

Diocese of Hallam

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

St Dominic's Catholic Primary School
Carlton Road
Barnsley
S71 2BE

Inspection Date: 23rd to 25th February 2004
Diocesan Inspector: Jarlath Burke

This inspection of the denominational character of St Dominic'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 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 Guidelines for Section 23 Inspections in Catholic Schools issued by the National Board of Religious Inspectors and Advisors in January 2004.

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

A copy of this report may be obtained from the Governors of St Dominic's Catholic Primary School, Carlton Road, Barnsley S71 2BE 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 Dominic's Catholic Primary.
Type.	Nursery, Infant and Junior.
Status.	Voluntary Aided.
Number on Roll.	207 plus 50 part-time Nursery.
Age range.	3-11 years.
Gender of pupils.	Mixed.
Chairperson of Governors.	Mrs A Holt.
Headteacher.	Mrs F Nelis.
Address of school.	Carlton Road, Barnsley. S71 2BE.
Telephone number.	01226 282085.
Fax number.	01226 285287.
Dates of Inspection.	23 rd , 24 th , 25 th , February 2004.

The 257 pupils are organised as follows.

Nursery.	50 part-time. (25 am plus 25 pm)
Reception.	29
Year 1 (Class 1).	28
Year 2 (Class 2).	29
Year 3 (Class 3).	28
Year 4 (Class 4).	32
Year 5 (Class 5).	28
Year 6 (Class 6).	33

1. Key characteristics of the school.

- 1.1 St Dominic's Catholic Primary School was opened in 1963 to serve the parish of the Blessed Sacrament at Athersley. The school now also serves St Mary Magdalene's at Cudworth, St Teresa's and St Joseph's at Darton and Royston and St Paul's parish at Grimethorpe. This broad catchment area has a wide socio-economic mix with the majority of households in areas of deprivation and need. Twenty three pupils are eligible for free school meals (11%). School pupil ethnicity is 100% British. Baseline assessment of Reception children shows attainment to be broadly in line with national results.
- 1.2 There are one hundred and seven baptised Catholic pupils on roll (42%). Forty baptised pupils live in the Athersley parish, twenty eight in Darton / Royston, twenty eight in Cudworth and eleven come from other surrounding areas. Of the remaining pupils on roll, ninety eight are Church of England, fourteen are Methodist, two are Greek Orthodox, one is Bethel and the remaining thirty five are unaffiliated.
- 1.3 Of the nine full-time teachers, five are Catholic (56%). On return to school of a presently absent teacher the percentage of Catholic teachers will be (67%). The school has two Nursery nurses, nine teaching assistants, nine supervisory assistants, two administrative/ clerical assistants, two cleaners and a caretaker.

- 1.4 Attainment at Key Stage 1 is slightly below average. Attainment at Key Stage 2 is also slightly below average but with an upward trend, since the year 2002, in core subject areas.
- 1.5 The School Improvement Plan prioritises curriculum Religious Education development. Included are community and parish-based activities such as raising awareness of community needs and improving the 'Rainbows' programme for pupils who have suffered bereavement or family upheaval. Curriculum and community work are considered necessary 'path ways of spirituality, prayer and celebration'.
- 1.2 The overall quality of the school's Catholic life and its provision for Religious Education.**
- 1.2a The quality of the Catholic life of St Dominic's School and its provision for Religious Education is very good. The school's mission guides the daily life of the school, and is reflected in its Gospel inspired values.
- 1.2b The school is very well led by a dedicated, committed headteacher supported by a hardworking staff. The headteacher's vision for the school is clear and based on her faith and drive for excellence.
- 1.2c St Dominic's School has a strongly supportive and challenging Board of Governors.
- 1.2d The School Improvement Plan outlines several targets for improving Religious Education and in the future will need to include recently generated targets, outlined in the Diocesan Self Evaluation Form, as well as the outcomes of this Section 23 report.
- 1.2e Parish-home-school links are very good and developing. Pupils are increasingly involved in community activities. The school is regularly visited and well supported by the parish priests and sister.
- 1.2f Sacramental preparations are carried out in the relevant parishes with the assistance of parish catechists supported by school staff. This is good practice.
- 1.2g Relationships amongst staff, pupils and staff, staff and parents are very good. Parents feel very welcome in the supportive environment of the school.
- 1.2h Provision for pupils with Special Educational Needs is very good. The experience of the Special Needs support assistants enhances the provision.
- 1.2i Collective Worship fulfils statutory and Diocesan requirements and is a strength of the school. There is a clearly defined policy for Collective Worship and further developments are planned.
- 1.2j The spiritual and moral development of the pupils is very good. Policies for spiritual and moral development now need to be created.
- 1.2k The teaching of Religious Education at Key Stage 1 ranges from good to very good. Teaching at Key Stage 2 is satisfactory. At Key Stage 2, tasks need to be more differentiated and objectives made more challenging. The topic evaluative processes need to address the

