

*Diocese of Hallam*

***INSPECTION OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION  
(Section 23 of the 1996 School Inspections Act)***

***Holy Family Catholic Primary School  
Kirton Lane  
Stainforth  
Doncaster  
DN7 5BL***

Inspection Date: 14th and 15th October 2003  
Diocesan Inspector: Mrs Gillian Foster

This inspection of the denominational character of Holy Family Catholic Primary School was carried out under the direction of the Governors of the school in fulfilment of their obligations under the requirements of Canon Law (ref, 804, 806), Section 23 of the 1996 School Inspection Act, Section 13 of the Education (Schools) Act 1992 and Sections 241 and 259 of the Education Act 1993. This Inspection was conducted according to the Handbook for the Inspection of Religious Education in the Diocese of Hallam.

The process of Inspection in the Diocese of Hallam has been developed to support and encourage each school community. It is hoped that this report will celebrate all that is positive and praiseworthy in Holy Family Catholic Primary School and help promote and develop sound development for the future.

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A copy of this report may be obtained from the Governors of Holy Family Catholic Primary School, Kirton Lane, Stainforth, Doncaster DN7 5BL or from the Diocese of Hallam Schools' Department, The Hallam Pastoral Centre, St Charles Street, Sheffield S9 3WU.

## INTRODUCTION

### Basic information about the school

NAME OF SCHOOL	Holy Family Catholic Primary
TYPE	Nursery, Infant and Junior
STATUS	Voluntary Aided
AGE RANGE	3 - 11
GENDER OF PUPILS	Mixed
CHAIRMAN OF GOVERNORS	Mr Peter O'Neill
HEADTEACHER	Mr Paul McLaughlin
ADDRESS OF SCHOOL	Kirton Lane, Stainforth, Doncaster DN 7 5BL
TELEPHONE NUMBER	01302 841283
DATE OF INSPECTION	14th and 15th October 2003
DIOCESAN INSPECTOR	Mrs Gillian Foster

Holy Family School was founded in 1963 to serve the parishes of St Joseph and St Nicholas, Moorends and Our Lady of the Assumption in Stainforth. The school is situated in the former mining village of Stainforth but draws children from a wide catchment area which includes Dunsville, Duncroft, Thorne, Moorends, Barnby Dun, Hatfield and Fishlake. The wide catchment area covers a diversity of social and economic backgrounds

The school buildings are of good quality and are very well maintained. The Foundation Stage unit has recently been extended by the establishment of a conservatory which has allowed for the re-arrangement of resources in order to provide better accommodation for teaching and learning.

During the past two years, the school has undergone a series of long term staff absences and staff movement which resulted in the employment of a considerable number of supply teaching staff. The school now has a more settled staffing.

The school has nine full time teachers including the Headteacher, one part time teacher and one post-graduate trainee teacher. There are five full time and one part-time educational support staff including a nursery assistant, teaching assistants and a part-time assistant trained to support pupils with special educational needs.

There are currently 232 pupils on roll including 33 part time Nursery children, organised into classes as follows:

Nursery	33
Reception	27
Year 1	28

Year 2	30
Year 3	30
Year 4	31
Year 5	21
Year 6	32

56% of pupils are baptised Catholics.

75%, that is, six of the eight permanent teaching staff are Catholics.

