

DIOCESE OF MIDDLESBROUGH

Inspection of Religious Education
Collective Worship
and
The Catholic Life of the School



School: St Patrick's RC Primary

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Headteacher: Mr Mark Ryan

Chair: Mr Gary Wilson

Date: 9th & 10th December 2013

Inspector: Mrs Susan Fall

A Report from:
The Diocese of Middlesbrough Schools' Service
Section 48 Inspection Team
50a The Avenue
Linthorpe
Middlesbrough TS5 6QT

INTRODUCTION

This inspection was carried out under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005.

The report of the inspection is produced for the Bishop of Middlesbrough (Code of Canon Law 804 and 806) and for the governors of the school. 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.

What Inspection Grades mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding Catholic school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a Catholic school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Requires Improvement	These features, though of adequate quality, require improvement to be good.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate Catholic school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils.

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Patrick's RC Primary is a larger than average sized primary school serving families from a wide area around Thornaby. There are 352 pupils on roll; 70% are baptised Roman Catholic and 82% of teachers are Roman Catholic. The proportion of children with Special Educational Needs is 11.75% compared with the national average of 9.7%. The school is in an area of high deprivation. The percentage of children on free school meals is higher than the national average and the school receives pupil premium for more than a third of its pupils. The percentage of minority ethnic groups is below average.

Pupil Catchment:

Number of pupils on roll: 352, including 53 Nursery

Planned Admission Number of Pupils: 40

Percentage of pupils baptised RC: 69.5%

Percentage of pupils from other Christian Denominations: 21%

Percentage of pupils from other World Faiths: 10%

Percentage of pupils with no religious affiliation: 0

Percentage of pupils with special needs: 11.75%

Teaching Staff:

Full-time Teachers: 14

Part-time Teachers: 3

Percentage of Catholic Teachers: 82.4%

Support Staff:

Full-time Classroom Support Staff: 16

Part-time Classroom Support Staff: 9

Percentage of Catholic Classroom Support Staff: 84%

Percentage of teachers with CCRS: 14%

Percentage of learning time given to R.E: 10%

Parishes served by the School:

St Patrick's, Thornaby

Christ the King, Thornaby

St Therese of Lisieux , Ingleby Barwick

1. OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

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MAIN FINDINGS

St Patrick's is an outstanding school with a strong Catholic ethos. The Catholic Life of the school has the highest possible priority. There is a tangible sense of family and community in all aspects of school life which is evident in the quality of the excellent relationships that exist between all stakeholders. The Head Teacher, who has been in post since September, demonstrates an excellent understanding of his role in communicating the school's vision to the whole community and is committed to building on the strengths of his predecessor in taking the school forward.

The excellent behaviour of the pupils, the quality of the curriculum and the dedication of all staff, both teaching and non-teaching, are outstanding aspects of this school. Pupils are very proud of their religious identity, as one pupil explained, "Everything we do here is related to religion and God".

Religious Education is at the heart of the curriculum and meets the requirements of the Curriculum Directory. It is very well planned, monitored and evaluated. Teaching is consistently good with many outstanding features. Given their capability and starting points pupils achieve very high standards.

Parents speak very highly of the school and value the commitment of staff and the high standard of teaching and learning. One parent summed up, "The children really get the message to love one another according to Gospel values". Pastoral care is outstanding and is given high priority by all members of staff.

Collective worship underpins the Catholic life of the school and makes an excellent contribution to the spiritual and moral development of the pupils. There are excellent links with the local parish through the support given by the parish priest who is a governor and a frequent visitor to the school.

Governors are knowledgeable and demonstrate a strong sense of commitment to every aspect of the life of the school. They make an outstanding and significant contribution to the Catholic Life of the school in providing both challenge and support.

What the school needs to do to improve further:

- Further embed feedback for learning so that children are guided to make improvements to their work by:
 - Sharing good practice and ensuring consistency
 - Ensuring that marking consistently provides information to pupils about how to improve their work and that pupils are given time to respond and act on advice given by teachers after marking their work
- The new leadership team should revisit the current school mission statement and involve all stakeholders
- Develop closer partnerships across the cluster of Thornaby schools

2. PUPILS

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

Pupils make an outstanding contribution to the Catholic Life of the school and benefit greatly from it, taking their responsibilities seriously, seeing their roles as important because “Jesus helped everyone and we should try to follow him”. Opportunities to contribute are provided through the effective school forum, planning and leading liturgies and fundraising.

