

Diocese of Hallam

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

*St Francis Xavier Catholic Primary School
Roberts Road
Balby
Doncaster
DN4 0JN*

Inspection Date: 7th, 8th and 10th July 2003
Diocesan Inspector: Mrs Gillian Foster

This inspection of the denominational character of St Francis Xavier 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 St Francis Xavier Catholic Primary School and help promote sound development for the future.

A copy of this report may be obtained from the Governors of St Francis Xavier Catholic Primary School, Roberts Road, Balby, Doncaster DN4 0JN 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	St Francis Xavier Catholic Primary School
TYPE	Nursery, Infant and Junior
STATUS	Voluntary Aided
NUMBER ON ROLL	254
AGE RANGE	3 - 11 years
GENDER OF PUPILS	Mixed
CHAIRMAN OF GOVERNORS	Mr Frank McDermott
HEADTEACHER	Mr Nick Collins
ADDRESS OF SCHOOL	Roberts Road, Balby, Doncaster DN4 0JN
TELEPHONE NUMBER	01302 344678
DATE OF INSPECTION	7th, 8th and 10 July 2003
DIOCESAN INSPECTOR	Mrs Gillian Foster

St Francis Xavier Catholic Primary School was built in 1932 and was at that time a small secondary school. In 1958 it was reorganised as a primary school. The school is located about half a mile from the town centre and serves the two parishes of Sacred Heart, Balby and St Peter in Chains, Doncaster. The school building has recently undergone considerable development and refurbishment and a purpose built Foundation Unit is now in operation with its own secure outside play area. Other extensions have been made to the administration area of the school to include a new meeting room, a much larger staff room, a finance office, additional toilet facilities and a relocated headteacher's office. Internal decorations are of a high standard and contribute greatly to providing a pleasant, practical and up-lifting environment for children and staff. The school has recently reduced the number on roll to accommodate single age classes; the subsequent free teaching spaces made available have been used to create a spacious chapel and multi-functional library with a computerised system and internet access. This is a valuable and well used resource for the school.

The school is closely surrounded by houses and playground space is limited. The largest play area has recently been marked with a netball court area and other games. Very creative use has been made of several small spaces by providing extensive and exciting seating areas; these quiet areas are used and appreciated by the children.

The headteacher has been in post since 1998. In recent years there has been a significant turnover of staff and several experienced subject leaders have left.

There are nine full-time teachers including the headteacher, and two part-time teachers. There are thirteen educational support staff including nursery assistants, classroom support assistants and Special Educational Needs support staff.

There are currently 254 pupils on roll (including Nursery children) organised into classes as follows:

Nursery am	26
Nursery pm	22
Reception	18
Year 1	31
Year 2	30 (includes 1 Year 1 pupil)
Year 3	29 (includes 1 Year 2 pupil)
Year 4	34
Year 5	29
Year 6	35

76% of pupils are baptised Catholics.

88% of the teaching staff are Catholics.

PART ONE

ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL AS A CATHOLIC COMMUNITY

1. THE MISSION OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 St Francis Xavier's Vision Statement is a succinct declaration of intent; *'Let God's love shine in our lives as we care and share and learn together.'* The explicit aims which are detailed in the Vision and Mission Statements recognise Jesus as their role model and acknowledge that all members of the school community are valued and respected as unique individuals with God given gifts and talents. The spiritual, caring, nurturing, co-operative and supportive ethos of the school bears daily witness to these beliefs.
- 1.2 The Vision and Mission Statements preface all documentation and these, together with the detailed aims of the school, inform all Development Plans and policies. They are regularly reviewed by all members of the school community which is very good practice.
- 1.3 The school acknowledges in the Vision and Mission Statements, the Home-School Agreement and many other documents that parents are the primary educators of their children and that the role of the school is to co-operate and interact with those at home to support them in this crucial work. The effective home-school partnership is appreciated by parents and is a strength of the school.