## **PART ONE**

### **ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL AS A CATHOLIC COMMUNITY**

#### **1. THE MISSION OF THE SCHOOL**

- 1.1 The Mission Statement consists of six clear aims which encapsulate the essence of Holy Family's vision of education. Each of the aims is explicit in promoting Gospel values in all areas of school life. The Mission Statement is a lived reality in the daily life of the School.
- 1.2 The Mission Statement prefaces all school policies and documentation and is known and understood by the whole school community, this is good practice.
- 1.3 The Self-Evaluation Document recently completed by school staff, identifies the aim to organise an in-service day, where all staff and governors would come together to reflect and pray and review the Mission Statement. Such a day would provide an excellent opportunity for new staff and governors together with long serving colleagues, to be involved in this vital aspect of school life.
- 1.4 The current School Improvement Plan identifies as its first priority, 'Developing the distinctive Catholic nature of the school'. Actions are identified which when implemented, will further this aim. This is very good practice.
- 1.5 One of the aims of the Mission Statement is to promote close co-operation between the school and home. This partnership is evident through formal communications between school and home but especially through the openness of the Headteacher and staff to meet with parents whenever they have concerns about their children.
- 1.6 Parents are welcome in school as visitors to Masses and liturgical celebrations or to assist in the classroom. Parents are also invited to Family Learning sessions. Parents value and appreciate these opportunities to share in the life of the school.

- 1.7 Fifty-one questionnaires were returned by parents and these, together with comments made by parents at the pre-inspection meeting and during the inspection, were unanimous in their praise of the school for the care and support it offers to their children and themselves and the excellent Catholic ethos of the school.
- 1.8 Parents express satisfaction with the standards their children achieve in Religious Education, and they appreciate the newly introduced end-of-year reports which include informative comments on the progress made by their children in Religious Education.
- 1.9 Parents are particularly pleased with the spiritual and moral development of their children.
- 1.10 Parents are highly satisfied with the behaviour of the children and praise the ethos of the school and the example of all staff in developing the environment where there are very high expectations of good behaviour and self-discipline based on Gospel values.
- 1.11 Parents speak appreciatively of the dedication of the Headteacher and staff and regard them as good role models for their children.
- 1.12 A significant minority of parents expressed concern that they did not receive regular information regarding what their children were being taught in Religious Education. This issue now needs to be addressed by the school.
- 1.13 Relationships throughout the school are very good. The very happy environment and the caring support, which all adults and pupils show for each other, is a significant strength of the school.
- 1.14 The school prospectus is a good comprehensive document firmly rooted in the ethos and Christian values of the school and offers parents a full range of detailed information. It is reviewed annually by staff and governors.
- 1.15 Governors of the school are drawn from both parishes and all are supportive of the school. The Chairman of Governors gives generously of his time to the school. A nucleus of the Governing Body are very pro-active and contribute to the strategic development of the school. Both governors and school have recognised the need to develop the role of the Governing Body further to allow more governors to take an active role in the governance of the school. The reconstitution of the Governing Body which will take place next year would provide a good opportunity for strengthening the partnership between school and governors through additional training leading to a clear understanding of roles and responsibilities.
- 1.16 Sacramental preparation is parish based. The school supports the children by attending the celebrations in Church and having celebrations in school for all pupils to participate in.

- 1.17 Links between school and parishes are maintained by the school placing items of news in the church bulletins, the Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher regularly attending Parish Council meetings, the children performing an Easter play, Lenten and Advent services in Church and attending Masses at Our Lady's Stainforth on Holy Days. Parishioners are invited and welcomed into school for Masses and celebrations. The school has identified in the School Improvement Plan, extending and strengthening links with the parishes as a priority. The implementation of this action should be of great benefit to school and the parishes.
- 1.18 The parish priest is a welcome visitor to school and in addition to celebrating Mass and participating in liturgies, he contributes to the spiritual development of the children and their pastoral care through his role as chaplain.
- 1.19 The school is welcoming to children with special educational needs and they are well integrated into all aspects of school life. Children with special needs and their families are well supported.
- 1.20 The school demonstrates its commitment to the wider community and to those less fortunate by prayer and giving. The children respond most generously to appeals and currently support, Mission Together, The Hallam Caring Services, CAFOD, Bluebell Wood, the Macmillan Coffee mornings and other local and national charities.
- 1.21 The school has good links with the local Catholic family of schools and with local community schools. There is also good liaison with the McAuley Catholic High School to which most of the pupils transfer.
- 1.22 The school makes good provision for cultural development by offering residential visits and retreat opportunities for the children from Year Four upwards. A variety of theatre groups, artists and historians visit school and children are taken out of school on educational visits. The school is planning to develop and extend extra-curricular activities for all pupils. This extension of provision will add to the breadth of curriculum already offered to the children.