Pupils have a deep sense of belonging to their ‘school family’ and they all strive to do their best to promote the strong ethos within their school family and in the wider community. Pupils have a strong sense of personal worth. They express their own views and feelings with confidence and show they understand their responsibility as Christians to be fair, just and forgiving of others. They are also quick to congratulate others and show a keen interest in social, moral and ethical issues. Exemplary behaviour is enhanced by the development of the ‘fruits of the spirit’ initiative which rewards examples of acts relating to the gifts of the Holy Spirit. The pupils are passionate about the needs of those who are less fortunate than themselves and take an active part in leading events to raise money for local and international charities. When asked what made their school different they reported that ‘here everyone follows Jesus and does what He asks of them’.

The standards achieved in religious education are high. From below average starting points on entry to school, the large majority of pupils make excellent progress in Religious Education through Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 and this progress continues in Key Stage 2. Pupils speak enthusiastically about Religious Education; have very positive attitudes and show high levels of enjoyment. A wide variety of teaching strategies, good questioning skills, clear explanations and well-paced lessons ensure that pupils are interested in and enjoy their learning and make good progress. Pupils are becoming increasingly religiously literate, very articulate and reflective in their oral responses. Their knowledge, skills and understanding are developing well according to their age and capacity. Their neat and imaginative work can be seen in their Religious Education books and in the attractive displays in their

classrooms and around the school. There are good examples of pupils using technology facilities to enhance their work.

Pupils are involved in evaluating their learning ,however, feedback from teachers is not consistent throughout the school in helping them to know how to improve their work and what the next steps are in their learning. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress and arrangements are in place to ensure that, whenever necessary, pupils are supported in order to make progress according to their needs and capabilities.

Pupils’ standards of attainment in knowledge and understanding of religion and an ability to reflect on meaning are high. Reflecting on how God calls us to serve one another, one pupil in Key Stage 2 was able to explain links with baptism and the sacraments: ‘I have been called to be a good person. When I was baptised I became three things, a priest so I could be helpful, a prophet so I could speak God’s word and a king so I could be strong and firm’.

Pupils’ response to and participation in Collective Worship are outstanding and give a clear indication that they understand the importance of key celebrations in school throughout the liturgical year. They know what constitutes good worship and regularly prepare and lead worship with confidence. Pupils also know and value a variety of ways of praying including action and litany. This was evidenced in a particularly successful pupil led Advent Collective Worship. These Acts of Worship engage pupils’ interest and inspire in them deep thought and heartfelt response.

• 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 do pupils respond to and participate in the school’s Collective Worship	1

3. PROVISION

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How effective the provision is for Catholic education

The quality of the curriculum is excellent. At least 10% of curriculum time is used for Religious Education which follows the 'Come and See' programme. Religious Education is very well resourced and it fully meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference. Links are made with other curriculum areas. Staff work hard to ensure the subject has a high priority and is given core subject status.

The majority of teaching seen during inspection was outstanding and never less than consistently good. Varied teaching styles, good questioning, high quality resources, the use of ICT and adult support are all highly effective in moving learning forward and ensuring high standards. Teachers have high expectations of pupils. They demonstrate excellent subject knowledge and carefully plan lessons to build on prior learning and pupils' capabilities. Activities are differentiated and teachers check pupils' learning throughout lessons and are able to adapt their teaching when appropriate. An example of this was seen in Foundation Stage where pupils completed a variety of activities, including role play, making a nativity scene and sequencing the story of the Nativity which enhanced their learning about Jesus's birthday. Teachers use praise effectively to provide encouragement and support for all pupils throughout the school.

Pupils' workbooks show evidence of a good variety of written activities, including Scripture work, differentiation and a range of activities which linked with other curriculum areas. Written work is very well presented. Focused marking is in place in some classes, however, not all pupils benefit from this and so some pupils do not have the opportunity to reflect upon the advice given and respond to it.