extent to which the objectives have been met. Monitoring of teaching and work standards need to be more challenging. There is a good assessment process in place.

- 1.2l Standards of work range from satisfactory to good throughout the school. The amount of recorded work needs to be increased and to improve especially for Key Stage 2 pupils. Better quality of work is needed to include challenging levels of expectation and presentation.
- 1.2m Pupil attitudes to learning are good. Pupils enjoy Religious Education and have a good knowledge and understanding of Scripture.
- 1.2n At the time of the Inspection the Religious Education Co-ordinator was on leave. Significant strides have been made in profiling and promoting Religious Education within the school but on the return of the Co-ordinator her role will need to be re-established to include setting targets for inclusion in the School Improvement Plan; the Diocesan Self Evaluation Form; this report; and her responsibilities as SENCO and as a member of the Senior Management Team.
- 1.2o Religious Education display is generally good throughout the school. However the main hall needs to be a focus for religious and liturgical themes. Displays need to include more pupil-produced work.
- 1.2p In spite of extenuating circumstances necessitating recent changes and internal movement of teaching staff, the school enjoys a good staff / pupil ratio. Two staff are currently on leave and there are two newly-qualified staff within the teaching team. Accommodation is satisfactory but the Key Stage 2 classrooms are small. Resources for Religious Education are good.
- 1.2q There is not much evidence of multi-faith and multi-cultural education.
- 1.2r Parents see spiritual and moral development, Collective Worship and the Catholic, Christian ethos of the school as strengths. Pupils enjoy Religious Education and their behaviour in school is very good.

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

All Key Issues (KI) for further development, identified in the previous Inspection report in 1998, have been addressed.

- KI 1 School staff, parents and governors celebrate and consolidate previous good practice by working together as a team in the delivery of the 'Here I Am' Religious Education programme, planning meaningful liturgies, Masses and assemblies and building up religious resources.
- KI 2 Monitoring of teaching, planning and work takes place but needs to demand higher standards.

- KI 3 Assessment procedures have improved. Pupils now have individual assessment sheets. There is an assessment portfolio in place. Work is levelled using the Religious Education level descriptors.
- KI 4 Religious and clergy are involved in the life of the school. Regular meetings take place between the Senior Management Team, clergy and religious. The parish priest visits a different class each Wednesday morning and staff members are assisted by clergy and religious in the preparation of liturgies and Masses.
- KI 5 The Eucharist is central to the life of the school. Mass is offered twice a term in school and some pupils help to plan a Mass in each of the parishes during the year. Pupils also attend a parish Mass at the beginning and end of each year in the Blessed Sacrament church. Staff, pupils, parents and catechists assist with parish-based Sacramental preparations. This is now very good practice.
- KI 6 The content of the Religious Education curriculum meets the Religious Education Curriculum Directory requirements.

1.4 How the school is viewed by its pupils and parents.

- 1.4a Pupils at St Dominic's enjoy coming to school. They appreciate their participation in the Prefect Buddy scheme where the older pupils care for the younger ones and reward systems that acknowledge achievement and good behaviour. Over one hundred pupils participate in after-school activities. Pupils generously offer their talents to give to the needy at home and in Third World countries. All pupils are happy in a well ordered, secure environment provided by the school.
- 1.4b Twenty two parents attended the Pre-inspection Meeting. Seventy five parent questionnaires were returned representing one hundred and fifteen pupils. Parents strongly support the school. They appreciate commitments to building a caring, secure school environment with a strong Catholic Christian ethos. They consider pupil behaviour, spiritual and moral development, liturgical celebrations and acts of Collective Worship to be school strengths. A good number of parent volunteers work in school and some are involved in 'Sure Start' and 'Right Start' programmes building home school links for pre-school and Foundation stage pupils. Parents find the headteacher very approachable and feel they are listened to. Parents appreciate the school's communal involvements, links with Barnsley Football Club, Barnsley Hospice and the local police.