## **2. THE SCHOOL AS A WORSHIPPING COMMUNITY**

- 2.1 Collective worship meets statutory requirements and is celebrated daily in the classroom or in the hall as a whole school or key stage assembly.
- 2.2 The heart of The Holy Family School is rooted in prayer and the understanding that each individual is valued and loved by God. This creates an awareness of God's love and presence throughout the school community.
- 2.3 The school has a very good Collective Worship Policy. The policy affirms the school's philosophy that 'Worship in this school is more than just a legal requirement. It is an integral part of school life and is central to the Catholic

tradition'. This is very evident in practice. The policy sets out in detail the aims and principles of the school in Collective Worship and the practical ways in which these aims will be met. The policy is reviewed by staff and governors every two years. This is good practice.

- 2.4 Two Key Stage assemblies led by the Headteacher were witnessed by the inspector. The Headteacher put his excellent story telling skills to good use. In the Key Stage One assembly, he retold the story of David and Goliath; he involved many pupils in miming parts of the story and held the attention of all the children. Following the story he guided the children to reflect on the moral and spiritual issues raised and allowed them to explore and articulate their own beliefs. The assembly ended in prayer which the children participated in reverently. The assembly provided an opportunity for the children to experience a sense of belonging and to develop a common ethos and shared values. The Key Stage Two assembly followed the same pattern; the story retold was the Good Samaritan and again the children were active participants and were encouraged to explore and voice their own feelings and beliefs. The assemblies were good examples of effective Collective Worship.
- 2.5 The inspector witnessed a further two assemblies, again in Key Stages, led by a representative from 'Mission Together'. The children were congratulated on their generosity in the past and told about the focus for help this year. The whole assembly was rooted in helping the children to appreciate the wonder of God's world and how they could act as witnesses for Jesus in helping others. The children listened attentively and showed by their questions and answers that they had a good understanding of the issues and the part they could play in helping through their prayers and gifts.
- 2.6 Throughout the school the prayer life of the children is developed and encouraged. The inspector witnessed simple prayerful, reflective liturgies or gatherings at the end of each Religious Education lesson from Nursery to Year Six. There is a schedule of formal prayers to be learnt by children appropriate to each age group, these are said reverently. Spontaneous prayer is encouraged and children speak naturally to God as a loving Father and friend who cares for them all. Most classes display books made up of the children's own prayers.
- 2.7 The school has created a small prayer room next to the Library where children are able to go on a voluntary basis. In talking to children of all ages, it is obvious that the prayer room is well used and that the children are very comfortable using it when appropriate.
- 2.8 Parents and parishioners are invited to most of the Masses and liturgies in school and this is greatly appreciated. Many parents state how much they enjoy these occasions and how impressed they are by the good behaviour of the children and the confidence they show in taking active parts through reading, miming and singing. Parents feel that these occasions can help to deepen or re-kindle their own faith.

### **3. SPIRITUAL AND MORAL DEVELOPMENT**

#### **3.1 Spiritual Development**

- 3.1a The spiritual and moral development of the children at The Holy Family is a great strength of the school and clearly contributes to the happy Christian atmosphere of cheerfulness, calm and consideration which prevails.
- 3.1b All who visit the school speak of the warmth of welcome and the respect and consideration that all are given.
- 3.1c All classes have a focal area for prayer. These are generally of a high quality and feature Scripture together with examples of children's work, usually from the current 'Here I Am' topic.
- 3.1d Displays of Religious Education work from children of all ages and abilities feature in all public areas of the school and serve to underline the high profile and importance placed upon Religious Education and the value placed on the efforts of all children.
- 3.1e Prominent also in public areas, in particular the entrance corridors, are certificates and articles relating to pupils achievements in a wide variety of in and out-of-school activities. This public recognition of individual achievement, helps to develop and foster an ethos of affirmation and praise.
- 3.1f The opportunities for children to take part in a breadth of experiences, especially for the older children in residential visits and retreats, helps to enrich the provision for spiritual development.
- 3.1g It was noted during the inspection that every opportunity is used by staff to develop the spiritual life of the children both inside and outside the classroom, in formal planned ways and in spontaneous responses to situations.
- 3.1h The school does not currently have a specific policy for spiritual development. This has been identified in the Self-Evaluation Document as a priority and now needs to be developed.

