

Diocese of Hallam

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

St Bede's Catholic Primary School
Wortley Road
Rotherham
S61 1PD

Inspection Date: 4th and 7th October 2004
Diocesan Inspector: Mr Stephen Owen

The inspection of the denominational character of St Bede's 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 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 Guidelines for Section 23 Inspections in Catholic Schools issued by the National Board of Religious Inspectors in Catholic schools issued by the National Board of Religious Inspectors and Advisors Inspection Working Party in January 2004.

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 Bede's Catholic Primary School and help promote sound development for the future.

A copy of this report may be obtained from the governors of St Bede's Catholic Primary School, Wortley Road, Rotherham, S61 1PD 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 Bede's Catholic Primary School
Type	Primary School
Status	Voluntary Aided
Number on roll	303 (including 16 FTE in the Nursery)
Age range	3-11 years
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Chair of Governors	Mr Martin McDonagh
Headteacher	Mr John DiClemente
School Address	Wortley Road, Kimberworth, Rotherham S61 1PD
Telephone number	01709 740101
Dates of inspection	4 and 7 October 2004
Diocesan Inspector	Mr Stephen Owen

The 303 pupils are grouped as follows:

Foundation Stage:

Maintained Nursery	32 part-time FTE 16
Reception	40 full time

Total FTE 56

Year 1	34
Year 2	39
Year 3	40
Year 4	40
Year 5	40
Year 6	<u>38</u>
Total	303

1.1 Key characteristics of the school

1.1a St Bede's school originated in the 19th century and there have been many changes. The amalgamation of the infant and junior schools took place in 1982 and the present headteacher came into post in 2000. The school is bigger than average with 272 full-time pupils.

1.1b The school is situated on the north west outskirts of Rotherham in South Yorkshire. It draws its pupils from a wider catchment area, which includes pupils from the Catholic parishes of St Bede's and Forty Martyrs.

1.1c The socio-economic background of the pupils is varied. Fifty three per cent of the pupils are baptised Catholics and at 9.1% the proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is just below the national average.

- 1.1d The attainment of pupils on entry to the school is below the national average. Nearly all pupils have a white British heritage. There are very few pupils for whom English is an additional language.
- 1.1e There are 161 Catholic children in the school including full and part-time Foundation Stage pupils (53.1% of the school population).
- 1.1f There are 13 teachers in the school (FTE 12.5) and 10 are Catholic, including a recently appointed Religious Education co-ordinator and two newly qualified teachers.
- 1.1g The school has identified the following areas for school improvement planning in relation to Religious Education:
- To continue to develop links between home, school and parishes
 - Improve teacher knowledge and confidence
 - To deepen children's understanding of the Mass
 - To continue to develop prayer through class liturgies and daily prayer
 - To improve the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school
- 1.1h The school achieved the Basic Skills Quality Mark in 2004; two School Achievement Awards in 2000 and 2003; the Investors in People Award in 2003; and most recently the Active Mark Gold Award in 2004. The school is also involved in the Family Learning Coalfields Project, the Family Learning Better Reading Scheme and Excellence in Cities initiatives as part of the N.W. Rotherham EAZ.
- 1.1i The school was inspected by Her Majesty's School Inspectorate in May 2004 under Section 10 of the Schools Inspection Act.
- 1.1j Children in Reception class reach standards that match those expected for children of their age in all areas of learning. This represents good achievement in relation to prior attainment. The end of KS1 tests show that standards have improved over the past three years and the trend of attainment is above the national trend. At KS2 the proportion of pupils achieving the higher levels in mathematics and science was above the national average but in English was unusually below the average, compared to the previous three years. Boys and girls achieve equally well.

1.2 The overall quality of the school's Catholic life and its provision for Religious Education

- 1.2a St Bede's Catholic Primary School is a very good Catholic school where the Gospel values explicit in the Mission Statement are lived out in the day-to-day life of the school.
- 1.2b The warmth of welcome extended to all who visit the school is exemplary, and a genuine interest taken in helping all those who seek it, within the school community.

