

*Diocese of Hallam*

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

***Our Lady of Mount Carmel Catholic Primary School  
Sandringham Road  
Intake  
Doncaster  
DN2 5JG***

Inspection Date: 29<sup>th</sup> - 30<sup>th</sup> November 2001  
Diocesan Inspector: Mrs Mary Johnson

The inspection of the denominational character of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Catholic Primary School was carried out under the direction of the Governors of the school in fulfillment of their obligations under the requirements of Canon Law (ref.804,806), Section 23 of the 1996 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 Our Lady of Mount Carmel Catholic Primary School and help promote sound development for the future.

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A copy of this report may be obtained from the Governors of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Catholic Primary School, Sandringham Road, Intake, Doncaster, DN2 5JG or from the Diocese of Hallam Schools' Department, The Hallam Pastoral Centre, St Charles Street, Sheffield S9 3WU.

## Introduction

### 1.1 Basic information about the school

NAME of SCHOOL	Our Lady of Mount Carmel Catholic Primary School
TYPE	Infant and Junior
STATUS	Voluntary Aided
NUMBER on ROLL	201
AGE RANGE	4 – 11 years
GENDER of PUPILS	Mixed
CHAIRMAN of GOVERNORS	Fr. Liam Smith
HEADTEACHER	Mr Michael D’Rozario
ADDRESS of SCHOOL	Sandringham Road Intake Doncaster DN2 5JG
TELEPHONE NUMBER	01302 349743
DATE of INSPECTION	29 <sup>th</sup> – 30 <sup>th</sup> November 2001
DIOCESAN INSPECTOR	Mrs Mary Johnson

Our Lady of Mount Carmel Catholic Primary School is a well established school opened in 1960 to serve the parish of Our Lady Mount of Carmel and Mary Magdalene, taking children from Intake, Wheatley Hills, Wheatley Park and Clay Lane area. The school is situated in a central position to the catchment area it serves and is close to the parish church.

There has been a large turnover of staff due to retirement and promotion over recent years. At the time of the inspection only the headteacher and one other member of the teaching staff had worked in the school for more than five years. Last year there were difficulties due to staff illness and unfilled vacancies, this led to the headteacher spending a large amount of time teaching whilst staff have taken on extra responsibilities. However these problems are almost resolved with a new team now in place.

The children are organised into seven classes and there are seven permanent teachers including the headteacher. Year 5 is currently staffed by two temporary part-time teachers in a job share situation.

Class Groupings are as follows:	Reception	30
	Year One	22
	Year Two	25
	Year Three	36
	Year Four	26
	Year Five	32
	Year Six	30

Ninety-one percent of the children are baptised Catholics.

## **PART ONE**

### **ASPECTS of the SCHOOL as a CATHOLIC COMMUNITY**

#### **1. THE MISSION of the SCHOOL**

- 1.1 Our Lady of Mount Carmel's Mission Statement, which leads all documentation, places Christ and his teaching at the centre of all school life, its teaching, ethos and values. The school certainly lives up to this statement and an atmosphere has been created where each person is valued, respected as an individual and encouraged to reach their full potential spiritually and academically through a deepening relationship with God. The Mission Statement is a good model.
- 1.2 Forty questionnaires were returned by parents. They express their confidence in the school and the good work carried out in the spiritual and moral developments of their children. They also praise the high standards of work and behaviour in the school and some also expressed their pleasure that the children discuss what they have been learning in religious education with the family at home.
- 1.3 The school has a thriving parents/friends association and values the help and support provided by parents and parishioners who play an important part in the life of the school assisting in classrooms, with visits and social functions.
- 1.4 The school prospectus is a good, comprehensive document firmly rooted in the ethos and curriculum values of the school.
- 1.5 There has always been and still is a strong commitment to the school by the parish priest. However due to ill health he has been unable to be as actively involved in the life of the school to the same extent in recent times.
- 1.6 The Governors maintain a keen interest in the life of the school and those who are available assist in the school on a regular basis.
- 1.7 There are very strong links between school and parish. The school hall is also used as the parish hall and sacramental preparation is carried out on a shared basis. A very successful Parish Day took place last year and was very well attended by a wide cross-section of ages. Parents and parishioners highly praised the event and said that it helped strengthen the community and make new friendships.
- 1.8 Our Lady of Mount Carmel school is highly committed to the needs of others and those less fortunate, by prayer and giving. Some of the charities regularly supported are the Hallam Caring Service, Mission Together, CAFOD and the RNIB.
- 1.9 There is good liaison with other schools and agencies in the area. An out of hours club takes place in the school hall before and after school and is of assistance to many parents. This is run by an outside agency and open first to pupils from Mount Carmel and other schools when places are available. The school has formed links with Doncaster Rovers football club through the 'Sport in the Community' project and with the local police through the 'Crucial Crew' programme. There are also good

links with other local schools and with the McAuley High School where good measures are in place to ensure a smooth transition between Years 6 and 7.