- 1.4 Forty-seven questionnaires were returned by parents and these, together with comments made by parents who met the inspector at the pre-inspection meeting and during the inspection, were unanimous in their praise of the school. They all expressed appreciation of the caring, Catholic ethos of the school and the support given by staff to their children and themselves. They feel that St Francis Xavier is a community made up of home, school and the two parishes where all are valued and supported in their personal journey of faith.
- 1.5 Parents express satisfaction with the standards their children achieve in Religious Education and they value the regular information they receive about what their children are learning and the annual reports which give them a good indication of the progress their children are making.
- 1.6 Parents are particularly pleased with the spiritual and moral development of their children.
- 1.7 Parents praise the very good behaviour of the children and the respect children show to each other and adults.
- 1.8 Parents speak highly of the dedication and commitment of the headteacher and staff and regard them as good role models for their children.
- 1.9 Relationships throughout the school are very good. All visitors to school receive a very warm, respectful welcome. There is a happy, caring, supportive and co-operative ethos which is contributed to by all. This positive, affirming environment allows the children to feel secure and valued and creates a calm and purposeful atmosphere.
- 1.10 There is an active Parent Teacher Association which also includes amongst its members, grandparents parishioners and friends, who organise a wide variety of social events to raise funds for school projects.
- 1.11 Parents are welcome in school as visitors to Masses, liturgical celebrations, assemblies or to assist in the classroom. Parents are also invited to training courses in computer skills in the new computer suite. Parents value and appreciate these opportunities to share in the life of the school.
- 1.12 All school documentation is of a very high standard. Parents appreciate the quality of information they receive in special booklets such as the School Prospectus and Foundation Unit information, the timetables of liturgical celebrations which are sent to them, the termly information on what their children are being taught in Religious Education and the regular letters from the headteacher.
- 1.13 Governors are drawn from both parishes. They are very supportive and proactive in the life of the school and almost all attend regular training to help them in their critical role of monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the school. Governors contribute to the School Development Plan and many

policies They rely on the data and reports they receive from the headteacher and staff and visits they make to school and LEA evaluation reports, to support them in maintaining a strategic over-view of school development and performance.

- 1.14 The parish priests of Sacred Heart and St Peter in Chains are both regular and welcome visitors to school. The parish priest of St Peter in Chains serves as a governor and has special responsibility for monitoring Religious Education provision.
- 1.15 There are very strong links between the school and both parish communities. There are notice boards in the entrance corridor which display parish and community news and also a board displaying the names and special responsibilities of all the school governors, this is very good practice.
- 1.16 Sacramental preparation is carried out in school with strong support from the parishes. The parish priests hold meetings with the parents during preparation and this partnership is seen as being critical by the priests and is appreciated by the parents.
- 1.17 For the past eighteen months the school has operated a 'Rainbows' group which offers support to children who have suffered loss or bereavement. The facilitators have demonstrated care and sensitivity and have had a beneficial impact on several of the children and their families. This element of pastoral care is most commendable.
- 1.18 The school demonstrates its commitment to the wider community and to those less fortunate than themselves by prayer and giving. The children give regularly and generously to charities including The Hallam Caring Services, Mission Together, The Doncaster Childrens' Hospice and a Hospice in Uganda.
- 1.19 The school has very good links with other Diocesan and community schools in the area. Most children progress from St Francis Xavier to the McAuley High School and very good links exist between the two. The headteacher and subject leaders meet regularly with staff from the High School to ensure a smooth transition for the pupils at the end of their primary school careers.
- 1.20 The school makes good provision for the cultural development of its pupils through offering a broad and balanced curriculum and the planning of cross-curricular activities. It also offers retreat opportunities for the older 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 school has an excellent Collective Worship policy which states a clear rationale and practical guidelines for its implementation. Where these guidelines are followed, high quality acts of worship result. However, practice does not always match policy and in these cases, there is a need for greater attention to the details of the policy when planning acts of worship.
- 2.3 Prayer and worship are very important in the life of the school and the staff meet each Monday morning on a voluntary basis, to start the week in prayer. Staff appreciate this opportunity to meet together and set the atmosphere for the week ahead. This is good practice.
- 2.4 One whole school assembly led by the deputy headteacher, a Key Stage Two reflection led by the headteacher, Key Stage One and Key Stage Two end of 'Here I Am' topic assemblies and a Leavers' Mass were observed during the Inspection.
- 2.5 The Key Stage Two reflection provided an excellent opportunity for the children to reflect on the beauty of God's creation and the wonders of the world. Skilful, sensitive guidance by the headteacher and the use of excellent resources, allowed the children to reflect upon their own unique place in God's creation and to explore their personal relationship with an ever-loving and forgiving God. The content of the reflection was appropriate to the ages of the children and the tasteful use of music and candles created a quiet and reverent atmosphere observed by all.
- 2.6 The Key Stage One assembly observed was also of a very high standard. Children reflected upon and presented work they had completed on the 'Special Places' topic. The presentations included many children and were lively and informative holding everyone's interest. The children joined in prayers and hymn singing respectfully and wholeheartedly. The children obviously enjoyed the celebration as did the twenty parents and grandparents who were able to attend.
- 2.7 The Leavers' Mass celebrated by the parish priest of Sacred Heart and attended by the parish priest of St Peter in Chains and many parents and grandparents was a joyous celebration. Following the Mass, the Year Six children gave a powerpoint presentation compiled by themselves of their happy memories of life at St Francis Xavier School. It is obvious that the children regard themselves as being part of a supportive, nurturing and affirmative community.
The self-esteem and confidence that this environment generates should serve the pupils well as they transfer to High School.
- 2.8 The very high quality of Collective Worship observed in the three celebrations reported on above was not evident on the other observed occasions. The good practice already taking place in school now needs to be shared so that all teaching staff are aware of the elements that contribute to good quality Collective Worship.