- 1.2c Children are taught in a supportive culture, and feel able to offer thoughts, ideas and suggestions freely.
- 1.2d There is a very strong culture of respect and affirmation in the school, amply borne out in the smiles and laughter of children and staff alike.
- 1.2e The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good indeed, and these pupils are fully integrated into the life of the school, and make good progress. The quality of support staff who help and facilitate these pupils' learning is exemplary, and is a credit to the school.
- 1.2f Class assemblies observed were of a very high standard. They were well prepared and well presented, including the elements of humour and respect. Children speak clearly and confidently. Parents are made welcome, and many attend. They appreciate the involvement.
- 1.2g Parish catechists carry out Sacramental preparation, but there appears to be a lack of consistency in this regard.
- 1.2h The school is extremely well led by the headteacher who has a clear and shared vision for the school, based on strong faith and a desire to provide an environment for the children, which will allow them to grow in God's love and reach their full potential. The headteacher is well supported by an able and dedicated deputy headteacher, a very good Religious Education co-ordinator and a staff who work together as an effective team. The governors of the school have a clear understanding of all aspects of the life of the school.

1.3 How the school's effectiveness has improved or changed since its previous inspection

All Key Issues (KI) for further development in the report of 1988 have been addressed.

- KI 1 The school has celebrated and consolidated the good practice previously noted and continued to enhance the spiritual and moral development of the children.
- KI 2 The school has put in place effective lines of communication, involving the parish churches in the process, and all parents are fully informed about Sacramental preparation.
- KI 3 The school has ensured the work on the Religious Education Curriculum Directory has been developed, and detailed and effective evaluation and assessment procedures are now in place.
- KI 4 Through the management of involvement, effectively facilitated by the headteacher, the governing body is now actively involved in all aspects of the life of the school, under the leadership of a strong chairman.

1.4 How the school is viewed by its pupils and parents

- 1.4a From informal discussions with children of all ages, and a meeting with the children who form the School Council it is clear that they enjoy coming to school. They all express the view that problems or difficulties of any kind are easily shared with all adults within the school, and they have great confidence in the support and help they get. The children speak with enthusiasm about Religious Education lessons and the liturgical celebrations and assemblies. Many speak of the way the staff help them prepare for such occasions and all speak of the friendliness of the staff and fellow pupils. They are obviously very proud of their school, and are not afraid to say so.
- 1.4b Eighty-three questionnaires were returned by parents, and this very large response is indicative of the excellent home-school partnership that is so evident and a great strength of the school. Parents overwhelmingly support the school and praise the warm, family atmosphere and excellent care and support the school gives to their children and themselves. They are mindful of and value the many opportunities the school provides for the spiritual and moral development of the children, and praise the very good behaviour of the children and the relationships shared by all who are part of the school community. They speak in glowing terms of its inclusive and affirming atmosphere and way of life. Parents are very well satisfied with the standards their children achieve in Religious Education and appreciate and value the many and varied invitations to visit the school, although they would appreciate more notice of these events. Parents enjoy sharing in all the religious activities and celebrations that take place.
- 1.4c Parents' views are also sought by the use of a school-generated questionnaire. The result of the findings are then included in the review process of the School Development Plan. This is very good practice and enhances the already strong partnership between parents and school.
- 1.4d The parents value the dedication and commitment of the headteacher and all who work within the school, and feel they provide excellent examples of living out their faith tradition.

1.5 The accuracy of the school's self-evaluation

The school has completed the Diocesan Self-Evaluation Document. This provides a tool for development by highlighting relevant areas needing action or development. The assessment is realistic but now needs to be re-visited to include issues identified in this report. These issues need to generate targets and objectives which should then be included in the School Improvement Plan.

2.1 Areas for further development

The governors and staff of St Bede's School should now address and include in its Post Inspection Action Plan the following:

- 2.1a Celebrate and consolidate the very good partnership between the school, the parents, the parishes and the wider community and the very good spiritual and moral development of the children.
- 2.1b Further develop the good work being carried out by the newly-appointed Religious Education co-ordinator by facilitating an effective schedule of monitoring and evaluating learning and teaching through lesson observations and an agreed whole school lesson planning proforma and marking procedures.
- 2.1c Ensure consistency of opportunity between the two parishes regarding children's sacramental preparation.
- 2.1d Ensure children have clear and manageable targets for improvement as part of consistent practices in the marking of children's work.