1.5 The accuracy of the school's self evaluation.

The schools' self evaluation is contained in the Diocesan Self Evaluation Form and gives a realistic assessment of existing standards, achievements and needed improvements. It will need revision in light of this report and in conjunction with a future School Improvement Plan.

2.1 Areas for further development.

Governors and staff should now address the following issues in their post - inspection plans:

- 1 Celebrate and consolidate Religious Education improvements since the previous Inspection, the caring Catholic, Christian ethos of the school and good, developing links with the community.
- 2 Consider and address the matter of a declining baptised Catholic pupil population in school.
- 3 Improve standards in the teaching of the Religious Education curriculum at Key Stage 2 and standards of written religious work throughout the school.
- 4 Build on existing good work of profiling and promoting Religious Education by re-establishing the role of the Religious Education Co-ordinator on her return to work.
- 5 Develop multi-faith and multi-cultural education in relation to Religious Education.
- 6 Promote high-quality religious display throughout the school, especially in the main hall.

2.2 The following matters should also be considered as development areas for the school:

- 2.2a Create policies for spiritual and moral development. (10.1d, 10.2e.)
- 2.2b Develop areas for quiet prayer inside and outside school. (9.1d.)
- 2.2c Actively involve all teaching assistants in curriculum Religious Education. (4.1f, 3.1e.)
- 2.2d Improve Religious Education / Literacy links. (3.1h.)
- 2.2e Improve links between ICT and Religious Education. (4.1d.)

3 The quality of Religious Education.

3.1 Standards and achievements in Religious Education.

- 3.1a Religious Education standards and achievements are broadly the same as in other subjects.
- 3.1b Pupil progress ranges from satisfactory to very good in Religious Education and in relation to standards set by the National Board of Inspectors and Advisers.
- 3.1c Pupils have particular strengths in what makes occasions such as Christmas and Easter special, scriptural knowledge, behaviour, sacramental, liturgical and prayer involvement and their spiritual and moral development.

- 3.1d There is little evidence of multi-faith, multi-cultural education. The 'Here I Am' World Faith Programme for the Autumn Term 2003 was not followed.
- 3.1e There are twenty three pupils on the Special Education Needs register, nine with statements of need. Pupils are very well catered for and make good progress through an extensive well-resourced teaching programme, help from experienced non-teaching assistants and friendly liaison with outside agencies. Some assistants are more actively involved in lesson objectives and activities, and are instrumental in the achievement of desired outcomes.
- 3.1f Progress made by boys and girls in Religious Education is broadly the same.
- 3.1g The 'Here I Am' planning sheets are used extensively. Greater thought needs to be given to more challenging lesson objectives and activities. Lesson and topic evaluative processes need to take account of the extent to which objectives have been met.
- 3.1h Teachers adopt good questioning styles and pupils enjoy the freedom to express their views, this they do in an articulate way. More activity time is needed to enable pupils to improve the quality and quantity of their work and staff need to develop strategies for improving links with literacy.

4 Teaching and learning in 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 ranges from satisfactory to very good.
- 4.1b Four of the nine teaching staff are not Catholic but all show enthusiasm for teaching Religious Education. Some staff are insecure in their knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith as evident from responses to pupil questions. Two staff hold NQT status. One teacher is in her second year of teaching and another teacher takes two separate classes for Religious Education. Staff are supportive of each other and they have regular meetings and discussions about Religious Education. Priests and religious meet regularly with staff for discussions about celebrations and school life. Religious Education targets are part of Performance Management in school.
- 4.1c Teaching staff use a variety of teaching methods to include visual, symbolic and dramatic stimuli but mainly employ a question-and-answer technique. Pupil response patterns are good, often incorporating personal experience. Activities need to allow more time for interactive exploration, explanation and resolution of outcomes. Pupils gain good knowledge from scriptural study, prayer, meditation and circle time. The Religious Education curriculum has a clear policy and aims.
- 4.1d Teaching time allocation fulfils statutory requirements. Excellent use is made of visual and symbolic resources especially for liturgies, Collective Worship and assemblies. Pupils were not observed employing ICT skills in their Religious Education work.
- 4.1e Pupil behaviour is very good. Parents acknowledge good behaviour. In school pupils are carefully listened to and questions are sensitively answered. Some pupils have physical and learning difficulties, and staff work with them in a supportive and caring way.