Creative lessons, where pupils are challenged to think deeply and extend their knowledge and understanding, result in the vast majority of pupils achieving extremely well by the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils are developing as independent learners and are able to sustain their concentration extremely well. This is particularly evident in upper Key Stage 2 where pupils, whilst studying The Angelus, were able to use information to discuss in depth and show understanding of religious sources and experiences of Advent as a time of joyful expectation.

Within Key Stage 1 pupils work collaboratively with good use of talk partners recognising and describing how Christians show their love for one another.

The school's assessment procedures are very thorough. Assessments are regular and systematic and both internal and external moderation shows levelling is accurate. Regular assessments recording pupils' attainment are used to ensure progression trends over time. The measurement of the progress is rooted in comparing individual pupil work with the school portfolio of levelled, annotated samples of Religious Education work.

The school's provision for prayer and worship is outstanding. . Prayer and worship underpin the Catholic life of the school so that pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is outstanding. There are opportunities from the very moment children enter nursery for spiritual and moral development and for learning about the teachings and life of Jesus. Prayer and worship are integral in the daily life of the school. Pupils are given many opportunities for prayer, meditation and reflection within the Catholic tradition and several examples were seen during the inspection. There is a calm and peaceful ethos throughout the school. Pupils are reflective, can discuss their own faith and spirituality with confidence and are respectful of those with beliefs different to their own.

Pupils have a strong sense of social justice and concern for others beyond the School; they initiate fundraising for numerous charities and can discuss the impact of their efforts. Throughout the school the pupils are working towards linking this to Catholic social teaching. Pupils are very aware of the importance of service to others. This was evidenced through discussions with them formally and informally during the inspection. It was very evident that pupils had a very good understanding of the reasons why they do good and give to others.

• The quality of teaching and how purposeful learning is in Religious Education	1
• The extent to which the Religious Education curriculum promotes pupils' learning	1
• The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school	1
• The quality of provision for the Catholic life of the school	1

4. LEADERS, MANAGERS AND GOVERNORS

How effective leaders, managers and governors are in developing the Catholic life of the school

The leadership and management of the school are outstanding and are a major factor in the school's success. The detailed self-evaluation document demonstrates that the school knows itself well and is clear about plans for development. The leadership of the school is committed to the Church's mission in education and demonstrates this by providing a curriculum with spiritual and moral development at its heart. The extremely strong Catholic identity is present in the school's daily life including a good level of pastoral care and chaplaincy work.

The governing body has a strong commitment to the school's vision of itself as a Catholic community. They use their professional skills and talents to ensure that the school thrives. Governors ensure that all policies and documentation reflect and support the school's Catholic identity and they are rigorous and pro-active in monitoring and evaluating practice. The governing body includes members who know the community very well and have a wide range of expertise. The chair of governors is experienced, very well informed and he makes a valuable contribution to the monitoring and evaluating of the provision of the school. The parish priests also play a very valuable and key role in this school.

Relationships at all levels are very good and the school ensures that there is close communication between the home, the school and the parish. Parents are happy and are very supportive of the Catholic life of the school in so many ways.

The leadership and management of Religious Education are outstanding and have a positive impact on the life of the school. The Religious Education subject leader ensures that excellent monitoring systems are in place and has identified areas for development and devotes the necessary time to monitor and evaluate teaching and learning as well as supporting colleagues, including non-Catholic members of staff. He has a clear vision and direction for Religious Education which is shared by the whole school community. The mission statement, 'Seek ye first the Kingdom Of God' is well known by pupils and central to all that is done. In the very well-kept learning environment, the co-ordinator ensures that resources and staff are deployed very effectively so that all pupils are included fully in the religious life of the school.

The school is effective in developing partnerships with other providers and organisations which result in positive outcomes for the pupils and making an excellent contribution to pupils’ achievement and well-being.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How well leaders, managers and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic life of the school, including collective worship, and plan improvement to outcomes for pupils 	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How well leaders, managers and governors monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education and plan for improvement to outcomes for pupils 	1