3 The Quality of Religious Education

3.1 Standards and Achievement in Religious Education

- 3.1a The progress made by pupils in Religious Education ranges from satisfactory to very good, and is in line with progress made in other areas of the curriculum.
- 3.1b Pupils with special educational needs make good progress, and are extremely well supported by able teaching assistants. Teachers plan activities that are appropriate to pupils' abilities and present tasks in interesting and varied ways. Pupils who find learning difficult benefit enormously from the shared planning between teacher and teaching assistant, ensuring all abilities are catered for in a "CAN-DO" and inclusive environment. The knowledge, enthusiasm and commitment of the support staff is exemplary, and a great strength of the school. The more able pupils are presented with challenging tasks that make them think and reflect on the subject/topic in hand.
- 3.1c The progress made by boys and girls is broadly equal.
- 3.1d All teachers' planning includes learning objectives from the 'Here I Am' Religious Education programme, and as mentioned earlier, all teaching assistants are fully aware of these objectives and support the children in their achievement of them, at an appropriate level.
- 3.1e The school places great emphasis on teaching the beliefs and values of the Catholic Faith to all the children, in ways appropriate to their age. Teachers do this very effectively, with the excellent work done by the support staff,

through the delivery of the 'Here I am' programme and through the everyday life of the school which is underpinned by Gospel values. The Mission Statement of the school is a lived and shared reality, encompassing and embracing all aspects of the school community. Children benefit from their experience of liturgy in a variety of ways, and come to know their value in the eyes of their Creator. Evidence of previous work, and discussion with children, show that they have a good knowledge and understanding of other world faiths.

- 3.1f Pupils are generally able to communicate their understanding of religious concepts very well. Most teachers demonstrate good questioning skills carefully differentiated to allow all children to be part of the learning process. All teachers observed were positive and encouraging in their comments about the children's efforts.
- 3.1g During the inspection, it was very pleasing to observe the variety of teaching/learning methods facilitated by the teaching and support staff. Drama, mime, speaking aloud, hot-seating and empathy were all used effectively as catalysts to improving learning and this varied approach gave children confidence and competence in dealing with their given tasks. The older children show very good speaking and listening skills when sharing ideas with their peers, and reflecting on these ideas in an orderly and mature way.

4 Teaching Religious Education

4.1 The quality of teaching in Religious Education in relation to its impact on pupils' learning

- 4.1a The quality of teaching in Religious Education lessons ranges from satisfactory to very good.
- 4.1b All teaching staff have a secure knowledge and understanding of the Catholic Faith, of Religious Education in terms of that faith tradition and of the 'Here I Am' programme. Staff meetings are regularly dedicated to Religious Education developmental issues within the school, and the newly appointed Co-ordinator attends sessions exploring topics at the Hallam Pastoral Centre.
- 4.1c Most teachers demonstrate good questioning skills in discussion sessions which challenge pupils to deepen their knowledge and understanding of the topic area being studied. Teachers, with the help of an excellent support staff, make very good provision for encouraging children to work independently and cooperatively and to produce the best work of which they are capable. Expectations in terms of quality work and standards of behaviour are explicit and challenging.
- 4.1d Teachers' planning is detailed and thorough, and ensures coverage of the Religious Education Curriculum. On some occasions, the balance of time between introductory questioning, development of working towards the objective, task and finally, plenary, needs some thought and reflection.

Learning objectives are explicit, but in some cases could be explored in a little more depth. Teachers build on work done previously to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding.

- 4.1e Teachers use a variety of methods appropriate to the needs of the children in helping them to achieve the learning objectives and efficient use is made of resources. Teaching assistants make a very good contribution in assisting children with additional needs.
- 4.1f The behaviour of the children is very good. Teachers demonstrate very good class management skills and the very good knowledge they have of pupils' personalities and abilities, allows them to present interesting tasks to ensure the motivation and cooperation of pupils in their care. Most lessons are conducted at a lively pace and independent learning is encouraged.
- 4.1g All classes allocate ten percent of teaching time to Religious Education, as required by the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales.
- 4.1h Teachers make great efforts to facilitate cross-curricular links in their planning of Religious Education lessons. Evidence of this is particularly strong in Literacy and ICT.
- 4.1i As previously stated, teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to the achievement of pupils. They enjoy very good relationships with the children, and in addition to supporting them in their learning, they contribute to developing the children's self-esteem and self-worth. They themselves are valued by the teaching staff and parents, and they bring an enthusiasm, commitment and devotion to their role which is of benefit to all.

