
The Diocese of Hallam Section 48 Report

The Catholic Life of the School and Religious Education

Diocese of Hallam



SECTION 48 INSPECTION REPORT

THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

St. Mary's Catholic Primary School, Chesterfield

School URN	112898
Name of Chair of Governors	Mr Paul McGinley
Name of Head teacher	Mrs Lindsey Apps
Date of inspection	Tuesday April 1 st 2014
Section 48 Inspectors	Mr J Cape, Mr M D'Rozario

“ An enthusiasm for the things of God”

Introduction

The Inspection of St Mary's Catholic Voluntary Aided School, has been carried out under the requirements of the Education Act 2005, and in accordance with the Diocese of Hallam Framework and Schedule for Section 48 Inspections as approved by the Bishop of Hallam.

The process of inspection in the Diocese of Hallam has been developed as an activity of the Church to support schools in further deepening the quality of Catholic education provided.

Description of the School

St. Mary's Catholic Primary School is a much larger than average-sized primary school located on the edge of the town centre of Chesterfield. The school serves children from a wide catchment area. Many pupils are from the parish of The Annunciation. The school also serves the parishes of Holy Family, St Hugh of Lincoln and Holy Spirit, Dronfield. The school had its last Religious Education Inspection (Section 48) in 2009 and its last Ofsted inspection (Section 5) in December 2013. Most of the pupils on roll are of white British heritage and 96% of the pupils are baptised Catholics. The proportion of pupils supported through School Action is below average as is the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs. Currently, a below average proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for pupil-premium funding. The pupil premium is the additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children who are looked after by the local authority and children with a parent in the armed services.

Type of School	Voluntary Aided Catholic Primary School
Age profile of students	4 -11 years
Number on roll	448
Number of students on Special Needs and Disabilities Register	44
Number of students with a Statement of Special Educational Needs	6
Number of Catholics on roll	429
Number of Other Christian Denominations	9
Number of other Faiths	10
No religious affiliation	
School Address	Cross Street, Chesterfield ,S40 4ST
Telephone Number	01246 232170
Email	lapps@st-marys.derbyshire.sch.uk
School Website	www.stmarys-derbyshire.sch.uk

SUMMARY JUDGEMENTS

OUTCOMES FOR PUPILS

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THE PROVISION FOR CATHOLIC EDUCATION

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LEADERS AND MANAGERS

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OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

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The overall effectiveness judgement is based on all the evidence available.

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

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

OUTCOMES FOR PUPILS

How good outcomes are for pupils, taking into account variations between groups.

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.	2
How well pupils respond to and participate in the schools' Collective Worship	1

The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life of the school Is Outstanding

- Children are given many opportunities to take ownership and a lead in the Catholic life of the school and the wider community through liturgies, fund raising for charities and worship in the local parish.
- Through a rigorous selection process, a Chaplaincy Team, comprising of Year 6 pupils, has been appointed to support the ongoing development of the Catholic character of the school. One pupil joined the team to 'expand her love for God'.
- Pupils are presented with a wide range of opportunities to take on responsibilities such as the Chaplaincy Team and School Council, in order to make a difference and further develop the Catholic character of the school.
- They have a clear purpose and are articulate in expressing and sharing their views. Pupils take great pride in their school and what they have achieved and demonstrate a significant contribution to its Catholic Life.
- It is very evident the extent to which pupils value and respect themselves in the care they take of each other in and out of lessons e.g. 'Buddies' system and visiting younger children at St Joseph's nursery.
- The positive link with St. Joseph's nursery provides an excellent opportunity for young pupils to continue their journey in faith at St. Mary's.
- Pupils have a strong sense of belonging to their school community and embrace difference. They are proud of the charity work that they have undertaken to support children in developing countries e.g. India and Africa. In this way they make a significant contribution to the Common Good in the school and the local and wider community.

- Parents are very proud of their children's contribution to the Catholic life of the school. One parent noted, 'St. Mary's is a very welcoming school, where relationships are really important and children are nurtured through fabulous Catholic education. And, 'the strong Catholic ethos encourages all children to feel safe and secure allowing them to grow fully and make a difference to the life of the school'.
- Parents are very proud of their school with some commenting on how generations have benefited from attending St. Mary's Catholic school and celebrating what the school has to offer.
- Respect and reverence was highly visible throughout the inspection visit and evidenced in class observations, meditation and Collective Worship.
- Children participate fully in the Catholic life of the school not only through their Religious Education lessons but through their acts of Collective Worship. They have a good understanding of the traditions of the Catholic faith.
- When children are presented with spiritual, moral and ethical issues they can empathise and appreciate the circumstances of those less fortunate than themselves and express their reasoning e.g. the betrayal of Jesus by Judas, the pupils were able to describe what is meant by betrayal.
- Pupils embrace an holistic approach to their Religious Education and school life as very often they are expected to relate real life experiences to key questions posed in their learning e.g. How would you feel? When the children discussed the washing of the feet at the Last Supper.
- Children take full responsibility for themselves and their actions in class when asked to contribute and engage in lessons.