#### **3.2 Moral Development**

- 3.2a The moral development of the children at The Holy Family School is very good.
- 3.2b Great emphasis is placed on creating a happy, calm and stimulating environment where every child feels secure and confident, the very good behaviour of the children demonstrates the success of this approach.
- 3.2c Children are constantly encouraged to and do show great courtesy and consideration towards each other and to members of staff and visitors to the

school. All staff, teaching and non-teaching, set very good examples to the children through the way in which they value and respect each member of the school community.

- 3.2d Children are praised and affirmed for good behaviour. This positive approach helps to build an ethos of high expectations and co-operation.
- 3.2e Children and parents have a clear understanding of the consequences of any unacceptable behaviour and the sanctions that may result. Parents are very appreciative and supportive of the school's positive attitude to behaviour.
- 3.2f Children are helped to confront unacceptable behaviour and find a better way of behaving; there is an evident culture of forgiveness in the school.
- 3.2g On speaking with the children, it is obvious that most have a strong sense of right and wrong and they express pride that their school is a fair and just place to be.
- 3.2h The children all care for one another and this is evident in the life of the school where they help and assist one another in class and in the playground. The older children help the younger ones in a variety of ways, including sharing lunch times with them when they first start school.
- 3.2i Currently the school does not have a specific policy for moral development. This has been identified as a priority in the recently completed Self-Evaluation Document and this now needs to be addressed.

## **PART TWO**

### **CURRICULUM RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

#### **4. Standards achieved by pupils**

##### **4.1 Attainment and progress**

- 4.1a Not all classes in school currently allocate ten percent of teaching time to religious education as required by the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales. This issue now needs to be addressed.
- 4.1b All teachers give the children opportunities to talk about their views. The development of speaking and listening skills is a school focus and is planned to take place in all religious education lessons.
- 4.1c Teachers generally show good questioning skills and in the best lessons seen, the children were guided to reflection, self-awareness and analysis appropriate to their ages through sensitive questioning.

- 4.1d Children generally show good recall of previous work done and in the best lessons seen, teachers built upon this to extend and develop pupil's knowledge and understanding and thus ensure progression.
- 4.1e The quality of written work throughout the school ranges from satisfactory to very good. Presentation is usually good but the quality of content and the amount of written work produced is variable.
- 4.1f In some classes there is too great a reliance on work sheets. These largely undifferentiated activities do not allow children the freedom to express their own ideas or engage in independent work which could allow them to achieve higher standards.
- 4.1g In most classes, levels of attainment are commensurate with the children's attainment in other curriculum areas. In a few cases where teachers expectations are not high enough or are not made clear, children do not reach their potential in comparison to other subjects.
- 4.1h Marking of children's work is always satisfactory and in some cases very good. Where it is very good, praise and affirmation is given realistically and comments made to indicate ways in which work can be further improved.
- 4.1i Written work throughout the school does show a clear progression, but it also demonstrates that levels of expectations are not consistently high.

## **4.2 Attitudes to learning**

- 4.2a Children's attitudes to learning are generally good, they are very good when they are challenged and highly motivated.
- 4.2b Children's behaviour in class is good and they work co-operatively together. They are always ready to affirm each other's work following the examples set by their teachers.
- 4.2c Children are encouraged to express their own views in class and they listen to the views and ideas of others respectfully and with interest. The older children are encouraged to question views held which are different from their own; this often leads to mature debate which demonstrates the confidence the children have to express themselves.
- 4.2d Children are generally very keen to participate in assemblies and liturgies and do so with confidence. They take a pride in their school community and welcome opportunities to demonstrate what they have learnt in particular in end of topic celebrations.
- 4.2e Discussions with the children indicate that most show an understanding of what has been taught in their lessons and that they enjoy religious education lessons.