4.2 How well pupils learn in Religious Education

- 4.2a In all lessons, teachers share learning objectives with the children at the start of each lesson so that children are quite clear about what they are going to learn.
- 4.2b All lessons are planned to ensure that children either acquire new knowledge and understanding, or consolidate and develop existing knowledge and understanding. These objectives are almost always met.
- 4.2c In all lessons observed teachers build upon prior knowledge of pupils by skilful and relevant questioning. The children show good recall of work previously done and are enthusiastic and eager to share this knowledge with staff and fellow pupils.
- 4.2d Pupils apply themselves well to the task in hand. Teachers are not over prescriptive and generally allow for the children to show creativity and independence. This is very good practice. The quality of presentation of written work ranges from satisfactory to very good and is commensurate with written work in other curriculum areas. Where teacher expectations are high and made clear, the presentation of work by the children is very good.

Marking is used to affirm good work and in some cases suggest ways the child can improve. This good practice noted in some classes in marking now needs to be shared and implemented throughout the school by ensuring effective marking by all teachers.

- 4.2e Children are generally eager to engage with tasks and complete activities. This is especially so where teachers set high standards of expectation and help children to a good pace of work by encouraging remarks, affirmation and modeling good examples of other pupils' work.
- 4.2f Almost all children show interest and enjoyment in Religious Education and are able to sustain good levels of concentration. In the best lessons, there is good pace and a variety of activities and teaching strategies which inspire and motivate the children to concentration and enthusiasm.
- 4.2g Children are given many opportunities to work collaboratively together in such ways as presenting dramas or mimes, discussing ideas, producing collaborative pieces of work, creating liturgies and sharing in prayer circles. Children are encouraged from the earliest age to respect each other's views and be confident to voice their own. The regular use of circle time and prayer circles present excellent opportunities for this development. Pupils are given many opportunities to work independently and creatively and are thus helped to develop their potential.

4.3 The quality of assessment of pupils' work in Religious Education

- 4.3a The development and promotion of more detailed assessment strategies was a Key Issue in the last Section 23 Inspection, and has been addressed very effectively. Teachers plan assessment opportunities into each 'Here I Am' topic. The assessment procedures for this school year are linked to the assessment tasks provided by the Diocese of Hallam and take place termly. Detailed plans are in place to further refine this process.
- 4.3b The school has a good marking policy, which sets out procedures for ensuring that marking is both affirmative and helps children to know how they can improve their work. Whilst many aspects of the Policy are being adhered to in Religious Education, further development in children's achievement would be enhanced if targets for improvement were more clearly identified.
- 4.3c Teachers mark written work in Religious Education, although for the majority, this amounts to affirmation and celebration of what the children have done. There now needs to be a consistent approach to marking, including affirmation but also target-setting for improved achievement.

5 Pupils' response to Religious Education

- 5a Pupils generally apply themselves productively and with interest to what they are doing, especially when they are presented with interesting and challenging tasks. They generally show enjoyment of Religious Education

and are able to sustain concentration in lessons. Teachers contribute to this by lively questioning and appropriate prompts.

- 5b The Gospel values which underpin all the school tries to achieve, place a great emphasis on developing and nurturing self-respect and respect for others as children of an all loving God. This is reflected in the very good relationships throughout the school. All staff are supportive and affirming of each other and act as excellent role models for the children. The children form respectful and purposeful relationships with each other, which lead to the creation of good learning environments.
- 5c All the adults in school work hard at helping the children to develop confidence and self-esteem. Children are frequently asked to perform tasks and are always thanked for doing so. Pupils are encouraged to praise classmates when they have done good work or behaved well. Pupils respond well to this praise and are generous in giving it.
- 5d Children's behaviour is generally good, they have a clear understanding of what is right and wrong, a good sense of justice and an understanding of what constitutes acceptable behaviour. When pupils' behaviour falls below acceptable levels, staff discuss issues with them and help them to understand how they can improve. There is an evident culture of forgiveness in school.