- 2.9 The school has created a small chapel area, this is an excellent resource which is used for staff and class prayers and liturgies and which is open on Monday lunchtime for private prayer for the children. During the Inspection, several of the Key Stage One and lower Key Stage Two children were observed visiting the chapel. The children behave in a calm, reverent and respectful way
- 2.10 The school has a schedule of formal prayers which the children learn in each age group. Children say prayers naturally and reverently. An encouragement to children to offer their own spontaneous prayers on occasions, would provide them with more opportunity for spiritual development.
- 2.11 School Masses are celebrated each half-term on Sundays in the Sacred Heart Church. These Masses are well supported by children, parents and staff and help to strengthen the links between school, home and the parish.

3. SPIRITUAL AND MORAL DEVELOPMENT

3.1 Spiritual Development

- 3.1a The spiritual development of the children at St Francis Xavier School is very good and clearly contributes to the calm, peaceful, co-operative and happy Christian ethos which prevails.
- 3.1b All those who visit the school speak of the warmth of welcome they receive and the sense of spirituality which is created by the 'uplifting' environment and the respect and affirmation offered to all.
- 3.1c All classes have a focal area for prayer. These are generally of a high standard and feature Scripture together with examples of children's work from the 'Here I Am' topic.
- 3.1d Displays of Religious Education work in the corridors and public areas of the school are of a consistently high standard and always reflect the Church's liturgical season. They include work from children of all ages and abilities. These informative and thought-provoking displays contribute to a stimulating environment which emphasises the high priority the school places on Religious Education and the spiritual development of the children.
- 3.1e The external environment of the school has been creatively developed to provide exciting seating areas, often under the shade of large, mature trees. These quiet areas are used by the children to take time away from the busy playground or to chat with friends.
- 3.1f The school offers a wide range of extra-curricular activities including sport, music, drama and gardening. These opportunities add richly to the provision for spiritual development.

3.1g The last Religious Education Inspection in 1997, identified as a Key Issue, the need to ‘Develop a greater sense of spirituality throughout the school’. This issue has been successfully addressed and the sense of spirituality and provision for spiritual development, is now a strength of the school.

3.2 Moral Development

3.2a St Francis Xavier’s has an excellent behaviour policy which states very clearly and in detail what is expected of the children. There is a hierarchy of sanctions spelled out and understood by all children, staff and parents. This policy, together with the Vision and Mission Statements, spell out the Gospel message of love, respect and care for each other and forgiveness.

3.2b In speaking with the children, it is obvious that they have a good understanding of what is right and wrong and a strong sense of fairness. They treat each other and adults with respect relating their understanding of how Christ wants us to behave to their own situations.

3.2c Behaviour is very good throughout the school. The ancillary staff treat the children with care and respect; the children respond in like manner.

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 The newly developed play areas, although small, are well designed and monitored. The children happily share the space and show consideration to each other.

