

**DENOMINATIONAL INSPECTION  
REPORT (Section 48)**

on

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

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**School:** Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School

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**School URN:** 119632

**Headteacher:** Mr Paul Eaton

**Chair of Governors:** Rev Anthony Edwards

**Section 48 Inspector:** Mrs F Wygladala

**Date of Inspection:** November 22<sup>nd</sup> 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**

Sacred Heart is a Catholic voluntary aided primary school in the Diocese of Lancaster. The school serves the parishes of Sacred Heart in Thornton, St Nicholas Owen in Thornton and St John Southworth in Cleveleys. It is an average sized primary school. The school is situated in a residential area and the vast majority of pupils are from White British heritage. There are currently 200 learners on role of whom approximately 46% are baptised Catholics. The vast majority of pupils transfer at the end of year six to Cardinal Allen Catholic High School.

### **FACTUAL INFORMATION**

#### **Pupil Catchment:**

Number of pupils on roll:	200
Planned Admission Number of Pupils:	30
Percentage of pupils baptised Catholics:	46%
Percentage of pupils from other Christian denominations:	30.5%
Percentage of pupils from other faith backgrounds:	0.5%
Percentage of pupils with no religious affiliation:	23%
Percentage of pupils from ethnic groups:	1%
Percentage of pupils with special needs:	24%

#### **Staffing**

Full-time teachers:	6
Part-time teachers:	4
Percentage of Catholic teachers:	60%
Percentage of teachers with CCRS:	12%

#### **Percentage of learning time given to RE:**

R	10%	Yr 4	10%
Yr 1	10%	Yr 5	8%
Yr 2	10%	Yr 6	10%
Yr 3	8%		

#### **Parishes served by the school:**

1. Sacred Heart, Thornton
2. St Nicholas Owen, Thornton Cleveleys
3. St John Southworth, Cleveleys

**Overall Effectiveness**

3

**Capacity for sustained improvement**

3

## **MAIN FINDINGS**

Sacred Heart is a very welcoming school, where everyone is respected and loved. There is a clear vision for this Catholic school in the heart of the community that is shared and understood by everyone.

Pupils clearly enjoy coming to school. They engage well in lessons and have positive attitudes to learning. Most make progress in Religious Education from low starting points in Foundation and Key Stage One where data shows that attainment is good and higher than in other core subjects. However, at the end of Key Stage Two a large majority of pupils are not making the progress expected of them in RE.

Leaders and managers have worked hard to improve the building to enhance provision, especially in the newly extended school hall. This was built to show Christ is at the centre of everything that happens at Sacred Heart and is a new focal point for school and parish Collective Worship.

Pupils make a good contribution to the Catholic life of the school, such as the lead they take in the prayer and liturgical life of the school.

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 which has been a recent focus for improvement. The promotion of spiritual and moral development in school is good.

Most aspects of leadership and management of the school are satisfactory, despite this, standards in RE have fallen at the end of Key Stage Two.

Parents are very supportive of the school as shown in responses to questionnaires and the relationship with the parish is a strength of the school. Communication is effective, with school and parish distributing each other's newsletters ensuring parents and parishioners are kept up to date with news and planned Masses and assemblies.

### **The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

The school's capacity for sustained improvement is satisfactory. Some priorities for improvement since the last inspection have been addressed and the others are continuing.

In 2009 staff, governors and parents reviewed the school Mission Statement and have ownership it.

Staff have developed opportunities for worship at the beginning of their weekly meetings.

A comment on progress in RE was reintroduced in Foundation Stage end of year reports to parents.

Continuing action for improvement since the last inspection includes:

- Developing teachers' assessment skills in RE.
- Implementing a system to track the attainment and progress of all pupils in RE.
- Developing assessment for learning strategies in RE.
- Ensuring that teaching is monitored and supported effectively in order to extend the good practice that exists in school.

All staff have total commitment to the ethos and mission of Catholic education.

The Religious Education curriculum provided is varied and is focused on meeting the needs of all pupils and raising standards, especially in Foundation and Key Stage One. There needs to be more focus on planning for opportunities for Key Stage Two pupils to make expected progress and achieve levels in line with other core curriculum subjects. The quality of Collective Worship is good and pupils respond with respect and reverence. An emphasis on improving Parish links has brought about effective partnership work and is appreciated in both the Parish and the school. The staff are good role models for pupils and offer a variety of prayer and worship opportunities.