6 The provision for the curriculum in Religious Education

- 6a The planned curriculum fulfils the requirements of the Curriculum Directory.
- 6b The teaching time allocated to Religious Education fulfils the requirements of the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales.
- 6c The school has sufficient teaching and support staff to meet the demands of the Religious Education Curriculum. The school has a well planned programme for staff development and formation, and all staff are knowledgeable, confident and enthusiastic in teaching and promoting Religious Education.
- 6d All classrooms provide adequate accommodation for the delivery of a broad and balanced curriculum, and feature displays of pupils' work in Religious Education. All classrooms have a focus area for prayer and reflection, though some are more prominent than others. In many areas of the school, displays with an intrinsic moral or ethical bias are in evidence, and the quality of children's work in such displays is good. Specific religious displays follow the signs and symbols of the Church's liturgical year and visibly demonstrate the explicit and unique nature of the Catholic education offered by the school to its pupils.
- 6e The school is fully inclusive and within the limits of the admissions criteria, welcomes any child into the school whose needs they are able to address.

- 6f The school includes and respects the faith backgrounds of other Christian Churches. Currently the school has no pupils from other world faiths, but all the children are taught to understand, respect and celebrate diversity.

7 Leadership and Management

7.1 The quality of leadership provided for religious education

- 7.1a The headteacher, together with the deputy head and recently appointed curriculum co-ordinator, have a very clear vision for Religious Education within the school. They prove to be a very effective team, working to facilitate, promote and maintain high standards of work expected of the children.
- 7.1b The curriculum co-ordinator, appointed in September 2004, worked alongside the previous co-ordinator, who retired last year. This strategic approach and preparation ensured a smooth handing over of responsibility. It is pleasing to note that new ideas and developments regarding learning and teaching in Religious Education are being discussed by all concerned.
- 7.1c The Governing Body has a clear understanding of its role in promoting the mission of the school. The headteacher ensures that governors are consulted at every level of school development, and they in turn provide the support and challenge that is the hallmark of effective and rigorous communication and self-evaluation.

7.2 The effectiveness of management in Religious Education

- 7.2a The headteacher is a very thorough and effective manager, communicating well with all governors, staff, parents and children. This ensures that all are involved in the decision-making process; this management of involvement is a key strength of the school.
- 7.2b As mentioned earlier in the report, the Religious Education co-ordinator is also an effective communicator. Good systems are in place for the effective management of Religious Education.

8 THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

8.1 How well the governing body fulfils its role in relation to the school's religious foundation

- 8.1a As mentioned in the Section 10 Inspection Report, the governors are very active in the developmental life of the school. They take their responsibilities very seriously and meet regularly. Their effectiveness is enhanced by the quality and quantity of information provided by the headteacher, and they in turn play their part as a 'critical friend', offering challenge and support.

8.1b The governors have a very clear understanding of the explicit nature of Catholic education. All governors are totally committed to maintaining the very strong Catholic ethos of the school and play a very active role in shaping the vision and direction of the Catholic life of the school.

8.2 The quality of leadership of the headteacher and senior staff in leading the Catholic life of the school

8.2a The headteacher has a very clear vision for the direction of the Catholic life of the school, and this vision is explicitly shared and supported with and by all members of staff. It is this unity of purpose that makes for the strong leadership within the school, and also the living out of Gospel values, where all who are part of the school community are valued.

8.2b Effective, strategic and cohesive planning strategies ensure the Religious Education developmental life of the school is reviewed, challenged and improved.

8.2c There is a very clear and genuine commitment to evangelisation and catechesis, which extends beyond the children to their families and the wider community. Parents and parishioners are invited to all liturgical celebrations and they in turn express and experience a real appreciation in the development of their own faith family.

8.2d The headteacher places a very high priority on the standards achieved in Religious Education and is aided by the Deputy headteacher and Religious Education co-ordinator in this resolve.

8.2e The Mission Statement informs and directs all school documentation. The Gospel values explicitly stated in the Mission Statement are a lived-out and active reality in the day-to-day life of the school.