## **5. Quality of religious education provided**

### **5.1 Teaching**

- 5.1a The quality of teaching seen during the inspection ranges from satisfactory to very good.
- 5.1b All teachers use the 'Here I Am' religious education programme and the planning documentation provided by the Diocese. All planning seen covers the breadth of the topics. This is reflected in the work produced by the children in books, folders and assessment documents.
- 5.1c Most teachers plan in detail, however there is little evidence of planning differentiated activities to suit the needs and abilities of all pupils. Teachers tend to rely on differentiation by outcome which in many cases does not provide sufficient challenge or opportunity for children to extend their learning or become independent learners. Monitoring of planning and sampling pupil's work by the religious education co-ordinator, could ensure that all teachers include differentiated activities into their planning where appropriate.
- 5.1d The best lessons seen were well structured with clear learning objectives shared with the children and re-visited during the plenary session to give the teacher the opportunity to check progress made and reinforce the learning objectives. The very good lessons were characterised by good pace and interesting content delivered in a lively, enthusiastic way. This demonstrated good practice now needs to be shared to enable the quality of teaching throughout the school to be consistently good.
- 5.1e Where marking of pupil's work is positive and affirmative and is used to identify targets for future improvement it becomes an additional tool for improving the quality of teaching and has a positive impact on pupil's learning. Again, the good practice identified in school, needs to be shared to ensure a consistently high quality of marking.
- 5.1f Classroom management is generally good with a variety of groupings and teaching strategies used. The very good relationships which exist between the pupils and staff and pupils and pupils, generally ensures calm and peaceful environments where effective learning can take place.
- 5.1g The children are introduced to formal religious education in the Nursery, where the lessons are accurately geared to their needs in terms of length, content and pace. The teaching in Nursery and Reception provides a very firm basis for religious education.
- 5.1h The use of Scripture is evident in lessons, liturgies and assemblies and in displays around the school including displays of work of religious education and other curriculum areas.
- 5.1i Assemblies and liturgies are well planned, meaningful and well focused and

appropriate to the ages of the children.

- 5.1j Multi-faith and multi-cultural education is taught through the 'Here I Am' programme and is evident in special folders developed by the children. Priority One of the School Improvement Plan, states the intention to further develop interfaith understanding by holding a whole training day in the next academic year, to which the parish priest will be invited to attend along with all teaching and non-teaching staff.

## **5.2 Religious Education Curriculum and Assessment**

- 5.2a The religious education co-ordinator is dedicated and hard-working. Her own deep faith underpins all she does. She offers great support both professional and personal to all her colleagues and is held in very high regard by them.
- 5.2b Diocesan meetings for religious education are attended by the co-ordinator and other staff. Feedback is given at staff meetings to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to share and discuss new ideas with colleagues.
- 5.2c Religious education very evidently underlies all areas of school life and is given a very visible high priority. This is demonstrated in the School Improvement Plan which identifies as its first objective to strengthen the explicit Catholic nature of the school.
- 5.2d Currently the religious education co-ordinator has limited opportunity to monitor planning, teaching and learning or scrutinise samples of pupil's work. The extension of her role to include these duties could help her to be aware of strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning and to support colleagues by sharing good practice and providing opportunities for all colleagues to achieve consistently good teaching.
- 5.2e The school currently has an adequate Policy for Religious Education which is due to be reviewed. It would be appropriate at the policy review to specify the responsibilities and role of the co-ordinator to include the monitoring of planning, teaching and learning and sampling children's work.
- 5.2f A Key Issue following the last religious education inspection in 1998 was to develop planning and assessment procedures which measure the knowledge and understanding of the children in religious education. The school now has good procedures in place for assessing pupil's knowledge and understanding. All teachers include assessment opportunities in their planning. The children have assessment books for specially assessed pieces of work. There is an assessment port-folio containing pieces of work from children of differing abilities in each class and assessed by the class teacher and moderated by colleagues. This is very good practice. This Key Issue has been addressed in full.

