

# DIOCESE OF LEEDS



DIOCESAN BOARD FOR INSPECTIONS

## SECTION 48 FINAL REPORT THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Our Lady of Good Counsel  
Pigeon Cote Road  
Seacroft  
Leeds LS14 1EP

School URN	108030
School DfE Number	3833376
E-mail address	Flahersm01@leedslearning.net
Chair of Governors	Mrs Kathleen Walpole
Headteacher	Mrs Stephanie Flaherty
RE Subject Leader	Mrs Stephanie Flaherty Mrs Fran Hughes
Date of Inspection	24 <sup>th</sup> - 25 <sup>th</sup> June 2013
Section 48 Inspector/s	Mrs Barbara Ford

# INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection Grades: 1 is Outstanding, 2 is Good, 3 requires improvement in order to be good, 4 is Inadequate

**OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS:** how effective the school is in providing Catholic Education.

1

*The above judgement on overall effectiveness is based on all the available evidence following the evaluation of:*

- *Outcomes for pupils,*
- *The provision for Catholic Education*
- *Leaders and Managers*

**OUTCOMES FOR PUPILS**

1

**THE PROVISION FOR CATHOLIC EDUCATION**

2

**LEADERS AND MANAGERS**

1

**Summary of key findings:**

**This is an outstanding school.**

- Our Lady of Good Counsel is a 'Haven of tranquillity in Seacroft'.
- The spiritual and moral development of pupils and Collective Worship are linked to the school's development plan. Staff and pupil understanding of the school's mission, 'As the family of God, with Jesus, we love, learn and enjoy', is outstanding.
- The exceptional headteacher is energised by her leadership role and inspires staff, parents and pupils alike.
- The 'Faith Friends' who take voluntary sessions in the beautifully refurbished Prayer Garden are committed to evangelising and nurturing the faith of younger children, demonstrating enthusiastic, leadership qualities.
- Pupils treat others with high levels of respect, know that their behaviour always has consequences and adherence to the 'Good to be Green' behaviour policy ensures that the behaviour throughout school is exceptional.
- Teaching is consistently good or better, with many outstanding features.
- A significant contribution to the high quality of teaching and learning across the school is the calibre and professionalism of the support staff, many of whom are Catholics.
- Teachers' excellent subject knowledge, combined with very good relationships, ensure pupils make exceptional progress, considering their starting points, evidenced in lessons, but also through the wider evidence base and the religious literacy of the pupils.
- There are many high quality resources used in RE, including the outstanding provision in ICT, providing evidence that it can enhance the learning, sustain concentration and motivate pupils.
- To make provision outstanding, school needs to develop an element of peer assessment and a more effective whole school pupil-tracking system.

- There was excellent evidence from the ‘Year of Faith’ programmes and particularly the ‘Pentecost Day’ highlighting the development of an imaginative, creative curriculum in RE, enabling pupils to express their ideas, feelings, opinions and learning. School should continue to collaborate with the cluster of schools (and wider) to ensure curriculum provision is consistently outstanding throughout school and the liturgical year.
- Collective Worship (CW) is central to the life of the school and a key part of every school celebration. There is outstanding use of music, enthusiastic singing and liturgical dance to praise and worship God.

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

- To continue to develop the imaginative, creative curriculum in RE, enabling pupils to express their ideas, feelings, opinions and learning and to share the ‘Year of Faith’ events with the cluster of schools (and wider).
- To further embed the diocesan SRE (Sex and Relationships Education) Policy ‘Created for Love’ into curriculum provision for EPR (Education in Personal Relationships), in consultation with all stakeholders.
- In collaboration with the Leeds Diocese and local schools, to develop an element of peer assessment and a more effective whole school pupil-tracking system, so that accelerated progress can be identified.
- In line with the Curriculum Directory, continue to develop systematically the work on other World Faiths to ensure that it enhances the RE curriculum and enriches the children’s appreciation of their own and other religions.

### **Information about this inspection**

The Inspection of Our Lady of Good Counsel was carried out under the requirements of the Education Act 2005, and in accordance with the Leeds Diocesan Framework and Schedule for Section 48 Inspections approved by the Diocesan Administrator of Leeds. The inspection reviews and evaluates how effective the school is in providing Catholic education. This process begins with the school’s own self-evaluation and the inspection schedule follows the criteria set by the National Board of Religious Inspectors and Advisers (NBRIA 2012).

The inspector reviewed in detail the following aspects:

- The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school;
- How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in RE;
- How well pupils respond to and participate in the school’s CW;
- The quality of teaching and how purposeful learning is in RE;
- The extent to which the RE Curriculum promotes pupils’ learning;
- The quality of CW;
- The accuracy of the school’s self evaluation system;
- The school’s partnership activities – including home/school/ parish links;
- The inspection was carried out by 1 inspector over a 1 ½ day period. A sample of 3 RE lessons and 3 acts of Collective Worship were observed, including one for staff, a KS2

class worship, and a whole school Assembly led by pupils in Y5. Meetings were held with the headteacher, staff, governors, parents, pupils and the school council. A comprehensive range of RE/Catholic life of the school monitoring and assessment documentation was scrutinised including, moderated pupil RE work folders and workbooks. Governors approved an RE Budget of £2000 (2012 – 2013) which is equal to other core curriculum areas.