9 The quality of Collective Worship

9.1 The frequency and quality of prayer and Collective Worship

9.1a Collective worship fulfils statutory and diocesan requirements. Acts of Collective Worship are held each day either in Whole School assemblies, Key Stage assemblies, in class, or in Church.

9.1b Worship plays a central part in the life of the school and acts of worship and liturgical celebrations are carefully planned to ensure they reflect the Church's liturgical seasons and usually the current 'Here I am' Religious Education topic. Children are actively involved in the planning process, and their sense of enjoyment is evident.

9.1c Two whole-school assemblies were observed during inspection, one led by the headteacher and one facilitated by Class 6 (Y3 & Y4). Both assemblies contained elements of Collective Worship, where the children were given opportunities to reflect upon the Word, and gain insights into the ways God

wants us to live our lives. The class-led assembly was excellent. The whole atmosphere and ethos of the experience was friendly, informal, ordered and respectful. Children acted and spoke with confidence and reverence, and offered to fellow pupils, staff, parents and parishioners excellent opportunities to reflect on the current Religious Education topic. Through the commitment and devotion of all involved, there was a genuine sense of sharing the word of God.

9.2 The provision and quality of the Liturgical life of the school

- 9.2a The school provides regular opportunities for pupils and wider community to share liturgical celebrations. Class masses are celebrated throughout the year and the priests of both parishes endeavour to encourage the children on their journey of faith.
- 9.2b Sacramental preparation is facilitated by parish catechists in an already well established 'after-school' system. There needs to be more consistency and equality however, in the matter of such provision, ensuring all children receive the opportunity for effective instruction.
- 9.2c The school plans liturgical celebrations carefully and both parish priests share this responsibility.
- 9.2d The children respond well to liturgical celebrations. They play an active role, sing with enthusiasm and say formal prayers confidently and respectfully. Children often contribute their own personal prayers to celebrations.

10 The Spiritual and Moral Development of the Pupils

10.1 Spiritual Development

- 10.1a The spiritual development of the children is much in evidence, and permeates all aspects of their lives. Planned activities in the 'Here I am' programme, and a broad, balanced and differentiated curriculum, ensure a wide variety of experience, from which they draw and develop. These experiences are greatly enhanced by the carefully planned visits and visitors the children enjoy and benefit from.
- 10.1b Thorough planning and delivery of the 'Here I Am' programme, allows the children many opportunities to reflect on their own experiences, attitudes and values in the light of Scripture knowledge and the teaching of the Church. An excellent example of this was a Book of Psalms written by children in Year Three. These psalms were both poetic and resonant with the spiritual growth and development of all the children in the school.
- 10.1c There is a very strong and pervading culture in the school of recognition, affirmation and reward. Not only does this promote the development of self-esteem, self-respect and respect for others, but breaks down barriers.

- 10.1d During their time in school, the children develop an awareness of how religious beliefs impact on people's lives and behaviour. They develop the ability to explain and interpret people's actions and motives based upon religious beliefs.
- 10.1e The prayer-life of the school is strong. This is promoted by formal prayers being taught, appropriate to each age group and children being encouraged to say and write their own prayers. The children say prayers confidently and reverently and each classroom has an area for prayer, though some are more focal than others. Prayer boxes are offered at weekly assemblies and discussion with the children revealed the genuine importance attached to this idea. Several children, of varying ages and abilities, commented on how the writing of these prayers helped them to deal with problems and issues on a number of levels.
- 10.1f The school's Policy Statement for the promotion of Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development which as reviewed in September 2003 is a clear and comprehensive document. The explicitness of intent is commendable, and caters for all aspects and all members of the school community.

10.2 Moral Development

- 10.2a The school has very good policy for behaviour which states clearly and in detail what is expected of the children and what procedures are taken to address unacceptable behaviour. The policy is based on the Mission Statement of promoting Gospel values and providing a learning environment in which all pupils feel valued, safe and secure. Parents are aware of this policy and work with the school to ensure its success. Parents speak highly of the general good behaviour of the children.
- 10.2b The behaviour policy speaks of giving responsibility to the children; a School Council has recently been established which seeks to give responsibility to the children for many things such as suggesting ways of improving the quality of the school environment and dealing with certain types of behaviour. Members of the Council represent their classmates and have so far identified several issues they would like to address. They are given support and encouragement by the Deputy Head and are enthusiastic about their new role.
- 10.2c In observing and speaking to the children it is obvious that they generally have a good understanding of what is right and wrong and a sense of fairness and justice. They generally treat each other and adults with courtesy, consideration and respect and try to live out the Gospel values so well promoted by the school.
- 10.2d The school does not currently have a specific policy for moral development but this is incorporated into the new PHSE policy and the Drugs and Sex Education policy.