4.1f Teaching assistants need to be better informed on lesson objectives and some need to be more actively involved in subsequent activities.

4.2 How well pupils learn in Religious Education.

4.2a Learning objectives are set out at the beginning of each lesson on either the whiteboard or through explanation. Often both strategies are used.

4.2b Lessons are planned from the many outlined activities in the programme of study. Pupil knowledge is reinforced by teachers revisiting and recalling previous work done and particular lesson experiences.

4.2c Pupils spoken with say how much they enjoy Religious Education. They generally respond with enthusiasm to prescribed tasks, which in some cases need to be more challenging to extend learning opportunities, especially of the higher achievers.

4.2d Pupils concentrate well, showing interest in working independently and collaboratively. However, pupils need to be given appropriate activity time to assist them in producing work of better quality and quantity. Lesson introductions need to be shorter and more focused and the plenary periods longer and more explanatory.

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

4.3a Assessment was a key issue at the previous Inspection. The school now adopts a whole school approach using the Diocesan Assessment Recording and Reporting material and Level Descriptors. There is an assessment portfolio of work. Staff work together to level work appropriately. This is good practice.

4.3b Parents and guardians receive an annual report detailing Religious Education progress. Parents come to school to discuss their children's progress towards the end of the Summer term. Frequent regular meetings take place between staff and pupils of the Foundation stage, to discuss progress and child welfare.

4.3c Marking of Religious Education work is comprehensive and affirmative. In some isolated instances pupils do not respond to requests to finish or improve pieces of work.

5 Pupils' response to Religious Education.

5.a Pupils apply themselves productively, with interest and enjoyment, to the Religious Education curriculum. Pupils respond affirmatively to sympathetic teacher questioning.

5.b Pupils and staff work hard to uphold the Mission Statement principle 'Love one another as I have loved you'. Staff are exemplary role models. Relationships in the school community are very good.

5.c Staff and Governors speak positively and encouragingly about pupils enabling them to develop confidence and self-esteem.

5.d Behaviour is very good. The school policy outlines clear guidelines and parameters of behaviour. Advice from staff is firm, explanatory and purposeful.

6 The provision for the curriculum in Religious Education.

6.a The Religious Education curriculum fulfils Curriculum Directory requirements.

6.b Teaching time given to Religious Education fulfils requirements of the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales.

6.c Staff numbers, as outlined in the Introduction, enable good provision and delivery of curriculum Religious Education. The school has a relatively young staff with two NQT's and a teacher in her second year of teaching. The Religious Education Co-ordinator is currently on leave. Through staff mutual support and with professional development criteria in place, a clearly defined Religious Education curriculum is well provided for.

6.d Some accommodation is good and generally greatly improved since the previous Inspection. The entrance hall, library area and office have been remodelled. The heating system is improved. An ICT suite for whole class teaching has been established. A redecoration programme is in place. An outside terrapin classroom has been removed. There is a current programme of repair to two thirds of the roof area. There is a newly completed toilet for disabled pupils. However some floor tiles are badly worn and the Key Stage 2 classrooms are too small to accommodate comfortably the numbers of pupils working in them.

6.e Recently acquired resources enrich the Religious Education curriculum. The Religious Education Co-ordinator audits resources and commits appropriate expenditure to the Religious Education curriculum.

6.f St Dominic's School is fully inclusive. The Admissions Policy welcomes all admissible pupils into school.

6.g Eighty seven percent of the pupils in school are Christian. Thirteen percent have non-affiliated or non-denominational status. A multi-faith / multi-cultural programme needs to be developed and pursued to enhance pupil understanding and appreciation of human, cultural and faith diversities.