## **6. THE MANAGEMENT OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

### **6.1 Leadership and Management**

- 6.1a The school is well led by a most committed and dedicated headteacher. He provides very clear spiritual leadership for the school rooted in his own deep faith.
- 6.1b The headteacher is very well supported by an enthusiastic and committed deputy and staff who work well together as a team.
- 6.1c The Chairman of Governors is very committed to the school and gives whatever time he is able to visit school and attend meetings. The headteacher is most appreciative of his support.
- 6.1d The governors of Holy Family School are all supportive of the school. A small nucleus of governors are able to visit school frequently and attend relevant training sessions. The Governing Body will be re-constituted next year and governors may consider this an appropriate time to undertake further training on their roles and responsibilities in order to be able to take a more pro-active role in monitoring the school's performance and contributing to strategic planning for the future.
- 6.1e The parish priest, in the relatively short time he has been in post, has become a regular and welcome visitor to school.
- 6.1f The religious education co-ordinator is hard working, dedicated and committed. Her own strong faith underpins all her work and is evident to all. The co-ordinator offers valuable professional and personal support to colleagues. Currently, the co-ordinator does not systematically monitor planning, teaching and learning or sample pupil's work. Her role now needs to be extended to include these responsibilities in order to give her an overview of the strengths and weaknesses of the religious education curriculum.
- 6.1g One of the annual school INSET days is always dedicated to religious education, in addition to input at staff meetings. This is good practice and helps to retain the high profile of religious education and also offers opportunities for staff formation.

### **6.2 Staffing, Accommodation and Resources**

- 6.2a The staff are very hard working, caring, dedicated and supportive of each other. Parents praise the staff for their commitment to their children and to themselves.
- 6.2b Non-teaching staff are well used to support children and help to raise both their self-esteem and levels of attainment. Non-teaching staff are well informed about teacher's plans for lessons and work to achieve the same objectives.

- 6.2c All non-teaching staff- administrative, ancillary, midday supervisors, site manager and cleaning staff are hard working and committed to the school. They all speak of the school with pride and appreciate the way that they are all valued and respected, irrespective of their roles.
- 6.2d The school building is well maintained and well decorated and provides a bright and stimulating environment for the children.
- 6.2e Displays throughout the school are of a good standard and seek to demonstrate explicit witness to the Gospel values which prevail throughout the school and to recognise and value work from children of all ages and abilities.
- 6.2f The school is adequately resourced to deliver the religious education curriculum. The religious education co-ordinator maintains an up-dated list of resources available which is useful for the staff; she also arranges for loans of certain artefacts from the Diocesan Schools' Department.

## **7. MAIN FINDINGS**

- 7.1 Holy Family School has a very good and clear distinctive Catholic ethos which is made explicit in the aims of the Mission Statement and pervades all aspects of school life.
- 7.2 The school is well led by a most committed and dedicated Headteacher. He provides very clear spiritual leadership for the school rooted in his own deep faith.
- 7.3 The Headteacher is very well supported by an enthusiastic and committed deputy and staff who work well together as a team.
- 7.4 The Chairman of Governors is very supportive of the school and gives generously of his time.
- 7.5 All governors are supportive of school and a nucleus of them are able to visit school frequently and take a pro-active role in the life of the school. The reconstitution of the Governing Body due to take place next year, could provide a good opportunity for further governor training to identify roles and responsibilities and allow all governors to take an active part in monitoring school performance and contributing to strategic planning for the future.
- 7.6 The parish priest is a welcome visitor to school and in his role as chaplain, contributes to the liturgical life of the school and the spiritual and moral development of the children.
- 7.7 Well established links exist between the school and the two parishes served by it. Both school and the parishes are seeking to strengthen these links.