10.2e The children are encouraged to and give very generously to many charities including, The Good Shepherd Collection, Mission Together, CAFOD and other charities which have particular links with the school. This charitable giving helps the children to understand and engage with the wider world beyond their own community.

SUMMARY REPORT

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

- ◆ Standards in Religious Education attained by the children range from satisfactory to very good and are commensurate with their attainment in other curriculum areas.
- ◆ Teaching ranges from satisfactory to very good.
- ◆ Behaviour is generally good and the children have good attitudes to learning.
- ◆ The spiritual and moral development of the children is very good and this is a strength of the school.
- ◆ The school is very well led by the headteacher who is effectively supported by the staff and governors.
- ◆ Relationships throughout the school are very good which leads to a warm, caring, supportive environment where the aims of the Mission Statement are able to be lived out.

How the school has improved since the last inspection

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

- 1) Celebrate and consolidate the very good partnership between the school, the parents, the parishes and the wider community and the very good spiritual and moral development of the children.
- 2) Further develop the good work being carried out by the newly-appointed Religious Education co-ordinator by facilitating an effective schedule of monitoring and evaluating learning and teaching through lesson observations and an agreed whole school lesson planning proforma.
- 3) Ensure consistency of opportunity between the two parishes regarding children's sacramental preparation.
- 4) Ensure children have clear and manageable targets for improvement as part of consistent practices in the marking of children's work.

How 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 for their children.
- ◆ Parents are well satisfied with the good standards their children achieve in Religious Education.
- ◆ Parents praise the caring Catholic ethos of the school and they are grateful for the way in which the staff treat each of the children as individuals and work hard to develop the potential of each.
- ◆ Parents value their frequent invitations to Masses and celebrations although they would appreciate more invitations to attend school assemblies and receive more notice of all these events.
- ◆ Parents value the very good partnership fostered by the school between themselves, the parishes and the wider community.
- ◆ Parents are very satisfied with the arrangements for Sacramental Preparation.

Areas for further development

The governors and staff of St Bede's School should now address and include in its Post Inspection Action Plan the following:

- ◆ Celebrate and consolidate the very good partnership between the school, the parents, the parishes and the wider community and the very good spiritual and moral development of the children.
- ◆ Further develop the good work being carried out by the newly-appointed Religious Education co-ordinator by facilitating an effective schedule of monitoring and evaluating learning and teaching through lesson observations and an agreed whole school lesson planning proforma and marking procedures.
- ◆ Ensure consistency of opportunity between the two parishes regarding children's sacramental preparation.
- ◆ Ensure children have clear and manageable targets for improvement as part of consistent practices in the marking of children's work.

CONCLUSION

The inspector wishes to place on record his personal thanks and appreciation for the kind cooperation received from the headteacher, staff, governors, parish priest, parents and children at St. Bede's School.

EVIDENCE BASE

- ◆ The programme of inspection consisted of one pre-inspection visit and two full days of inspection, including an after-school meeting with parents.
- ◆ Religious Education lessons were observed in all classes.
- ◆ The inspector attended a Whole School assembly led by the headteacher and a second Whole School assembly facilitated by a Key Stage Two class.
- ◆ Interviews were held with the headteacher, the parish priest of St Bede's, representation of the governing body and the Religious Education co-ordinator.
- ◆ Discussions were held with members of the School Council, other children, parents, and representation of all aspects of staff.
- ◆ A detailed, systematic and comprehensive range of well presented and well organised documentation was provided by the headteacher. This included all items on the Diocesan list, and many other policies. Samples of children's work, assessment books, portfolios of moderated work and photographs of celebrations, liturgies and special events in the school were also provided, giving a complete and pleasing picture of the faith shared by all.