7 Leadership and management in Religious Education.

7.1 The quality of leadership provided for Religious Education.

7.1a The Governing Body, headteacher and Senior Management Team have a clear vision for Religious Education and the promotion of high standards for St Dominic's School.

7.1b The headteacher's role in promoting Religious Education is knowledgeable and innovative. Her preparation for and presentation of liturgies and acts of Collective Worship is excellent.

7.1c At the time of the Inspection the Religious Education Co-ordinator was on leave. She has made significant strides in profiling, promoting and prioritising Religious Education. Planning is comprehensive. Work is scrutinised and monitored. In the Summer Term 2003 four half days were set aside for lesson observation, with feedback to teachers. However the

role of the Co-ordinator will need to be re-established on her return to work, to include setting targets for inclusion in the School Improvement Plan and the Diocesan Self Evaluation Form, taking note of this report and her responsibilities as SENCO and as a member of the Senior Management Team.

7.2 The effectiveness of management in Religious Education.

- 7.2a The School Improvement Plan highlights areas for development, persons responsible, actions needed and success criteria for Religious Education and the community. Areas for development include: liturgical, sacramental, eucharistic celebrations; parish and school events; the “Rainbows” programme for pupils with family loss or bereavement; shared in-service training with other Catholic schools in the area and improved resources. Each area is addressed and effectively managed.
- 7.2b The Religious Education Co-ordinator has audited existing resources, identified needs and prepared and expedited an appropriate budget. Recently acquired resources such as Bibles for Key Stage 2 and various artefacts, improve curriculum delivery.
- 7.2c Whole-school curriculum planning is comprehensive and ensures a good progression of knowledge and skills. More attention needs to be given to the acquisition of understanding through consistent, challenging lesson objectives and evaluative processes.
- 7.2d The school recently completed the Diocesan Self Evaluation Form and that, together with this report, should provide the necessary criteria for a future School Improvement Plan.
- 7.2e Performance Management is seen as an integral part of the Catholic life of the school and community and the professional development of staff. Religious Education targets form part of the Performance Management programme. Target realisation positively impacts on staff personal and professional development, as well as the lives of the pupils.

THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

8. The impact of the school’s leadership and management on 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 Governors of the school clearly understand what is distinctively Catholic about the school. Governors encourage strong communal partnerships as outlined in the School Vision and Mission Statements and the School Prospectus, and these aims are lived out in their active involvement with school life. Governors and associate governors are involved in the administrative and sacramental life of the school, visit school regularly and observe the pupils at their work.
- 8.1b The Governing Body promotes Religious Education curriculum developments. It receives regular reports on Religious Education developments; it oversees and authorises policies, including Religious Education, Sex and Relationships, Behaviour, Pastoral Care, PHSE, SEN and Performance Management. It also monitors non-discriminatory codes of practice,

Health and Safety regulations, statutory assessment programmes and complaints procedures. Governors addressed all the issues of the previous Religious Education Inspection.

8.1c The newly constituted governing body has an experienced, supportive Chairman who has a good working relationship with staff, pupils and parents; she is aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses and ensures that governors meet regularly in sub-committees and as a full board.

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 clear, committed, Catholic vision for the school based on her faith and drive for excellence. Governors, staff and parents acknowledge her purposeful drive in curricular improvements already made; parish and community developments outlined in the School Improvement Plan; the high priority given to Religious Education; and the active participation she engenders in school and community members.

8.2b School plans include strong elements of catechesis and evangelisation. Committed staff use the 'Here I Am' programme assiduously nurturing the pupils' Christian faiths and proclaiming Gospel values. The Eucharist is the centre of parish / school celebrations where pupils help to plan Masses in school and in each of the parishes. The school has a carefully planned liturgical calendar. Parish priests and religious visit school regularly and are actively involved in the sacramental life of the school and parish with staff support. The parish priest holds three penitential services annually in school.

8.2c Governors, headteacher and Senior Management staff are committed to running an equitable, inclusive school where each individual matters.

8.2d The headteacher, a good role model, is strongly supported and appreciated by parents for her approachability, her respect for the pupils, her listening skills and the good example she sets.