- 1.10 There is good provision for cultural development through residential and non-residential visits. Outside providers are also invited to the school to help raise awareness of other cultures. These include the Zimbabwe Music Dance Workshop and the visit of Indian musicians. E-mail links have also been made with a school in Dublin. A teacher of the Jewish faith who worked in the school on a temporary basis and also informs the staff and children on matters relating to Judaism.

## **2. The SCHOOL as a WORSHIPPING COMMUNITY**

- 2.1 The collective worship in Our Lady of Mount Carmel school meets statutory requirements and is celebrated daily in the classroom, or in the hall as a key stage or whole school assembly.
- 2.2 During the inspection two acts of collective worship were observed including a penitential liturgy planned by Years 3 and 6 which took place in the church and was attended by the whole school, parents and parishioners. The liturgy was well planned with a balance of scripture readings, drama, reflection and penitential rite. The children read clearly, prayed and reflected reverently and sang well. Parents and parishioners also said how much they had appreciated the liturgy.

The second act of worship observed was a Celebration Assembly involving the whole school which took place in the school hall. This was led by the headteacher and all classes were involved in thanking God for their gifts and talents in music, prayer and appreciation. All children participated fully in appreciating the work, artefacts and talents of others. The assembly was a well planned prayerful and joyous experience.

When the whole school is in the hall it is impossible to invite parents or parishioners due to lack of space but parents are invited to some of the key stage assemblies each half term and they stated how much they enjoy these occasions.

- 2.3 Collective worship in the classrooms is of a high standard. Children are given opportunities for quiet reflection, spontaneous prayer and also the more traditional prayers appropriate to their age.
- 2.4 The inspector was provided with a large collection of assemblies/liturgy plans, photographs and books of childrens' own prayers all of a good standard and illustrating a deepening understanding of spirituality and knowledge. Much of this material would be useful in the assessment process.

### **3. SPIRITUAL and MORAL DEVELOPMENT**

#### **3.1 Spiritual Development**

- 3.1a The spiritual and moral development of the children at Our Lady of Mount Carmel is a great strength of the school and clearly contributes to the happy, caring environment in which the mission statement is a lived reality.
- 3.1b A calm purposeful atmosphere rooted in Gospel values, promoted by the headteacher and staff, prevails throughout the school. Parents and parishioners also spoke of how welcome and valued they feel when they visit the school.
- 3.1c Spirituality is an integral part of the life of the school, not only during religious education but extending throughout the day into other lessons. The children are given time to reflect and think, and appreciate art and music during times of quiet thought and in discussions during circle time.
- 3.1d Children are also encouraged to explore the feelings of others in both religious education and other subjects as evidenced in their lessons and written work displayed around the school. This develops a deeper understanding and appreciation of others.
- 3.1e Children of all ages throughout the school are encouraged to appreciate and respect the beauty and wonder of God's creation and to recognise their own part as custodians of this creation.
- 3.1f There is a strong emphasis on prayer in the school and the childrens' own prayers are collected into class prayer books or displayed on the walls in an attractive manner. This gives the children the opportunity to feel valued and to value the work of others.
- 3.1g All classes in the school have a well presented focal point for prayer in the classroom, which has been enhanced by samples of childrens' work and tasteful artefacts.

#### **3.2 MORAL DEVELOPMENT**

- 3.2a The school has a very good behaviour policy based on its Mission Statement and Aims which seeks to promote a happy, stimulating and caring environment in which each person is valued as an individual with unique talents. This is certainly a lived reality in Our Lady of Mount Carmel.
- 3.2b The children feel secure and cared for and they in turn care for one another. Relationships throughout the school are very good. Children are affirmed by staff who support one another. This enables the children to build up a good self image and creates an atmosphere in which they are valued.
- 3.2c Behaviour observed by the inspector both in and out of the classroom was very good throughout the school. In discussion with children it is obvious that they have a clear sense of justice and fairness and therefore of good moral development. They play happily together and are well cared for at lunch time which is family service and behaviour is very good; older children serve and care for the younger ones ensuring

that their needs are catered for thus creating a bond between pupils and making the younger pupils feel secure.

- 3.2d Governors and parishioners who visit and assist in the school state how impressed they are with the general behaviour, good manners and consideration shown to themselves and others by the children.