3.2f There is a ‘Buddy’ scheme in place which pairs Year Six children with Reception children. The older children look after the younger children at playtimes and sometimes go into the Reception class to help with class activities. The system helps the younger children to settle into school easily by feeling more secure and confident in their new environment. It gives the older children an excellent way to develop responsibility; the trust placed in them by staff to undertake these responsibilities adds to their own confidence and self-esteem. All the children speak of the system enthusiastically and some real friendships develop. The parents are also very appreciative of the system.

3.2g A School Council has been in place for the past eighteen months. Representatives from each Key Stage Two class take the views of their classmates to the Council and generate ideas and projects they would like to see happen in school. They are given a small budget to allow them to implement the projects. The children have minimal help from staff and are justly proud of what they have achieved so far. The School Council helps to strengthen the ethos of respect, self-esteem and co-operation which characterises the school.

PART TWO

CURRICULUM RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

4. Standards achieved by pupils

4.1 Attainment and progress

- 4.1a All classes in school allocate ten percent of teaching time to religious education, as required by the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales. This was a Key Issue in the last Inspection and has now been satisfactorily addressed.
- 4.1b Most teachers give the children opportunities to talk about their views. Where this is encouraged, the children develop good speaking and listening skills. This was particularly evident in Key Stage One and a lower Key Stage Two class.
- 4.1c In the best lessons, children were given the opportunity to develop skills of reflection, self-awareness and analysis appropriate to their age. This good practice now needs to be shared and promoted throughout the school.
- 4.1c Children generally show good recall of work previously done and are enthusiastic about sharing their knowledge with classmates. In the best lessons, teachers build upon this prior knowledge to develop the children's knowledge and understanding and ensure progress. Progress was not evident in all the lessons observed.
- 4.1d Quality of written work in books and folders varies from unsatisfactory to good. Where it is good, children produce independent, well presented work which demonstrates a good understanding of the topic. Unsatisfactory work is often teacher directed and poorly presented. Work displayed around the school is often of a very good standard indicating that the children have the ability to produce good work when motivated to do so and expectations are high.
- 4.1e In some classes levels of attainment are commensurate with the children's attainment in other curriculum areas. Where teacher's expectations are not made clear, children do not reach their potential judged against other subjects.
- 4.1f The quantity of written work in all classes, apart from Nursery and Reception where expectations are different, is unsatisfactory. The minimal amount of work recorded does not demonstrate coverage of the religious education curriculum as delivered through the 'Here I Am' programme. Staff now need to reach agreement on the amount of written work expected to be achieved by

each age group. From the evidence in workbooks and speaking to children, it is clear that some pupils make good progress in knowledge and understanding but this is not always the case.

4.2 Attitudes to Learning

- 4.2a Children's attitudes to learning are good and where they are challenged and highly motivated they are very good.
- 4.2b Children's behaviour in class is good, they listen well and respond to tasks calmly. Where they are challenged and well motivated, they respond with enthusiasm.
- 4.2c Children work co-operatively with one another, they are prepared to listen to each others views and feel confident to contribute their own views and opinions.
- 4.2d Children are generous in recognising and praising the efforts of others; in this they follow the example of their teachers who always seek to be positive and affirmative.
- 4.2e Children are generally keen to participate in assemblies and liturgies and take part in readings, mime and liturgical dance.

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 with half of the lessons being judged satisfactory.
- 5.1b The best lessons seen were well structured with clear learning objectives shared with the children at the start of the lesson and re-visited during the plenary session. This gave the children the opportunity to share their new knowledge and understanding and allow the teacher to assess the progress made by them. The pace of lessons was good and the content was delivered in an interesting way to motivate the children. Expectations were high. This demonstrated good practice, now needs to be shared to enable the quality of teaching to be consistently good throughout the school.
- 5.1c All teachers use the 'Here I Am' religious education programme and use the planning documentation provided by the Diocese. The best planning includes differentiated activities to match the abilities of all the children; it takes account of previous evaluations and the knowledge of children's needs based on assessments made. Where this good planning is put into practice, effective teaching takes place which challenges children and allows them to make

good progress. Currently no monitoring of planning or teaching takes place by the religious education co-ordinator. This now needs to become part of the role of the religious education co-ordinator to ensure that good practice is shared and all teachers have an understanding of what constitutes effective teaching in religious education.