8.3. The effectiveness of management.

8.3a The Diocesan Self Evaluation Form outlines a rigorous, realistic assessment of the Catholic life of the school and the Religious Education programme.

8.3b Extenuating circumstances, outside school control, have resulted in many recent changes and internal movements of staff. Notwithstanding this, support for staff and the delivery of the Religious Education curriculum are effectively managed.

8.3c Pupils are happy in school, listened to and treated fairly.

8.3d There is a comprehensive range of policies relating to Religious Education, curriculum delivery, teaching and learning.

8.3e Resources are good. A good auditing and expediting system exists.

8.3f Structures, systems and organised plans are in place for effective personnel and curriculum management. The headteacher is proud of the number of non-teaching staff, their experience and training.

9 The quality of Collective Worship.

9.1 The frequency and quality of prayer and Collective Worship.

- 9.1a Collective Worship fulfils Diocesan and statutory requirements. There are daily acts of Collective Worship. Priests, religious and staff regularly review arrangements for worship.
- 9.1b There is an inclusive Collective Worship Policy with clear aims.
- 9.1c During the Inspection an excellent whole-school act of Collective Worship was observed. Worship is extremely well planned, it is visually, symbolically and spiritually stimulating, with time for scriptural, prayerful reflection and praise. Movement and drama is sometimes used, with appropriate music, to enhance spirituality.
- 9.1d Prayer is central to the life of the school. School staff provide meaningful opportunities for pupils to pray traditionally and experientially at various times of the day, during Masses, assemblies and liturgies. It is planned to develop quiet areas for prayer inside and outside school. Each classroom has a focal prayer-table area with visual prayer stimuli. Prayer groups are held with children at different times of the year for example, in October and May pupils say the Rosary. Where families are experiencing hardship through illness, mention is made on the school newsletter offering community concern with a prayer. There are prayer displays around school.

9.2 The provision and quality of the liturgical life of the school.

- 9.2a During the Inspection an excellent Ash Wednesday liturgical celebration took place for Foundation and Key Stage 1 pupils. The parish priest led a simultaneous Ash Wednesday celebration for the Key Stage 2 pupils. Pupils respond with reverence, they pray and sing enthusiastically.
- 9.2b The Eucharist is the central liturgical element of school life. Mass is celebrated in school twice a term and is also celebrated in the Blessed Sacrament church at Athersley at the beginning and end of the year. Priests, religious, staff and pupils work together to plan, prepare and make liturgical celebrations, prayerful, meaningful experiences. Some pupils help to plan a Mass in each parish during the school year.
- 9.2c Preparation takes place in the parishes, for the sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Communion, with the assistance of parish catechists. When the pupils receive these sacraments, the community celebrates.
- 9.2d Since the previous Inspection, priests, religious, school staff, parents and catechists have worked together to plan and enhance liturgical celebrations. The parish priest visits the classrooms each Wednesday morning to talk with the children and holds a penitential service in school three times a year. Pupils and parents appreciate the efforts being made to provide high quality liturgical celebrations.

10 The spiritual and moral development of the pupils.

10.1 Spiritual Development.

- 10.1a The pupils at St Dominic's School gain spiritual insight into their own personal existence from exploration of the 'Here I am' programme of study activities and the broader curriculum. Pupils learn to identify with the spiritual lives of Jesus, the Saints, people around them and each other. The school recognises that one of the aims of Religious Education is to 'provide knowledge to stimulate and encourage spiritual development'.
- 10.1b By exploration of and participation in the curriculum pupils develop Gospel values, attitudes and beliefs, leading to greater empathy and respect for others' feelings and emotions and a growing awareness of something beyond the material life. This became evident to Year 6 pupils during a lesson exploration of St Matthew's Gospel when they understood the spiritual resistance of Jesus to temptation and why he made the decisions he did. They could also relate to situations when they were faced with choices and the consequences of their actions.
- 10.1c By their experience of worship, liturgical celebration, prayer and their sacramental life pupils appreciate God's presence in the world and in each other.
- 10.1d St Dominic's School does not currently have a policy on spiritual development and will need to include this in the next School Improvement Plan.