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education is Good

- The school has successfully introduced the Come and See programme and is currently moderating its assessment of Religious Education.
- Pupils are religiously literate and have skills appropriate to their age and beyond, in many instances.
- Pupil's attainment in Religious Education is currently in line with Diocesan expectations and the subject leader has organised moderation meetings for all teaching staff to further their confidence and ability when accurately assessing pupil's topic work.
- Teacher planning is well differentiated in order to meet the needs of all learners, including those with disabilities.
- Pupils are very keen to do well in class and are often interested and enthusiastic about their learning. They are willing to share their work with their classmates and peers.
- The vast majority of pupils make good progress.
- Children demonstrate very positive learning behaviours as class routines are firmly established and tasks clearly explained.

How well pupils respond to and participate in the schools' Collective Worship is Outstanding

- They regularly prepare and lead acts of Collective Worship in a variety of gatherings e.g. Key Stage 1 Assembly, where parents were invited to celebrate a 'Recipe for Friendship'. This contributes to their spiritual and moral development.
- Pupils are presented with further opportunities to acquire and develop skills in planning and leading prayer and worship.
- Pupils have a good understanding of the religious seasons and feasts.
- They are comfortable and confident in praying publicly and privately and make good use of the 'Sacred Space'

PROVISION

How effective the provision is for Catholic Education

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

The Quality of teaching and how purposeful learning is in Religious Education is Good

- The positive relationship between teachers and pupils is a real strength of the school.
- Teachers frequently affirm pupils so they are confident, active and interested learners. This supports the self-esteem of pupils and gives them confidence to speak clearly and articulately e.g. during Liturgy or during question and answer sessions in lessons.
- Lessons are well prepared with clear learning objectives.
- 77% of lessons observed were good or better with 38% outstanding
- Teaching was particularly strong in Key Stage 2.
- Planning is of a high quality throughout the school as it identifies appropriate learning objectives, was well differentiated and built upon pupils' prior learning.
- Pupils respond to the guidance offered by teachers by commenting on their work after it has been marked, enabling them to consolidate their learning.

- Interesting activities supported by a range of effective resources, including ICT, ensured that pupils were fully engaged.
- Teachers demonstrated good subject knowledge to challenge and inspire pupils.
- Where teaching was strongest Teaching Assistants were used effectively to support learning.
- Questioning develops children's deeper understanding of their Religious Education topic, motivates them and can offer a high degree of challenge.
- Teachers and other adults have high expectations of pupils not only in their written work but of their behaviour and contribution within lessons.
- The school celebrates achievement and effort e.g. at the Collective Worship for Key stage 1 and the Headteacher Blog that identifies 'Golden children'.
- Many children seize the opportunity to visit the school Blog site and comment on their school experience and learning. A parent commented on how useful the site is to provide children with further learning opportunities, particularly when the school is closed.

The extent to which the Religious Education Curriculum promotes pupils' learning is Good

- Parents acknowledge the work of the school in promoting their children's understanding of the Religious Education curriculum.
- The school allocates at least 10% of curriculum time to the teaching of Religious Education, meeting the requirements of the Bishops' Conference.
- It contributes to the pupil's spiritual and moral development, in that they have a sense of justice, know what is right and wrong as well as understanding the impact of their actions on others.
- The curriculum is tailored to the needs of pupils by ensuring lessons and activities are suitably differentiated and supported by effective resources.
- The Religious Education curriculum through the Come and See programme meets the needs of pupils.
- Children can apply their deep thinking and empathy for issues raised in Religious Education lessons to stimulate other areas of the curriculum e.g. art and writing poetry and prayers.

The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school is Outstanding

- The appointment of a school Chaplain has made a significant contribution to strengthening spirituality throughout the school.
- The valuable work and support of the recently appointed Parish Curate is already having a positive impact in further strengthening provision and is warmly appreciated and welcomed by pupils, staff and the wider community.