### Information about this school

- Our Lady of Good Counsel is a popular, oversubscribed, average sized Catholic primary school.
- It is one of two primary schools in the parish of Blessed Edmund Sykes.
- The catchment area of the school has within it some of the most disadvantaged areas of the city.
- The number of pupils on the SEN register and with statements is above the national average and there are 51% Catholics.
- Most come from white-British backgrounds. A high proportion of pupils are entitled to free school meals.
- There are nine full time teachers; eight of whom are Catholic with four who hold the CCRS or equivalent. Since the last RE inspection. A new deputy headteacher was appointed in 2008 (an internal appointment) and there are four additional teaching assistants and a part-time teacher.
- The governors are a strong team and the appointment of a new parish priest has strengthened the relationship between school and parish.
- School has achieved the Stephen Lawrence Educational Standard Levels 1 and 2.

## Full report - inspection judgements

### Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils are outstanding.

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 pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship.	1

- Pupils lead and take responsibility for shaping activities with a religious character, in the school and the wider community. The headteacher trained the 'Faith Friends' who take voluntary sessions in the beautifully refurbished Prayer Garden. They wrote moving applications for their posts of responsibility and are committed to evangelising and nurturing the faith of younger children, demonstrating enthusiastic, leadership qualities. "I want to spread the good news about Jesus. I am knowledgeable in RE and pray every night. I will do my best and take advice to make me a better Faith Friend."
- The pupil voice is heard by leaders and their evaluations of the Catholic Life of the school are sought and acted upon. Their evaluations of Faith Friends, included, "To make it better, we could make up our own songs with them". "I would love to do a puppet show from the Bible."
- Pupils treat others with high levels of respect and know that their behaviour always has consequences, adherence to the 'Good to be Green' behaviour policy ensures that the behaviour throughout school is exceptional.

- Pupils value and respect the Catholic tradition of the school and its links with the parish communities. Our Lady of Good Counsel is a school where Christ truly is at the centre of all that it seeks to achieve. The school's Mission Statement, 'As the family of God, with Jesus, we love, learn and enjoy', is 'lived out' in the day to day life of pupils and staff of the school.
- Attainment in RE at the end of Key Stage 1 is in line with national levels in the knowledge and understanding of religion (AT1) and by the end of Key Stage 2, is in line in both AT1 and an ability to reflect on meaning (AT2), with a significant number above and the majority of pupils making very good progress.
- Most pupils concentrate very well; are rarely off task; generally seek to produce their best work and are interested in, and enthusiastic about, their learning.
- Pupils are skilled, relative to their age and capabilities, in using a variety of methods to support their private and public prayer showing confidence in their use of scripture and religious symbols, for example using the 'Five Fingers of Prayer' and leading voluntary rosary, prayer groups and Mass.
- Staff seek to ensure pupils are skilled in, and equipped to, lead worship; for example, year 5 have incrementally taken more responsibility for class Collective Worship during the year. They planned and delivered an outstanding session on the theme 'Inspirational people challenge us to live better lives', inviting their recently-retired teacher as an exemplar guest on receiving their photo montage gift, she commented, "It is you CHILDREN who inspire us!"
- They have a good understanding, appropriate to their age and capabilities, of the Church's main seasonal celebrations and enjoy performing Christmas and Easter Plays and the Partnership Schools summer production.

## The provision for Catholic Education is good with outstanding elements

The quality of teaching and how purposeful learning is in Religious Education.	2
The extent to which the Religious Education curriculum promotes pupils' learning.	2
The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school.	1

- Teaching is consistently good or better, with many outstanding features.
- A significant contribution to the high quality of teaching and learning across the school is the calibre and professionalism of the support staff, many of whom are Catholics, plus the SMART (Seacroft Manston Resource Team) intervention and input from Catholic Care.
- There is evidence of experiential and effective learning, engaging the pupils in active ways. For example in a year 2 RE lesson, 'our capacity to trust' was taught using 'feely' boxes.
- There was evidence of creative play and engagement in Reception class, during the afternoon, when children used their 'church' role play area to re-enact all the elements of a baptism. However many children seemed reliant on adult support and more opportunities for child-led or independent pupil-initiated learning, as evidenced during the excellent Creative RE days and topics (which do promote independent learning) should be encouraged in Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1.
- As pupils move through the school they gain an impressive knowledge of religious terminology, as evidenced by Reception's recent visit to church with year 4 which impacted on their retention of the names of sacred items, for example 'tabernacle', "That's where they keep Jesus' body, you know."