## **What the school needs to do to improve further**

- Continue to develop as a whole school, the new assessment and tracking system to monitor the attainment and progress of every pupil throughout the year, enabling underachievement to be addressed immediately and standards to rise.
- Ensure that more challenging tasks and activities enable Key Stage Two pupils to achieve higher levels of attainment.
- Develop 'Assessment for Learning' strategies and use 'next steps' marking consistently in every class to impact on learning and progress.
- Analyse baseline assessments in Foundation Stage to plan for progression in RE.
- Carry out more detailed planning in RE with a focus on the Attainment Target and strand for assessment. Give pupils opportunities to achieve levels throughout each topic, i.e. formative assessments not just in a summative assessment at the end of the topic or term's work.
- Provide governors with more regular information on standards to enable them to monitor attainment and progress in curriculum RE and to compare standards in RE with English.
- Audit curriculum RE allocation as a matter of urgency.

## **PUPILS**

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

**3**

The majority of pupils enjoy Religious Education. They speak enthusiastically about their lessons and have very positive attitudes towards their learning. Assessment data and work scrutiny all evidence pupils' improvements in Foundation and Key Stage One.

Most pupils' standards of attainment in knowledge and understanding of religion (AT1) is average, however their ability to reflect on meaning (AT2) is well below average especially at Key Stage Two. From below average starting points on entry to school, standards rise to being broadly in line with national norms at Key Stage One. In 2010, standards at Key Stage Two were average; however in 2011 standards fell to well below average, with only 34% of pupils attaining the expected Level Four. The majority of assessments were on AT2 which has been identified by the school as an area to improve in Key Stage Two.

The standard of work in the pupils RE books is good, but use of Assessment for Learning strategies needs to be further developed by staff and 'next steps' marking used consistently in every class to impact on pupils' learning and progress. More detailed planning in RE needs to be focussed on the Attainment Target and strand for assessment and pupils need to be given opportunities to achieve levels throughout each topic, i.e. formative assessments not just in an assessment piece at the end of the topic.

Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress because their needs are identified and support is given to meet them. Most pupils are becoming increasingly religiously literate and their knowledge, skills and understanding are developing well according to their age and capability. They discuss their faith confidently and demonstrate that they are able to think spiritually.

Prayer is central to the Catholic life of the school and pupils act with reverence and are keen to participate in the all of the many different types of worship offered at school; they join in community prayers appropriately and with confidence. During a whole school assembly observed during inspection the whole school sang and signed a carol enthusiastically. Pupils regularly prepare and lead worship with confidence and enthusiasm from their earliest years in a variety of gatherings. Pupils understand the importance of key celebrations in school and the parish community throughout the liturgical year.

All pupils act in a manner consistent with their beliefs and show respect for each other. Pupils display a sense of belonging to their school, their Church and to the local community. They take on responsibilities and participate constructively in the Catholic life of the school beyond routine lessons and activities. This is seen through pupils' eagerness to take part in prayer activities such as the harvest festival, remembrance liturgy and during Lent, also in their responses to planning and to leading worship during assemblies and Masses. Pupils are considerate to others and caring to anyone in apparent need. They regularly work together to lead and run their own fundraising activities, such as Operation Christmas Child.

Recently they have supported CAFOD, Vincent House at Harvest, Christian Aid, Actionaid and other charities.

## **LEADERS AND MANAGERS**

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

<b>3</b>
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Leaders and managers promote the Catholic life of the school well. 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.

Governors provide support regarding the Catholic life of the school. They are informed on issues relating to Religious Education and to the Catholic life of the school, but do not have sufficient understanding of the school's performance in Religious Education or what needs to be done to ensure continuous improvement in standards. Governors discharge their statutory and canonical duties satisfactorily and are very supportive of leaders and of staff. They are actively involved in the school community and have positive relationships with pupils and staff. However, standards in curriculum RE need to be monitored by Governors through work sampling and curriculum report from the subject leader, comparing standards in RE with English.

The school's partnership activities themselves, and the leadership and management, make a contribution to satisfactory achievement and to the well-being of pupils. The links with local schools and in particular with Red Marsh special school for the Great Outdoors project is a strength. There is a common sense of belonging amongst staff and pupils and all have a high regard for the Catholic life of the school. Staff are good role models for pupils and have very good relationships with pupils and parents. Pupils co-operate well with each other.