- 7.8 Sacramental preparation is carried out in the parish by a parish catechist. Members of staff from school attend sacramental celebrations in Church and hold special liturgical celebrations in school to allow all pupils to celebrate together.
- 7.9 There are very good links between the school and parents. Parents are made to feel welcome in school by frequent invitations to liturgical celebrations, to assist in the classrooms and to attend the parent workshops specially arranged for them. Parents value and appreciate these opportunities to share in the life of the school.
- 7.10 Almost all parents express satisfaction with the standards of religious education achieved by their children and with the very good spiritual and moral education their children receive. They all speak warmly of the caring, Catholic ethos of the school and of the dedication and commitment shown to their children and themselves by the Headteacher and staff.
- 7.11 A significant minority of parents would welcome regular information on what their children are being taught in religious education.
- 7.12 Provision for children with Special Educational Needs is good and good support is offered to them and their families.
- 7.13 Relationships throughout the school are very good which leads to a caring, warm and supportive atmosphere. This is a strength of the school.
- 7.14 The spiritual and moral development of the children is very good and this is a strength of the school.
- 7.15 Collective Worship throughout the school is good and offers children a variety of opportunities for praise, celebration and reflection appropriate to their ages.
- 7.16 Behaviour throughout the school is very good encouraged by high expectations from all staff and a climate of co-operation and forgiveness.
- 7.17 The school staff have recently completed the Diocesan Self-Evaluation Document and have identified areas for future development which include the review of the Mission Statement and Policy for Collective Worship, the development of policies for spiritual and moral development, and strengthening the links between school and the parishes. The implementation of these aims would future strengthen the explicit nature of the education offered by the school to its pupils.
- 7.18 Not all classes in school currently allocate ten percent of teaching time to religious education as required by the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales. This issue now needs to be addressed.

- 7.19 Of the lessons observed during the inspection, the quality of teaching ranged from satisfactory to very good.
- 7.20 All teachers use the 'Here I Am' religious education programme and associated planning sheets. Planning is thorough and takes account of all elements of the topics although not all planning includes activities differentiated to meet the needs and abilities of all pupils. Many activities planned do not include a sufficient level of challenge to allow pupils to reach higher levels of attainment. Consistency throughout the school in these elements could be ensured by the religious education co-ordinator monitoring planning, observing lessons and sampling pupil's work.
- 7.21 Children's attitudes to learning are generally good, they are very good when they are challenged and highly motivated.
- 7.22 Children make satisfactory to very good progress in knowledge and understanding in religious education and in most cases, levels of attainment are commensurate with the children's attainment in other curriculum areas.
- 7.23 Standards and quantity of written work vary from satisfactory to very good. Expectations of attainment are generally as high in religious education as they are in other subjects.
- 7.24 Good procedures for assessment and reporting are now in place and used throughout the school. This was identified as a Key Issue in the last religious education inspection and has now been addressed.
- 7.25 The religious education co-ordinator is hard-working and dedicated. Her own strong personal faith underpins all her work. Her role now needs to be extended to include the monitoring of planning, teaching and learning and sampling pupil's work in order to give her an overview of the strengths and weaknesses of the religious education curriculum and enable her to share the good practice already evident and support colleagues to achieve consistently high quality teaching and learning throughout the school.
- 7.26 The school is adequately resourced to deliver the religious education curriculum.
- 7.27 All Key Issues identified in the last religious education inspection have been addressed.

## **AREAS FOR FURTHER DEVELOPMENT**

The governors and staff of Holy Family School should now:

- 1 Celebrate and consolidate the very good Catholic ethos of the school, the effective partnership that exists between school and the parents and the very good spiritual and moral development of the children.