- 5.1d Marking of children's work is inconsistent. Where marking is good, it affirms the children and indicates ways in which the children could improve their work. A consistent approach to marking by all staff could be an additional tool to develop good teaching and therefore enhance learning and attainment for the children.
- 5.1e Classroom management is generally good. Children are grouped in a variety of appropriate ways and adequate resources are on hand to enrich delivery of the curriculum. Teachers have high expectations of behaviour and calm, working atmospheres prevail in most classrooms.
- 5.1f Circle-time is used by all teachers. During the Inspection one Reception Class circle-time was observed which took place outside. This provided a very good opportunity for the children to reflect and remember what they had learnt in the topic. Sensitive guidance by the teacher encouraged all to share their feelings. Her encouragement and affirmation helped to build self-esteem and a respect for the views of others. It was also used as an opportunity for the classroom assistant to record assessments without intruding on the session. This demonstrated very good use of classroom assistants and is good practice.
- 5.1g Use of Scripture is evident in most lessons and in displays, liturgies and assemblies.
- 5.1h Multi-faith and multi-cultural education is evident in the school's displays, in children's work and in collections of photographs.

5.2 Religious Education Curriculum and Assessment

- 5.2a The religious education co-ordinator is committed, dedicated and hard working, her own deep faith underpins all she does. She has made a significant contribution to implementing the Action Plan drawn up in response to the last religious education inspection.
- 5.2b Religious education very evidently underlies all areas of school life. This is demonstrated in the School Development Plan and specific Religious Education Action Plan which celebrates and seeks to build on the Catholic Faith and Vision of the school community.
- 5.2c There is a good religious education policy in place which is clear and detailed. The document includes roles and responsibilities of the religious education co-ordinator and includes the phrase 'distribute planning sheets and monitor

delivery of the 'Here I Am' programme. It would be appropriate now to include details of arrangements for monitoring planning, teaching and learning and sampling of children's work.

- 5.2d There is an excellent display policy which states as an aim 'To raise awareness of our distinctive (Catholic) nature'. This is accomplished most successfully.
- 5.2e A Key Issue in the last religious education inspection was to make a commitment to developing a whole school assessment strategy. Such a policy has been developed and where it is adhered to provides a very good indication of progress made by children and provides sound evaluative information to inform future planning and to report to parents and receiving class teachers. There now needs to be monitoring to ensure consistency of practice throughout the school.

6. THE MANAGEMENT OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

6.1 Leadership and Management

- 6.1a The school is well led by a most committed, dedicated and hardworking headteacher. He has a clear vision for the school rooted in his own strong faith. He has had a strong influence on developing the very good spiritual, Catholic ethos of the school. He now needs to develop monitoring strategies along with the religious education co-ordinator, to ensure rigorous delivery of the religious education curriculum.
- 6.1b The religious education co-ordinator demonstrates her own deep faith through her work in this role. She has made a considerable contribution to developing religious education provision in the school since the last Inspection. The role of co-ordinator now needs to be developed to include regular monitoring of planning and teaching and learning and the scrutiny of children's work.
- 6.1c The chairman of the governors is a valued member of the school community who gives generously of his time and many talents to support the headteacher, staff, parents, children and governor colleagues. He and fellow governors maintain an overview of school effectiveness based on reports and data provided for them by the headteacher, staff and LEA. They contribute to the School Development Plan and many policies. This is good practice.
- 6.1d The priests of both parishes visit the school regularly and make a significant contribution to the spiritual and moral development of the children.
- 6.1e The headteacher places a high priority on continuous professional development and formation of staff. One in-service day each year is set aside for the staff to meet together to have input on and discuss religious education matters. These days always include elements of prayerful reflection. Last year the headteacher participated in the Sabbatical experience and his experiences during that time have influenced his spiritual leadership of the school in a most positive way.