Strong links exist with the parish of Sacred Heart; this has been a focus since the last inspection with the Parish Priest visiting school often during the week and leading hymn practice. A local Methodist minister is welcomed into school and often leads assemblies. Parishioners look forward to the whole school Masses, either in church or in the newly extended school hall. The RE curriculum includes the study of Catholicism and some study of other world faiths, recently the whole school had a focus week on Judaism, visiting speakers were welcomed and the pupils were very proud of the work they had completed during the week. The school works well with all three parishes the school serves including St Nicholas Owen and St John Southworth.

Relationships among pupils are positive. Many opportunities exist for pupils to engage and collaborate with each other through, for example, the school council. Sacred Heart pupils have good links with a school in Nepal; they enjoy sharing news and raising funds to benefit the community out there.

# PROVISION

## How effective the provision is for Catholic Education

3
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A range of teaching styles, clear explanations, well-paced lessons and good use of ICT ensure that most pupils are consistently interested in their learning and make progress that is broadly in line with their capabilities in Foundation Stage and Key Stage One. However, due to the lack of planned opportunities for pupils to achieve levels in RE that are in line with other core subjects, or that they are capable of achieving, standards in RE in Key Stage Two are well below average, especially in AT2. More challenging activities and tasks are needed to enable upper Key Stage Two pupils to achieve higher levels of attainment, in line with English. Teachers have good subject knowledge which inspires and promotes confident learners. This was evident in a Year 2 lesson observed during inspection; the pupils were actively engaged in a well differentiated, interactive lesson on the Holy Trinity; all pupils were learning and making progress. Staff make learning interesting which impacts positively on pupil enjoyment, engagement and motivation. RE displays of children's work around school and worship areas are of a very high quality.

Support staff are effectively deployed to meet the needs of the pupils. Flaws in the way assessments are used means that a more detailed action plan, focusing on standards in AT1 at Key Stage Two and AT2 throughout the school, need to be developed and implemented to drive improvements in standards. Analysis of baseline assessments in Foundation Stage should help to plan for progression in RE.

Pupils need to be provided with detailed feedback, both orally and through effective marking, if they are to make the progress they are capable of at Key Stage Two.

The school should continue to develop the new assessment and tracking system to monitor the attainment and progress of every pupil throughout the year enabling underachievement to be addressed immediately and standards to rise.

The Religious Education curriculum is creatively adapted to meet the needs of most pupils. It is enriched through a variety of imaginative and well-planned strategies and relevant resources, which engage and motivate the pupils. The Religious Education curriculum provides opportunities for and impacts positively on pupils' spiritual and moral development. The curriculum meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales broadly, however not all classes have 10% of curriculum time directed to teaching RE.

The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school is good, prayer is central to the life of the school and a key part of every celebration. It is fully inclusive, reflective and well planned enabling pupils to take an active part. There is a range of formal and informal opportunities for daily prayer and pupils eagerly and confidently share prayers in class and school liturgies and school masses; this was evident during the inspection. Attendance by parents, other family members and parishioners is facilitated and encouraged in services in church and in the school hall. Parish clergy play an important part in sharing prayers, bible stories and experiences with weekly visits to school. Pupils, parents, staff and

governors relate well to the parish priest who works hard to strengthen the home, school and parish partnership. He is a regular visitor to school, running a weekly prayer group with the RE subject leader and leading the weekly hymn practice in school. Distribution of the Wednesday Word helps with this partnership.



# SUMMARY OF INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

**Key for inspection grades:**

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

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The school's capacity for sustained improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>PUPILS How good outcomes are for pupils, taking particular account of variations between different groups</b>	<b>3</b>
• how well do pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education?	3
❖ the quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
❖ the quality of learning for pupils with particular learning needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
❖ pupils' attainment in RE	4
• 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
<b>LEADERS AND MANAGERS How effective are leaders and managers in developing the Catholic life of the School?</b>	<b>3</b>
• 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?	3
• 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?	3
• how well leaders and managers develop partnerships with other providers, organisations and services in order to promote Catholic learning and well-being?	3
• how effectively leaders and managers promote Community Cohesion?	2
<b>PROVISION How effective is the provision for Catholic Education?</b>	<b>3</b>
• the quality of teaching and purposeful learning in?	3
• the effectiveness of assessment and academic guidance in Religious Education?	4
• the extent to which Religious Education curriculum meets pupils' needs?	3
• the quality of Collective Worship provided by the school?	2