- In a year 6 RE lesson, pupils were learning to ‘recognise that God has given us gifts and talents to use in the service of His people.’ They are alert to the needs of others, and seek justice for all within and beyond the school community and as the groups were devising fund raising activities utilising their talents, one pupil said, “We are a Catholic school, we believe in God and raise money to try to look after the poor.” There was good use of netbooks for research on Sylvia Wright and ICT (photo-story), as a tool to differentiate activities.
- Teachers’ excellent subject knowledge, combined with very good relationships, ensure pupils make exceptional progress, considering their starting points, as observed in lessons, but also through the wider evidence base and the religious literacy of the pupils.
- There are many high quality resources used in RE, including the outstanding provision in ICT, (the website, podcasts, power-points, ‘Speak Ease’, flip-cams) providing evidence that it can enhance the learning, sustain concentration and motivate pupils.
- Classroom learning is supported by extended homework tasks, for example, Learning Logs, which are appreciated by pupils and parents/carers alike.
- Feedback is ‘Learning Objective’ led, with excellent use of ‘extension questions’ and pupils given a set time to respond, which is very effective at consolidating and extending learning.
- The Religious Education curriculum is enriched through imaginative and well-planned strategies. Learning is often stimulating and memorable. Curriculum provision for EPR (Education in Personal Relationships), is currently under review and good opportunities for spiritual and moral development are enhanced by PSHCE lessons, the SEAL programme, Circle Times, Sacramental Programmes, the Liturgical life of the school and the choir.
- Assessment tasks are completed at the end of most topics (or adapted for use) to level children’s work. School ensures that all five strands are covered and assessed and ‘best fit’ end of year grades assigned.
- To make this area outstanding, school needs to develop an element of peer assessment and a more effective whole school pupil-tracking system, so that accelerated progress can be identified, in collaboration with the Diocese and local schools.
- Whilst most pupils have an excellent understanding of the Christian Faith, many were confused and had only superficial knowledge of other World Faiths, with the exception of year 5. School needs to continue to develop systematically, the work on other World Faiths, in line with the ‘Curriculum Directory’.
- There was excellent evidence from the ‘Year of Faith’ programmes and particularly the ‘Pentecost Day’ highlighting the development of an imaginative, creative curriculum in RE, enabling pupils to express their ideas, feelings, opinions and learning. School should continue to collaborate with the cluster of schools (and wider) to ensure curriculum provision is consistently outstanding throughout school and the liturgical year.
- Collective Worship is central to the life of the school and a key part of every school celebration. There is outstanding use of music, enthusiastic singing and liturgical dance to praise and worship God. An outstanding whole school Collective Worship, led by year 5, referred to the G8 conference and our role as ‘stewards of creation’ and peace-makers. A ‘dove of peace’ and a box of Jelly Babies (post WW1 peace babies of all colours) were given to each class to remind them of our mission to be peace-makers.

## The Leadership and Management are outstanding

<p><b>How well leaders, governors and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Catholic Education and plan and implement improvement to outcomes for pupils.</b></p>	<p><b>1</b></p>
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- Leaders, governors and managers are deeply committed to the Church’s mission in education, focused on teaching and learning, and committed to partnership working to ensure successful transition, particularly for the most vulnerable.
- The spiritual and moral development of pupils and Collective Worship are linked to the school’s development plan. Staff and pupil understanding of the school’s mission, ‘As the family of God, with Jesus, we love, learn and enjoy’, is outstanding.
- The strong bond with parish catechists, who share the preparation of young people for the Sacraments of Reconciliation and First Eucharist and the Parish Priest strengthens pupils’ spiritual and moral learning and vocations. Teaching about the Sacraments and the ‘Doors of Faith’ project has enabled pupils to ask questions, wonder and make some choices for future behaviours.
- Governors, leaders and managers are very proud of Our Lady’s and are totally committed to their roles.
- Governors have an expert range of skills and career backgrounds which are appreciated at sub-committee levels. Governors visit regularly, take part in RE work scrutiny and each attend their own class events and monitor progress. They have requested RE data in a comparable format to other core subjects.
- The exceptional headteacher is energised by her leadership role and inspires staff, parents and pupils alike.
- The RE co-ordinators work relentlessly with the staff and parish priest to provide a clear direction for the spiritual life and Catholic education of the school and their leadership is informed by a high level of expertise and vision, focused on improving teaching and learning, resulting in teaching that is consistently good or better.
- The parents and carers who spoke to the inspector were very positive about the school. “School is an extension of home”; “My children know how to treat others and have strong Christian morals.” They are especially appreciative of the headteacher and parish priest. “She is an outstanding headteacher and the relationship between the school and Fr. Eugene is a real asset and a great way of introducing them to church”.
- There is also a strong partnership with Leeds Trinity University to help to train future Catholic teachers.
- Staff and Governors took part in a pilgrimage to Ampleforth to develop their own spirituality.
- All canonical and statutory responsibilities are fulfilled.