- 2 Ensure that all parents regularly receive information about what their children are being taught in religious education.
- 3 Ensure that ten percent of teaching time is allocated to religious education as required by the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales.
- 4 Develop the role of the religious education co-ordinator to include the monitoring of planning, teaching and learning, and the sampling of pupil's work.
- 5 Ensure that all teachers plan for and implement differentiated activities that match the needs and abilities of all pupils and contain levels of challenge to allow all pupils to reach their maximum potential.
- 6 Implement the planned actions identified in the Self-Evaluation Document including reviews of The Mission Statement and the Collective Worship Policy, the development of policies for Spiritual and Moral Development and strengthening and developing links with the parishes.
- 7 Consider further training for governors to identify specific roles and responsibilities to allow them to contribute more fully to the strategic development of the school.

## **CONCLUSION**

The inspector wishes to place on record her personal thanks and appreciation for the kind co-operation received from the headteacher, staff and governors, parents and children of Holy Family School.

## **APPENDIX: EVIDENCE BASE**

- The programme of inspection included attendance at a parents' meeting, scrutiny of fifty-one completed parent questionnaires, a pre-inspection visit to the school and two full days inspection.
- Religious education lessons were observed in all classes including Nursery.
- The inspector attended assemblies for both Key Stages led by the headteacher and two additional Key Stage assemblies led by a representative of Mission Together.
- Interviews were held with the headteacher, the parish priest, the Chairman of Governors and another governor and the religious education co-ordinator.
- Discussions were held with children, parents, teaching and ancillary staff, classroom assistants, dinner ladies and the site manager.

- A comprehensive range of documentation was provided by the headteacher and religious education co-ordinator. This included most items on the Diocesan list and additional information. The inspector was also provided with samples of children's work, assessment books and assessment portfolios, teacher's plans and liturgy and assembly schedules.

## **SUMMARY REPORT**

### **The major strengths in religious education, collective worship and the spiritual and moral development of the children in school.**

- Standards of work in religious education range from satisfactory to very good and are generally commensurate with standards reached in other subjects.
- The spiritual and moral development of the children is very good.
- The quality of collective worship and celebration in school is very good.
- Children's attitude to learning is good and often very good.
- Teaching ranges from satisfactory to very good.
- Relationships throughout the school are very good and this helps to promote and nurture a supportive, learning ethos

### **How the school has improved since the last inspection**

All the Key Issues identified in the last inspection have been addressed satisfactorily.

### **How parents view the religious education, collective worship and spiritual and moral development of their children**

- Parents are very satisfied with the religious education their children receive although a significant minority of them would welcome more information on what their children are taught.
- Parents are very satisfied with the spiritual and moral development of their children.
- Parents praise the caring Catholic ethos of the school and the good behaviour of the children.
- Parents are appreciative of the dedication and commitment shown by the headteacher and staff to their children and themselves and regard the staff as good role models.
- Parents value the frequent invitations they receive to visit school to attend Masses and liturgies, assist in classes or participate in the parent's workshops specially arranged for them.

### **Areas for further development**

- 1 Celebrate and consolidate the very good Catholic ethos of the school, the effective partnership that exists between school and the parents and the very good spiritual and moral development of the children.

- 2 Ensure that all parents regularly receive information about what their children are being taught in religious education.
- 3 Ensure that ten percent of teaching time is allocated to religious education as required by the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales.
- 4 Develop the role of the religious education co-ordinator to include the monitoring of planning, teaching and learning, and the sampling of pupils' work.
- 5 Ensure that all teachers plan for and implement differentiated activities that match the needs and abilities of all pupils and contain levels of challenge to allow all pupils to reach their maximum potential.
- 6 Implement the planned actions identified in the Self-Evaluation Document including reviews of The Mission Statement and the Collective Worship Policy, the development of policies for Spiritual and Moral Development and strengthening and developing links with the parishes.
- 7 Consider further training for governors to identify specific roles and responsibilities to allow them to contribute more fully to the strategic development of the school.