

**DIOCESE OF HALLAM SCHOOLS'
DEPARTMENT**



SECTION 48 INSPECTION REPORT

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

**OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL HELP
CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL**

School URN	106770
Name of Chairman of Governors	Mr George Turton
Name of Acting Headteacher	Mrs Jo Ayres
Date of Inspection	1st, 2nd February 2006
Section 48 Inspector	Mrs Gillian Foster

“ AN ENTHUSIASM FOR THE THINGS OF GOD”.

Introduction

The Inspection of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Catholic Primary 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

Our Lady's Catholic Primary School was founded in 1929 and extended in 1966; the Foundation Stage Unit has recently been extended and re-furbished. The school serves the parish of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Bentley. It draws children from Bentley, Arksey, Cusworth, Scawsby, Scawthorpe and Sprotborough. Its last Religious Education Inspection (Section 23) took place in May 2000 and its last OFSTED Inspection (Section 5) took place in September 2005. Our Lady's is an average sized Catholic primary school in which most pupils are of white British heritage with a small proportion from ethnic backgrounds. Travellers' children form approximately 15% of the school population. There are eight full-time and two part-time teachers, four of the full-time teachers are Catholic and one holds the Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies or its equivalent. There is in addition, one part-time peripatetic music teacher.

The school offers a range of extra-curricular activities which are organised and run by staff together with qualified sports coaches from outside school. There is an active group of parents known as the 'Friends of Our Lady's', who organise social and fund-raising events for the school. The school has a good reputation in the area and is held in very high regard by the parents.

The school has been through a difficult time since the previous Religious Education inspection with a series of headteachers and significant changes in other staff. Since December 2004 an acting headteacher has been in place and since September 2005, a deputy headteacher, seconded from another Catholic school, has been in post. The school is in the process of consultation leading to the planned Federation with St Joseph and St Teresa's Catholic Primary School at Woodlands.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL

How effective and efficient is the provision of Catholic education in meeting

the needs of learners?

Currently the provision of Catholic education at Our Lady's school is satisfactory. Pupils are well cared for and respected in a warm, welcoming, caring and purposeful environment. A strong school ethos with good and developing links with the parish, has a positive impact on the pupils spiritual and moral development.

Steps were taken to address issues following the last inspection, but disruption in leadership has minimised their impact and some of the issues remain to be addressed and need to be developed further.

The school has correctly identified in the Self-Evaluation document, (SEF) aspects of provision which need development; these issues together with others identified in this report should form the basis of an action plan to be included as part of the School Improvement Plan and to be approved and monitored by governors.

The effectiveness of any steps taken to promote improvement since the last inspection

Areas for development identified in the last Section 23 Inspection included: developing procedures for assessment in religious education; clarifying information given to parents in reports; developing a consistent policy for written work in religious education; strengthening links with the parish and ensuring that ten percent of teaching time is allocated to religious education.

Following the 2000 inspection, assessment did become a focus for development but no consistent policy was arrived at and there was little impact on practice. The school has recently addressed this issue and has agreed and implemented assessment procedures which are having an impact on teachers' planning and learners' achievement. These strategies now need to be embedded in practice. Parents now receive annual, clear, informative reports on the progress their children are making. No policy was established regarding written work in religious education and this issue remains to be addressed. Many links have been established with the parish community and both school and parish are working effectively together to further develop and strengthen these links. Not all classes currently devote ten percent of teaching time to religious education and this issue now needs to be addressed with some urgency.

The capacity to further deepen the quality of Catholic education

The SEF was completed in an open, honest and rigorous way. It acknowledges that the significant changes in leadership and staffing structures in recent times had contributed to the fragmentation of the agenda for deepening the quality of Catholic education. The SEF recognises the more stable staffing structure now in place, as offering an opportunity to embrace a fresh start together to develop the Catholic mission of the school. Areas for development have been correctly identified in the SEF with the initial focus on building a shared vision of the school's Catholic mission with all staff and ensuring that they have the confidence, skills and knowledge to

enable them to deliver a high quality religious education curriculum to all learners. The acting headteacher has led these initiatives. Although she has received the full support of all staff, leadership and management skills and responsibilities now need to be shared by senior members of staff and governors. The priorities identified by the school and those included in this report, need to form part of the School Improvement Plan to be regularly monitored by governors.

THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL: LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

How effective are leadership and management in the development of the Catholic life of the school?

The acting headteacher has made it a priority to develop the Catholic life of the school. Her firm leadership and clear vision has enabled all members of the school community to work together to develop a new Mission Statement which is well understood by all and is at the centre of school life. All members of staff and governors are very proud of the distinctive ethos of Our Lady's School and are totally committed to its Catholic life. Links with the parish community are good and are strengthened by the parish priest who offers good, effective support and actively engages with the children through regular visits to school. The whole school and individual classes regularly visit church for Masses and liturgies and to further explore the religious topic being taught.

The acting headteacher has worked tirelessly to develop the Catholic life of the school and has achieved success in a relatively short time. Consideration now needs to be given to broadening the leadership and management role to include other senior members of staff and the more active participation of governors. The development of the Catholic life of the school needs to be explicitly identified as a section of the School Improvement Plan which is regularly monitored and evaluated by governors. The effectiveness of leadership and management in developing the Catholic life of the school is currently satisfactory.

THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL: COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

How good is the quality of Collective Worship?

The school meets the statutory requirements for Collective Worship. Prayer takes place at least twice a day in each class. On four days of the week, different members of staff lead assemblies that are liturgically based with Scripture, prayer, singing, signs and symbolism. During acts of Collective Worship, children act in a reverent, prayerful, responsive way and always enjoy active participation. Children are given many opportunities in each class for spontaneous prayer and for reflection. Each classroom has a high quality focal point for prayer where childrens' religious education work is displayed. Children are encouraged from the earliest years to plan and lead prayers in class and do so with confidence and reverence. The Eucharist is central to the life of the school and children visit church several times a year to celebrate Mass and participate in liturgies together with the parish community.

Collective Worship is very well planned, it shows progression and offers a rich diversity of experiences appropriate to the ages of the children. The high quality Collective Worship enjoyed by the children contributes positively to their spiritual and moral development. The quality of Collective Worship is currently outstanding.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION: ACHIEVEMENT AND STANDARDS

How well do learners achieve in Religious Education?

The quality of pupils' achievement is good overall. Good use is made of the 'Here I Am' programme. Most pupils make good progress in relation to prior attainment and abilities and achieve the targets set by their teachers and in some cases, by themselves. Pupils almost always have a clear understanding of the learning objectives and whether or not they have met them. The children respond to the high expectations the staff have for them. The quantity of written work produced in religious education is variable and there now needs to be agreement between staff of expectations of the quantity of written work, especially in the older classes. Pupils almost always enjoy their lessons and are attentive and responsive. There is an atmosphere of respect in all classes which encourages the children to express their views and listen to others. They enjoy and benefit from the many opportunities they are given to develop their understanding of topics and the feelings and motives of others through such techniques as mime and 'hot-seating'. Religious education lessons make a significant impact on the good spiritual and moral development of the children.

QUALITY OF PROVISION OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

How effective are teaching and learning in Religious Education?

Teaching and learning is good throughout the school. Through formal staff development opportunities (INSET), planned staff meetings, informal support from the acting headteacher in her role as Religious Education Co-ordinator and a general willingness by staff to support each other, staff are confident and secure in teaching the 'Here I Am' programme. A recent focus on planning has ensured that all teachers share learning objectives with the children. At the same time the introduction of a more rigorous assessment system has impacted on teachers' planning and has resulted in more effective differentiation of tasks and activities. Non-teaching members of staff are used effectively to support children identified with special needs and contribute to the good progress made by these pupils. A newly developed marking system is now in use which is effective but is not yet used consistently throughout the school. These procedures now need to be embedded in practice and used consistently throughout the school. The newly introduced lesson observation, planning and work scrutiny procedures should ensure that good practice is shared and that policies aimed at improving the quality of teaching and learning are implemented.

Parents and carers are kept well informed of what their children are being taught in

religious education and are actively encouraged to support them in their work.