10.2 Moral development.

- 10.2a The principles for moral behaviour are an integral part of the 'Here I Am' Religious Education programme of the school. All pupils of the school are currently on a journey of faith, making promises to be good, following in the footsteps of Jesus to Easter. Encouraging display boards in each classroom invite the children to make their promises and intentions known. The teachers and assistants help the children by discussing their intentions with them and by relating to the promises they themselves have made and their experiences in trying to keep them. Motives and intentions are implicit in the moral endeavours of the pupils.
- 10.2b Very good use is made of scriptural passages and incidents from the life of Jesus to encourage moral decision-making. In one class pupils were asked to reflect on the decisions Jesus made and why he made them, when tempted in the desert. The pupils were asked 'What would you have done and why?' They appreciated the need for moral decision-making. Pupils are encouraged to think about the consequences of their actions.
- 10.2c The school has a good policy on behaviour. Pupils are very well behaved in school. Each year group formulates its own classroom rules to include codes of behaviour and conduct, mutual respect for all, respect for property and the environment. School staff acknowledge good behaviour and thoughtfulness verbally and by operating a merit system. Parents acknowledge good behaviour within school. The school policy encourages pupils to be courteous and kind, to speak with respect and be sympathetic to the needs of others. Good behaviour is praised.

10.2d Moral development of pupils is encouraged in their desire and willingness to help others. Pupils help in a Barnsley Hospice and support the 'Guide dogs for the blind', 'Mission Together' and 'The Good Shepherd' associations. Their actions and the use of their talents in helping others, develop in the pupils, communal responsibility and attributes of fairness and justice.

10.2e St Dominic's does not currently have a policy for moral development.

CONCLUSION

The inspector wishes to place on record his personal thanks and appreciation for the kind co-operation received from the headteacher, staff, governors, priests and religious, parents and pupils of St Dominic's School.

Appendix: Evidence Base.

The Inspection programme included attendance at a parent's meeting, a pre-inspection visit to the school and three full days of inspection.

Religious Education lessons were observed in all classes.

A whole-school act of Collective Worship and an Ash Wednesday liturgy for Foundation and Key Stage 1 pupils were observed.

Interviews were held with the headteacher in her role as headteacher, as acting SENCO and Religious Education Co-ordinator, the parish priest, a religious sister and the Chairman of the Governing Body.

Discussions were held with pupils and various members of the school community.

A comprehensive list of policies and documents were inspected and read.

Samples of moderated work, classroom workbooks, teaching observation feedback evidence, liturgical plans, photographic compilations of school events and celebrations were also observed.

Summary Report.

The major strengths in Religious Education, Collective Worship and the spiritual and moral development of the children.

- Teaching of Religious Education ranges from satisfactory to very good.
- Standards of work in Religious Education range from satisfactory to good and are broadly in line with standards in other subjects.
- The school is very well led by a dedicated headteacher, hardworking staff and governors.
- Links between school, home, parish and community are very good.
- The behaviour of pupils is very good. The learning attitudes of pupils are good.
- The quality of Collective Worship is very good, and is a school strength.
- The spiritual and moral development of pupils is very good.

How the school has improved since the last inspection.

All Key Issues of the last inspection have been addressed but teaching and monitoring need to demand higher standards.

How the parents view the Religious Education, Collective Worship and the spiritual and moral development of their children.

- Parents are satisfied with the good standards of Religious Education achieved by their children.
- Parents feel that the school provides very well for the spiritual and moral development of their children.
- Parents describe the Catholic/Christian school atmosphere as caring, positive and family orientated.
- Parents greatly appreciate and benefit from involvement in school and community activities, liturgies, assemblies and sacramental preparations.
- Parents are happy with school support, staff approachability and care for their children.

Areas for further development.

1. Celebrate and consolidate Religious Education improvements since the previous inspection, the caring Catholic/Christian ethos of the school and good, developing links with the community.
2. Consider and address the matter of a declining baptised Catholic population in school.
3. Improve standards in the teaching of the Religious Education Curriculum at Key Stage 2 and standards of religious work throughout the school.
4. Build on existing good work of profiling and promoting Religious Education by re-establishing the role of the co-ordinator on her return to work.
5. Develop multi-faith and multi-cultural education in relation to Religious Education.
6. Promote high-quality religious display throughout the school, especially in the main hall.