- Each classroom has a designated focal point which reflects the liturgical cycle.
- Children participate in informal and formal prayer as evidenced in pupils' Spiritual Journals.
- The Community Prayer Journal is a testimony to parental and visitor appreciation of high quality worship provided by the school. After a recent liturgy one parent wrote, 'I must remember to ask my son what he is feeling on the inside, not just what he is showing on the outside'. And another 'I feel the spirit of God moving in this place'.
- Pupils enjoy opportunities for meditation and the Chaplaincy Team commented on children's need for quiet reflection.
- Parents, carers and parishioners are invited to Acts of Collective led by the children.
- On occasions, children are welcomed to participate in the Holy Mass in the Parish Church.
- Collective Worship is central to the life of the school and is a key part of the school celebration.
- There are opportunities for staff to pray together.
- The development of the 'Sacred Space' will further enhance the quality of Collective Worship and opportunity for personal prayer.

LEADERS AND MANAGERS

How effective the provision is for Catholic education

How well leaders, governors and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school and plan and implement improvement to outcomes for pupils.	2
How well leaders, governors and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education and plan and implement for improvement to outcomes for pupils.	2

How well leaders, governors and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school and plan and implement improvement to outcomes for pupils is Good

- School leaders and managers actively promote the Catholic life of the school through their dedication and commitment.
- The Strategic Planner provides valuable information for staff and parents about forthcoming events, liturgies and celebrations.
- The Headteacher ensures appropriate funding is targeted to supporting the teaching of Religious Education e.g. cover time, resources and artefacts, school chaplain and pastoral worker.

- Working in close partnership the Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher provide strong direction in promoting the work of the school with regards to the teaching of Religious Education and Collective Worship.
- The Religious Education Co-ordinator provides detailed reports to the Governing Body regarding Collective Worship and Curriculum Religious Education. She continues to support the successful implementation of the Come and See programme and develop accurate systems of moderating and levelling assessment tasks.
- They have accurately identified key areas for development as recorded in the School Development Plan.
- The Self Evaluation Document (SED) seeks the views of all stakeholders when identifying priorities. It is well communicated throughout the school community.
- The views of parents, clergy and governors are sought when identifying priorities.
- The clergy comment on how their advice is listened to and acted upon swiftly in order to enhance the Catholic life of the school.
- Governors are beginning to effectively monitor, evaluate and challenge school leaders in order to hold them to account for the Catholic life of the school and the teaching of Religious Education.

How well leaders, governors and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education and plan and implement for improvement to outcomes for pupils is Good

- Work scrutiny, learning walks and lesson observations show improved outcomes for pupils as is evidenced in pupils' levels of attainment and their contribution within lessons where they demonstrate growing subject knowledge and understanding.
- School leaders are now monitoring data to evaluate the schools performance in order to inform future planning.
- School leaders have a great desire to improve provision and outcomes for pupils.
- The recently appointed leadership team is becoming more effective in securing improvements as they apply more rigour to their monitoring and evaluation.
- School priorities for Religious Education have been prioritised through accurate self-evaluation and communicated effectively.
- The pastoral support, care and guidance for pupils are a real strength and have a positive impact on pupils' outcomes. They feel valued, safe and recognise who they can approach to resolve any difficulties whether it be academic work or friendships.

This final section draws together all the evidence and judgements made in the preceding sections

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

How effective the school is in providing Catholic Education	2
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The overall effectiveness of St. Mary's School is Good with some Outstanding features.

- Outcomes for pupils are good, with all groups making at least expected progress and some making accelerated progress.
- The effectiveness of leaders and managers is good in developing the Catholic life of the school.
- The provision in promoting Catholic education is good.
- The quality of Collective Worship is Outstanding.
- The impact of a committed leadership team including the Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher and Religious Education Co-ordinator, ably supported by the Chaplain, Parish Curate and Pastoral Worker, is that all pupils are benefitting from a corporate approach in supporting and nourishing the Catholic faith and tradition of the school.
- Children love coming to school and are eager to please. They have a real pride in their faith and confidently share this with their friends and staff.
- Collective Worship is a real strength of the school with children having opportunities to plan and lead liturgies.
- There is some outstanding teaching of Religious Education.
- Leaders, managers and governors strive to improve provision and have accurately identified strengths and areas for further development.
- There are links with the Parishes and this further develops and strengthens the Catholic identity of the school and its pupils.

Recommendations:

- To provide opportunities for staff to attend 'Come and See' topic days to develop knowledge and understanding of the Catholic tradition.
- To continue to accurately embed assessment and ensure moderation is consistent throughout the school.

- To continue to offer high quality professional provision through peer to peer support to all teaching staff to ensure 100% of teaching is good or better.
- To further develop the role of governors in actively monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning in Religious Education so that provision can move to outstanding.
- To encourage governors to respond to reports from the Religious Education Co-ordinator in a way that actions improvement and has an impact in driving high quality provision throughout the school in order to further enrich pupil's spiritual experience.