group has been set up to ensure that good school/parish/community links are maintained.

PROVISION

How effective the provision is for Catholic Education

2

The quality of teaching is good. A range of teaching styles, good questioning techniques, clear explanations and well paced lessons ensure that all pupils engage well and make good progress in both attainment targets. In a lesson observed in Key Stage 2 during the inspection, excellent questioning by the teacher resulted in very good relevant responses from the pupils. Most were able to make connections between the choices and decisions we make in our lives and the teachings of Jesus, i.e. to put others before ourselves.

Pupils say they enjoy Religious Education lessons most when there are activities such as role-play, drama, music and use of art, because it makes learning exciting.

In a lesson observed in Key Stage 1, pupils engaged with questions of meaning and purpose. They asked questions about heaven and discussed why their questions were difficult to answer.

With the support of the Religious Education subject leader, teachers have developed strong subject knowledge, which inspires and promotes confident learners.

Teachers are effective in ensuring that lessons build on prior learning and meet the needs of most pupils. Pupil activities are well planned and differentiated to enable pupils of all abilities to make progress. Teachers also make very good use of opportunities, through the creative curriculum, to further develop pupils' learning.

Support staff are well deployed in school, helping individual pupils to remain focussed and engaged with their work and reporting back to teachers on pupil progress.

The Religious Education subject leader has developed a comprehensive portfolio of moderated work to support staff in assessing the progress of pupils. Although there is some information on pupils' achievement and progress, leaders recognise the need to use this information more effectively, in order to identify and quickly tackle any underachievement.

A new marking policy has recently been introduced. This needs to be fully implemented consistently across the whole school, so that all pupils know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve.

The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school is outstanding and ensures that the spiritual needs of all pupils are well met. Prayer is central to the life of the school. All classes have well-resourced quiet areas where pupils reflect and pray.

Teachers' planning for acts of worship is good and acts of worship are fully inclusive and reflective. There are many opportunities for pupils across all key stages to plan and lead their own acts of Collective Worship. They do this very well and show a good understanding of the liturgical year in their planning.

Acts of Collective Worship have a significant impact on pupils, parents and the parishes they serve. Parental questionnaires show that parents value the opportunities they have to join their children in acts of worship in school and are satisfied with the school as a whole.

SUMMARY OF INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Key for inspection grades:

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

Overall effectiveness	2
The school's capacity for sustained improvement	1
PUPILS How good outcomes are for pupils, taking particular account of variations between different groups	2
• how well do pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education?	2
❖ the quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
❖ the quality of learning for pupils with particular learning needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
❖ pupils' attainment in RE	3
• 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?	2
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 RE and plan for improvement to outcomes for pupils?	2
• 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?	2
• the quality of teaching and purposeful learning in?	2
• the effectiveness of assessment and academic guidance in Religious Education?	2
• the extent to which Religious Education curriculum meets pupils' needs?	2
• the quality of Collective Worship provided by the school?	1