

**DENOMINATIONAL INSPECTION
REPORT (Section 48)**

on

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

School: St Gregory's Catholic Primary School

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School URN: 112339

Headteacher: Celia Holder

Chair of Governors: Hughie Stamper

Section 48 Inspector: Chris Wilkins

Date of Inspection: 29th June 2011

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

This is an average-sized Catholic primary school serving the merged parishes of St Gregory and Our Lady and St Michael. 35% of pupils are baptised Catholics and 44% are from other Christian denominations. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. An above average proportion of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Almost all pupils are White British. Almost all Year 6 pupils move on to St. Joseph's Catholic High School Business and Enterprise College.

FACTUAL INFORMATION

Pupil Catchment:

Number of pupils on roll:	239
Planned Admission Number of Pupils:	30
Percentage of pupils baptised RC:	35%
Percentage of pupils from other Christian denominations:	44%
Percentage of pupils from other faith backgrounds:	0.5%
Percentage of pupils with no religious affiliation:	20%
Percentage of pupils from ethnic groups:	0.5%
Percentage of pupils with special needs:	31%

Staffing

Full-time teachers:	9
Part-time teachers:	1
Percentage of Catholic teachers:	61%
Percentage of teachers with CCRS:	52%

Percentage of learning time given to RE:

NR	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 Gregory's and Our Lady and St Michael's

Overall Effectiveness

2

Capacity for sustained improvement

2

MAIN FINDINGS

The overall effectiveness of the school is good. The headteacher has a very strong commitment to forging links with the parish: she is supported ably in this by the staff and governors. Governors are committed to developing the Catholic life of the school and to supporting and encouraging staff in gaining the Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies (CCRS) qualification; which 5 teachers have done, with 2 more currently undertaking the qualification. There is a strong prayer life in school, leading to pupils being capable in planning and leading prayer services.

Pupils benefit from the good provision for learning in RE in the Foundation Stage and by Year 2 have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding for their age and ability. With overall good teaching across the school, pupils reach the end of Key Stage 2 in line with national expectations. Pupils are motivated, sustain their concentration well and enjoy their work. Throughout the school pupils are encouraged to develop their thinking skills and justify their thinking. The school works hard to develop and maintain positive relationships with the parents and the supportive questionnaires are evidence of their success.

Capacity for sustained improvement

The head teacher, senior managers and RE subject leaders are self evaluative and make sound judgements about school achievements and needs. There has been a significant change in the leadership of RE, and following these changes leaders at all levels are now beginning to develop effective and well thought out actions to ensure continued progression and development. A well informed and challenging governing body is monitoring the impact of these actions.

What the school needs to do to improve further

- Ensure that assessment data is used to monitor standards and progress throughout the year, and from year to year, to ensure underachievement is addressed and standards are able to rise.
- Ensure that more challenging tasks and activities enable more able pupils to achieve higher levels of attainment.

- Support the induction of new members of staff in the teaching of Religious Education through Continuing Professional Development.

PUPILS

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

2

Outcomes for pupils are good. Baseline assessments on entry to the school show that pupils enter with very low knowledge of the Catholic faith. However, they make good progress over the course of their time in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Progress in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory and by the time they leave Year 6 most pupils have developed knowledge and understanding of RE in line with national expectations showing good progress over the course of their time in Key Stage 2.

Pupils are very positive about their Religious Education and talk with interest and knowledge about what they have learnt. They are proud of the work in their books and especially of their answers to the questions their teachers write for them as part of their marking. Work scrutiny and pupil interviews show that more able pupils are capable of making better progress and attaining even more.

Parents' replies to the questionnaire show that they are happy with the progress that their children make in Religious Education. Pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN) are well supported in their work and make good progress. Good use is made of adult help around the school.

Pupils participate well in Collective Worship opportunities. During the inspection acts of Collective Worship were seen in the Early Years Foundation Stage and also in Year 6. The youngest children responded enthusiastically to the teacher-led act of worship and were excited about being able to choose the hymn that they sang. In Year 6, two pupils led the act of worship confidently and with reverence and all pupils in the class are afforded this opportunity during the school year. All Key Stage 2 pupils attended the Mass and responded keenly and reverently.