## **PART TWO**

### **CURRICULUM RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

#### **4. Standards Achieved by pupils**

##### **4.1 Attainment and Progress**

- 4.1a Six classes of the seven were observed during the inspection as there was a temporary teacher in post in one class. An atmosphere of joy prevailed in all the religious education lessons observed. Staff plan their lessons well, all children are expected to achieve the highest standards of which they are capable and are encouraged to do so in a calm, happy environment where they feel valued.
- 4.1b In all classes observed attainment was good to very good, children were attentive and interested, displaying clear knowledge and understanding of Christian values, scripture and spirituality appropriate to their age.
- 4.1c Written work, which is of a high quality, is carried out in individual books and on paper for wall mounting or class books. The children are proud of their own work and appreciative of that of others.
- 4.1d The work samples provided for the inspector were taken from all classes in the school and showed a clear development in knowledge, understanding and spirituality as the children progress through the school.

##### **4.2 ATTITUDES to LEARNING**

- 4.2a Attitudes to learning are very good throughout the school. Positive attitudes and the knowledge that they personally are valued and must value others are taught and encouraged from when the children first enter school. The very good level of support from parents has a marked influence on the positive attitudes and good achievements of the children.
- 4.2b The children enjoy taking part in assemblies, liturgies and class circle time which they help to prepare and in which they participate in a natural confident manner. They also enjoy and appreciate the short periods for prayer and reflection built into acts of worship and class lessons.

## **QUALITY OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

### **5.1 Teaching**

- 5.1a Teaching is of a high standard throughout the school and of the lessons observed one was excellent in each Key Stage.
- 5.1b The best lessons were well structured with clear objectives and well differentiated activities. The children were always on task; there was a good sense of pace and a balance of teacher-pupil input.
- 5.1c Individual lesson planning is very good tightly focused with clear objectives explained by the teacher at the beginning of the lesson and returned to during the lesson where appropriate. Long term planning throughout in school is mostly of a very good standard but not consistently so and this needs to be reviewed.
- 5.1d Multi-cultural education is developed through the new “Here I Am” materials and also through visits made to the school by members of other faiths and cultures.

### **5.2 RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CURRICULUM and ASSESSMENT**

- 5.2a Religious education is central to the life of the school and all documentation is led by the Mission Statement.
- 5.2b The school has a very good religious education policy and an inset day was used to compile a “Towards a Vision Statement” for which the views of parents and governors were also sought.
- 5.2c Good clear documents on special educational needs, behaviour, equal opportunities and development for personal relationships were also provided.
- 5.2d The school has an excellent religious education co-ordinator who is very supportive and works hard to ensure that all staff are kept updated on information from the Diocesan co-ordinator meetings which she disseminates at staff meetings.
- 5.2e Reports to parents are clear and informative, giving details of the child’s progress in knowledge, understanding of faith, scripture and doctrine.
- 5.2f Marking is good throughout the school. Teachers use positive and encouraging comments which illustrate a clear knowledge and understanding of the children.
- 5.2g There is some evidence of teachers evaluating their topics individually but this needs to be co-ordinated and developed. A whole school approach to evaluation and assessment has been identified as a priority in the school development plan. This has been previously delayed due to staff changes.

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

### **6.1 Leadership and Management**

- 6.1a The school is well led by a very able and dedicated headteacher who gives clear direction and support. He has a clear vision for the school which is rooted in its Mission Statement and his own personal faith. He has worked hard over the last two years of changing staff to implement that vision and retain the present high standards and ethos of the school.
- 6.1b The school governors play a valuable part in the life of the school, are a great support to the headteacher and staff and are involved in many aspects of the life and work of the school.
- 6.1c The parish priest is very supportive of the school, its commitment to the spiritual and moral development of the children and the best possible religious education it can provide for them.
- 6.1d Staff meetings regularly begin with a meditation and end with a prayer which encourages the formation and spiritual development of all staff. This is very good practice.
- 6.1e Parents appreciate the ‘Welcome Books’ which their children receive when they move to a new class and also the regular Newsletters. The children in Year 6 have also started their own “Mount Carmel Press” magazine and have now produced two issues. This is of good quality and is well supported by the headteacher, staff and parents; proceeds go towards the Good Shepherd Fund.