6.2 Staffing, Accommodation and Resources

- 6.2a The staff at St Francis Xavier are hard working and dedicated. Relationships are very good which leads to effective teamwork. Staff are co-operative and supportive of each other. Parents praise the staff for the care and commitment they show towards the children and themselves.
- 6.2b Non teaching staff are hard-working and in some classes are used most effectively to support children and help to raise their levels of attainment and build their self confidence and self-esteem.
- 6.2c Non-teaching staff - administrative, ancillary, midday supervisors, caretaker and cleaning staff are all cheerful, hard-working and loyal. They feel valued and affirmed for the contribution they make to the school community and are justly proud of the school.
- 6.2d Recent extensions and refurbishment to the school building have greatly enhanced facilities and provided the children and adults with a high quality and up-lifting environment to work in.
- 6.2e The space around the school is limited by the proximity of houses on all sides, but very good use has been made of the space available to provide a mixture of marked hard playing surfaces and a variety of inventive seating areas under the shade of mature trees. There is an attractive play area for the Foundation Unit with a good selection of large equipment.
- 6.2f The high quality of displays around the school enhance the learning environment of the children and help to promote their spiritual development and celebrate their good work.
- 6.2g The school is well resourced to deliver the religious education curriculum and has recently purchased many multi-faith artefacts to assist in the delivery of that element of the curriculum. There is a comprehensive list of resources currently available and costed plans to expand the resource in the future.

MAIN FINDINGS

- 7.1 St Francis Xavier School has a succinct Vision Statement which proclaims the aim to 'Let God's love shine in our lives as we care and share and learn together'. This vision becomes a reality in the day to day life of the school and is a strong witness to the Gospel values which underpin the life of the school and the distinctive Catholic education it offers to its children.
- 7.2 The school is well led by a committed and dedicated headteacher who has a clear vision for the school and provides strong spiritual leadership rooted in his own deep faith. He now needs to introduce and monitor strategies to ensure rigorous delivery of the religious education curriculum.

- 7.3 The governors of St Francis Xavier School are very supportive and proactive and play a valuable part in the life of the school.
- 7.4 The chairman of the governing body is highly committed to the school and offers both effective professional and personal support to the headteacher, staff and fellow governors.
- 7.5 The priests of both parishes are frequent and welcome visitors to school and both contribute to the spiritual and moral development of the children.
- 7.6 There are very good links between the school and both parishes which the parish priests, headteacher, staff and governors are constantly seeking to strengthen.
- 7.7 Sacramental preparation is carried out in school with support from the parishes. Parents are involved through working with their children at home and in attending meetings with the priests; they speak appreciatively of the thorough and sensitive way their children are prepared and the partnership fostered between school, the parish and themselves.
- 7.8 The parents appreciate the ethos of loving care provided for their children which leads to very good behaviour and good spiritual and moral development demonstrating the lived reality of God's love and care. They also feel valued themselves and welcome the many invitations they receive to participate in the life of the school.
- 7.9 Parents speak highly of the dedication of the headteacher and staff and regard them as good role models for their children.
- 7.10 Relationships throughout the school are very good and this leads to the calm, purposeful and happy atmosphere and the high standards of behaviour by the children. This is a strength of the school.
- 7.11 The spiritual and moral development of the children is very good and this is a strength of the school.
- 7.12 Provision for cultural development is good.
- 7.13 Pastoral care and support offered to the children is very good and has been greatly enhanced by the introduction of a 'Rainbows' group.
- 7.14 Collective worship varies from satisfactory to very good. Where it is very good, stimulating opportunities for praise, celebration and thanksgiving are offered together with time for personal prayer and reflection. Care needs to be taken in planning assemblies and liturgies to ensure that the recommendations detailed in the very good Collective Worship policy are taken into account.

- 7.15 Of the eight lessons observed during inspection, the quality of teaching in four of the lessons was judged to be satisfactory, the others were good with one very good lesson. Monitoring of teaching and learning needs to take place regularly to ensure that good practice is shared and that all staff have a common understanding of what constitutes effective teaching and learning.
- 7.16 The quantity of written work produced by the children is unsatisfactory and there needs to be agreement by the staff on the amount of written work expected from each age group.
- 7.17 Standards of attainment and progress made by the children are inconsistent. Where the teaching is good or very good, children make good progress and achieve standards commensurate with their ability in other subjects. This is not the case in all classes. Monitoring of planning and teaching and learning, together with regular work-sampling needs to be undertaken to enable teachers to deliver high quality teaching and give all children the opportunity to make progress and reach standards commensurate with their ability.
- 7.18 Childrens' attitudes to learning are good.
- 7.19 There are now good procedures for assessment in place which need to be used consistently by all members of staff in order to impact on future planning.
- 7.20 Displays of religious education themes and topics throughout the school are of consistently high standard. This affirms the high priority given to religious education and is a strength of the school.
- 7.21 The religious education co-ordinator is dedicated and committed and her own strong faith underpins all she does. The role now needs to be extended to include the monitoring and evaluation of planning and teaching and learning together with regular work sampling.
- 7.22 All Key Issues from the last inspection have been addressed although assessment procedures need to be monitored to ensure consistency of practice throughout the school.
- 7.23 The school is well resourced to deliver the religious education curriculum and has a carefully costed plan to add to the resource in the future.