LEADERS AND MANAGERS

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

2

Leaders and managers of the school make a good contribution to the Catholic life of the school. Religious Education is high profile within the

school and a proactive approach is taken to ensure increasingly good quality teaching and learning in RE. The senior leadership team, including the RE subject leaders, do a good job in managing the curriculum and ensuring teaching standards and learning outcomes are improving.

Increasingly rigorous monitoring and assessment of provision for Religious Education has been recently introduced using a new format and, this should lead to more effective provision over time. Work trawls and internal and external moderation of work ensure that assessments are accurate and consistent.

Governors are committed to ensuring that the school fulfills its mission as a Catholic school. There is day to day involvement in the life of the school by the Chair of Governors and RE Governor and, along with the RE subject leaders, they feed back to the governing body to ensure that they are fully informed. The school fully meet the requirements of the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales with respect to curriculum RE.

Leaders and managers of the school are strongly focused on the school's Catholic mission and are successful in creating a sense of shared mission amongst the staff. Pupils feel respected and in turn they show respect for others; they are well cared for and nurtured in a happy and caring environment where Gospel values are central to the life of the school. Parents are encouraged to be involved in their children's religious education as demonstrated by the strong support by parents at Mass on the day of the inspection.

Community Cohesion is a priority of the school and is good. The pupils play an active part in local community initiatives such as 'Rotakids' and are generous in their support of those in need locally. School residential visits to York and Liverpool each year widen pupils' understanding of our multicultural country. International awareness is strengthened through a school link with Jamaica and through schemes like the "Water Aid" initiative. Pupils have a good understanding of other faiths and cultures. Some pupils from the school enjoyed the opportunity to attend the recent Papal visit.

PROVISION

How effective the provision is for Catholic education

2

The quality of teaching is generally good across the school and most pupils make good progress given their starting points. There is ample evidence to show that pupils are challenged through incisive questioning and that their literacy skills are developed in their RE lessons. In a Year 5 lesson, pupils were encouraged to explore the changing of the wording of the Creed and to ensure they understood its meaning. In a Year 2 lesson

observed, pupils enjoyed their lesson and could clearly articulate what they had learnt.

Religious objects and attractive displays, such as the one on Fruits of the Holy Spirit in Year 6 mark the school as distinctively Catholic, as does the standard of Collective Worship areas around the school. High expectations of staff and a clear mission statement which is displayed throughout the school result in pupils having an obvious pride in their school. Pupils are given good opportunities to exercise responsibility. An example of this is the leading of class prayer services by Year 6 pupils in rotation.

Parents have very positive attitudes towards the school in which they are made to feel welcome. Parish priests are welcome visitors to the school and take an active role in school life. This helps to further strengthen the partnership between the school and the parishes.

The school has identified the need to raise attainment for the most able learners by the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Teachers also appreciate that embedding of assessment is key to ensuring their success in this aim.

Collective Worship is good and is a strength of the school. Staff lead thoughtful and reverent acts of worship and pupil response to this is heartfelt. Pupils of all ages are increasingly involved in the planning and evaluation of acts of worship and describe how they enjoy and learn from Collective Worship. Further development of this area is built into the RE action plan and will further improve the experiences of pupils in the school.

Pupils speak enthusiastically about RE and describe it as one of their favourite lessons. They are able to talk about the key messages of Jesus and how they learn about the Catholic faith. Pupils enjoy learning about other cultures and how people have fought for justice and fairness in different periods of history and in different faiths.

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	2
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?	2
• 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?	2
• 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
• how well leaders and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for RE and plan for improvement to outcomes for pupils?	3
• 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?	2
• how well leaders and managers develop partnerships with other providers, organisations and services in order to promote Catholic learning and well being?	2
• how effectively leaders and managers promote Community Cohesion?	2
PROVISION How effective is the provision for Catholic Education?	2
• the quality of teaching and purposeful learning in RE?	2
• the effectiveness of assessment and academic guidance in Religious Education?	3
• the extent to which Religious Education curriculum meets pupils' needs?	3
• the quality of Collective Worship provided by the school?	2