How well does the Religious Education curriculum meet the needs and interests of the learners?

Not all classes currently allocate ten percent of teaching time to religious education, this was a key issue in the last inspection and needs to be addressed with some urgency. All teachers fulfil the requirements of the Curriculum Directory by following the 'Here I Am' programme. Teachers use the recommended planning framework provided by the diocese. The religious education curriculum makes a significant impact on the childrens' spiritual and moral development. Pupils are given many opportunities for personal reflection and to consider the consequences of their actions on others in the light of Gospel values.

The school is socially inclusive and provides equal access and opportunity for all pupils to make progress. Through the planned teaching of other Christian Churches and other world Faiths, the children are helped to develop an understanding and tolerance of the diversity of peoples' beliefs. The children also learn of other cultures through exciting and innovative topics. The school does not have a policy for sex and relationship and citizenship and this issue needs to be addressed.

Relationships throughout the school are good. There is a culture of respect which allows pupils to feel valued and gives them the confidence to develop as unique individuals. The hard-working and committed members of staff create a secure environment and one where all feel safe and cared for. The Rainbows programme provides support for children suffering loss or bereavement and is greatly appreciated by the participating children and their families.

Parents and carers are welcome in school and many act as volunteer helpers in class and on school visits. They appreciate the care they and their children receive and the openness of the acting headteacher and members of staff to discuss any problems they may have concerning their children.

The religious education curriculum is broad and balanced and clearly meets the needs of learners allowing all equal access of opportunity and ensuring that good progress is made by almost all pupils. The issue of time allocation and the formation of a policy for sex and relationships and citizenship now needs to be addressed. Currently provision is satisfactory.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners in Religious Education?

Leadership and management in religious education is satisfactory. The acting headteacher has made the support of staff a priority following a difficult time for the school. She has taken on the role of Religious Education Co-ordinator and has supported the staff well through the provision of INSET and informal support. She has succeeded in raising staff morale and giving them the confidence, knowledge

and skills necessary to teach religious education effectively. Consideration now needs to be given to broadening the leadership and management role to include other members of staff.

Procedures for lesson observations, planning and work scrutiny have recently been introduced. The continuation of these procedures should ensure that some of the good practice already existing in school will be shared and quality assurance and self-assessment will be based on accurate data.

Accommodation is good and resources are adequate to deliver the religious education curriculum. The school plans to conduct an audit and review of resources and intends to allocate a designated budget for religious education; this will enable resources to be reviewed and extended to support the curriculum more effectively and support priorities identified for inclusion in the School Improvement Plan.

The School Improvement Plan includes as a priority, preparation for federation with St Joseph and St Teresa’s Catholic Primary School but there is no reference made to the development of religious education. This issue now needs to be addressed and governors should receive regular reports regarding the development of religious education to assist them in their efforts to support staff and pupils in raising attainment.

Information about the school

Type of School	Primary, Voluntary Aided
Age profile of Students	3 - 11
Number of roll	202
Number of Students on Special Educational Needs Register	17
Number of Students with a	2

Statement of Special Educational Needs	
Number of Catholics on roll	82
Number of Other Christian Denominations	63
Number of other Faiths	3
School address	Finkle Street, Bentley, Doncaster. DN5 0RP
Telephone Number	01302 874291
Fax Number	01302 876751
Email	admin@ourladys.doncaster.sch.uk
Website	www.ourladys-bentley.ik.org

Summary of Inspection Judgements:	
Overall Effectiveness	Satisfactory
The Catholic Life of the School	
How effective are leadership and management in developing the Catholic life of the school?	Satisfactory
How good is the quality of Collective Worship?	Outstanding
Religious Education	
How well do learners achieve in Religious Education?	Good
How effective are teaching and learning in Religious	Good

Education?	
How well does the RE curriculum meet the needs and interests of learners?	Satisfactory
How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners in Religious Education?	Satisfactory

Further copies of this report are obtainable from Our Lady of Perpetual Help Catholic Primary School or from the Diocese of Hallam Schools' Department, The Hallam Pastoral Centre, St Charles Street, Sheffield S9 3WU Tel: 0114 2566440