AREAS FOR FURTHER DEVELOPMENT

The governors and staff of St Francis Xavier School should now:

- 1 Celebrate and consolidate the very good spiritual and moral development of the children and the very good partnership which exists between the school, the parents and the parishes.

- 2 Maintain and extend the high quality of Collective Worship already demonstrated in school, ensure that all planning of Collective Worship takes into account the guidelines detailed in the excellent Collective Worship policy.
- 3 Develop the role of the religious education co-ordinator to include the monitoring and evaluation of planning, teaching and learning and the scrutiny of pupil's work samples.
- 4 Ensure that the good assessment procedures already in place are used consistently throughout the school and that all teachers have a shared understanding of what constitutes effective marking of pupil's work.
- 5 Ensure that staff come to an agreement about how much written work is appropriate and expected from each age group.

CONCLUSION

The inspector would like to place on record her personal thanks and appreciation for the kind co-operation received from the headteacher, staff, governors, priests, parents and children of St Francis Xavier School.

APPENDIX: EVIDENCE BASE

- The programme of inspection included attendance at a parent's meeting, a pre-inspection visit to the school, two full days inspection and an additional visit to observe a liturgy.
- Religious education lessons were observed in all classes including Nursery.
- The inspector attended assemblies for both Key Stages, a whole school assembly led by the deputy headteacher, a Key Stage two reflection led by the headteacher and a leavers Mass.
- Interviews were held with the headteacher, the two parish priests, the religious education co-ordinator and the chairman of governors.
- Discussions were held with children, parents, teaching and ancillary staff, classroom assistants, dinner ladies and the caretaker.
- A very comprehensive range of well presented documentation was provided by the headteacher and the religious education co-ordinator. This included all items on the Diocesan list and many other policies. The inspector was also provided with samples of children's work, assessment books, portfolios of work, teacher's plans, liturgy and assembly plans and photographs.

SUMMARY REPORT

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

- The spiritual and moral development of the children is very good and is a strength of the school.
- The children's behaviour is very good; the ethos of the school is supportive, affirming, co-operative and forgiving and develops the children's self-esteem which promotes good behaviour.
- Relationships throughout the school are very good.
- There are very good links between home, school and the parishes.
- Where teaching is good, children make good progress and achieve standards commensurate with their ability.
- Some collective worship in school is of a very high standard.

How the school has improved since the last inspection.

- All Key Issues have now been addressed although procedures in assessment need to be consistently implemented throughout the school.
- Extensive refurbishment and development of the school building and outdoor environment, has greatly improved facilities

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

- Parents highly value the spiritual and moral development of their children and feel that the headteacher and staff provide very good role models.
- Parents are happy with the standards their children achieve in religious education and feel well informed by the school.
- Parents appreciate the frequent invitations they receive to school both as visitors and when assisting in classrooms. They feel valued and respected by the school.
- Parents appreciate the caring Catholic ethos of the school and the support given to their children and themselves.
- Parents praise the way in which their children are encouraged to think of the needs of others and respect each other.

Areas for further development

- 1 Celebrate and consolidate the very good spiritual and moral development of the children and the very good partnership which exists between the school, the parents and the parishes.
- 2 Maintain and extend the high quality of Collective Worship already demonstrated in school, ensure that all planning of Collective Worship takes into account the guidelines detailed in the excellent Collective Worship policy.
- 3 Develop the role of the religious education co-ordinator to include the monitoring and evaluation of planning, teaching and learning and the scrutiny of pupil's work samples.
- 4 Ensure that the good assessment procedures already in place are used consistently throughout the school and that all teachers have a shared understanding of what constitutes effective marking of pupil's work.
- 5 Ensure that staff comes to an agreement about how much written work is appropriate and expected from each age group.