### **6.2 STAFFING ACCOMMODATION and RESOURCES**

- 6.2a The majority of the teaching staff have been appointed over the past two years and consequently the headteacher, governors and staff have worked hard to build up the happy, caring and conscientious team of teachers at Mount Carmel school today, which can only grow from strength to strength.
- 6.2b Parents speak highly of the headteacher and staff whom they say know and value all the children in their care. Parents also welcome the support and time given by headteacher and staff whenever they wish to speak to them.
- 6.2c Our Lady of Mount Carmel has a large support staff all of whom are loyal, hardworking and valued by the school.
- 6.2d Our Lady of Mount Carmel school, which is a two storey building is well maintained, providing a pleasant working environment for the children. A new library area has been located adjacent to the infant classes and is within easy access of all pupils. It is equipped with CD ROM and internet access and all classes are now able to have access to the Internet.
- 6.2e Displays throughout the school are of a high standard and both enhance the learning environment of the children and help to promote spiritual development.

- 6.2f The school is well resourced for religious education. Money is identified each year in the school budget to update and improve the resource base.

### **PART THREE**

#### **MAIN FINDINGS and AREAS for FURTHER DEVELOPMENT**

- 7.1 Our Lady of Mount Carmel is a very good Catholic school in which the Mission Statement is a lived reality, which places Christ at the centre of all school life.
- 7.2 The school is led by a very able and dedicated headteacher who gives clear direction and support and has a clear vision for the school, rooted in the Mission Statement and his own faith commitment.
- 7.3 The school is supported by an active governing body which plays a valuable part in the life of the school and is a great support to the headteacher, staff and children.
- 7.4 The parish priest who has been in the parish for many years is committed to supporting the school in every way possible.
- 7.5 The school has a good, conscientious religious education co-ordinator who works hard with the headteacher, staff and children to ensure that religious education in the school is of a high standard.
- 7.6 The spiritual and moral development of the children is very good and a strength of the school.
- 7.7 Collective worship is of a high standard and the children are able to experience praise and worship of God in a wide variety of ways and situations.
- 7.8 Overall, teaching in the school is good to very good with some examples of excellent practice. Good provision is made in lessons for children of different abilities. Planning throughout the school is of a very good standard but there are some minor inconsistencies which need to be reviewed.
- 7.9 The children's attitudes to learning are good throughout the school and children are made to feel secure and valued.
- 7.10 Children's work is well displayed in classrooms and around the school, further enhancing the environment for the whole school community, whilst showing appreciation of the children themselves.
- 7.11 Staff development and team building are given a high priority in the school in order to assist staff and provide the best possible education for the children.
- 7.12 The school is well resourced for religious education and money is identified each year in the budget to update and improve the resource base.

- 7.13 Forty questionnaires were returned by parents all of which were very supportive of the school and expressed their confidence in the good work carried out in the spiritual and moral development of their children. They also praise the high standards of work and behaviour in the school and the regular newsletters and welcome booklets sent out by the school.
- 7.14 There are long established, close links between school and parish and a very successful parish day took place last year which was praised by parishioners and parents.
- 7.15 The school has a thriving parents/ friends association and values the help provided by parents and parishioners who play an important part in the life of the school.
- 7.16 The school has addressed all key issues from the last inspection.

### **AREAS for FURTHER DEVELOPMENT**

To develop further the improvements made since the last inspection. The governors and staff of Our Lady of Mount Carmel school should now:-

- 1) Celebrate and consolidate the very good work already being carried out in religious education and the spiritual and moral development of the children.
- 2) Continue to build on, share and develop the strengths of the teaching team through staff discussion, training and inset.
- 3) Continue to develop the evaluation and assessment procedures through staff development and review, as identified in the development plan.
- 4) Review the time allocated to religious education to eliminate discrepancies and ensure that it meets with the 10% required by the Bishops' Conference.

### **Conclusion:-**

The Diocesan Inspector wished to place on record her thanks for the kindness and co-operation shown by the governors, headteacher, all staff, parents and children during the inspection.

### **APPENDIX: EVIDENCE BASE**

The programme of inspection included a pre-inspection visit to the school and two full days of inspection.

Religious education was observed in six of the seven classes, a whole school liturgy led by Y3 & 6 and a whole school assembly led by the headteacher.

Interviews were held with the headteacher, religious education co-ordinator and a small group of governors.

Discussions were held with teaching and ancillary staff, parents, the school caretaker, classroom assistants, dinner ladies and children.

Parents were also consulted through a parents questionnaire; forty replies were received all of which expressed support and admiration for the way in which religious education is taught in the school, the good spiritual and moral values, and the way in which both they and their children are valued.

A comprehensive range of documentation was provided by the headteacher and religious education co-ordinator including: the Towards a Vision Statement, Mission Statement and Religious Education Policy, Action Plan, Special Needs, Behaviour, Admissions policies, Development for Personal Relationships document, Equal Opportunities and all other information requested on the Diocesan list. Discs of the Parish Day and assemblies were also included.

The co-ordinator provided a wide range of children's work, books, teachers' plans, liturgies and assemblies and photographs.