

DIOCESE OF HALLAM SCHOOLS'
DEPARTMENT



SECTION 48 INSPECTION REPORT

THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL
AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

ST PATRICK'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY
SCHOOL

School URN	8913764
Name of Chairman of Governors	Mr Dave Clements
Name of Headteacher	Mr Steve Dent
Date of Inspection	March 6 th , 2007
Section 48 Inspector	Mrs Delia Kay

“... an enthusiasm for the things of God.”

Introduction

The Inspection of St Patrick's Catholic Primary School has been carried out under the requirements of the Education Act 2005, and in accordance with the Diocese of Hallam Framework and Schedule for Section 48 Inspections as approved by the Bishop of Hallam.

The process of inspection in the Diocese of Hallam has been developed as an activity of the Church to support schools in further deepening the quality of Catholic education provided.

Description of the School

St Patrick's is a small school, which serves St Patrick's parish in the village of Bircotes, as well as the villages of Harworth and Styrrup. The previous parish priest was a great advocate of the school, but since he died in June 2005, the parish has been served by another priest and deacon. The last Religious Education Inspection took place in June 2001 and its last OFSTED Inspection was conducted in December 2006.

There are three classes in the school – all mixed age, but the employment of a part time teacher enables the Year 2 children to be taught separately for four mornings a week. 35 % are baptised Catholics and 98% are of White British heritage. The main source of employment in the village was the coal mine which closed in December 2006. There are a range of extra curricular activities provided, one being a Christian Club, which is very popular with the children.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL

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

The provision of Catholic education at St Patrick's Catholic Primary School is satisfactory. Pupils are respected and well cared for in a calm well ordered environment. The Catholic ethos is apparent and has a positive impact on the pupils' spiritual and moral development. The Headteacher supported by the governors is committed to raising standards in all aspects of Religious Education.

The school recognises that there are aspects of Religious Education, spiritual development and Collective Worship that need to be developed. These aspects of development are contained in this report and should form the basis of a rigorous action plan as part of the school development plan approved by the governors.

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

Areas for improvement since the last inspection in 2001 included:

- the creation of high quality prayer areas in each class.
- an agreement to be reached on the acceptable standards of written work and presentation.
- assessment procedures to be developed to include the material recommended by the Diocese.
- a whole staff review to be undertaken using the Diocesan Self Evaluation Document to ensure a shared vision and provide a tool for further development.

Initially some satisfactory steps were taken to address these issues, but due to the high turn over of staff over the past two years as well as the school working to meet national challenges, there has been little long term impact. Prayer areas have been created in all classes, but assessment procedures have not been implemented, there has been no agreement on standards of written work or presentation of work and the Diocesan Self-Evaluation Document has not been used to help the school create a rigorous action plan that is shared by all staff. These issues need to be included in the new Religious Education action plan.

The capacity to further deepen the quality of Catholic education

The Self Evaluation Form was completed honestly and it is acknowledged that the school has experienced difficulties with the death of a supportive and much loved parish priest, as well as a high percentage of new staff joining the school. Over the past year the leadership has been focused on raising standards in other areas of the curriculum. However, now that new staff have been appointed and with a supportive and committed chair of governors, together with an equally committed nucleus of governors, as well as a hard working head teacher, they have the capacity to jointly prepare an action plan for Religious Education that will raise standards and enable the Catholic life of the school to deepen and further develop.

THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL: LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

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

The chair of governors and leadership team are deeply committed to providing a distinctive ethos and developing the Catholic life of the school. In spite of the lack of an actively involved Catholic priest, the school has taken steps to strengthen the links with the parish. The Deacon, who is also a governor, visits the school to lead assemblies, liturgies and work with the school council. However, the school has had some difficulty recruiting active Foundation Governors, which has had a limiting effect on the work of

the governing body, but there are plans to address this issue. The Headteacher and governors need to create an action plan for developing the Catholic life of the school which is included in the School Improvement Plan and informs all stakeholders of the direction the school is moving, and serves as a tool for monitoring and evaluating the impact of identified priorities for development. Currently there is no plan, which is unsatisfactory.

THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL: COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

How good is the quality of Collective Worship?

The quality of Collective Worship is satisfactory and meets the statutory requirements. There is a clear policy for Collective Worship and prayer takes place at least twice a day in each class. Provision is planned in line with the liturgical year but resources need to be improved to assist staff in leading acts of worship. To enhance the provision for Collective Worship the Anglican Vicar leads a lively, interactive assembly once a month which the children learn from and enjoy. All classes have a designated prayer board and during the inspection all classes displayed work on the current 'Here I Am' topic. Children enjoy preparing and leading acts of worship and so more opportunities should be given to them to participate and take responsibility in this aspect of school life.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION: ACHIEVEMENT AND STANDARDS

How well do learners achieve in Religious Education?

The quality of pupil achievement and progress are satisfactory overall but they vary across the school and in some classes are not in line with achievement in Literacy. Children enjoy their lessons and are engaged in their learning. Where they achieve well it is because clear learning objectives have been set. Behaviour was considered to be good in all lessons observed. Pupils with special educational needs are well catered for. They are well supported by able and dedicated teaching assistants. Good use is made of the 'Here I Am' religious education programme. The presentation of written work and the inconsistencies of quantity of written work is an area the school understands needs addressing. The achievement in Religious Education lessons could be improved by the greater use of I.C.T.

QUALITY OF PROVISION OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

How effective are teaching and learning in Religious Education?

Teaching and learning in Religious Education are satisfactory. The school recognises that it needs to reduce the variability in the quality of teaching across the school, by

sharing examples of good practice, which are present in some classes and by having agreed whole school objectives in terms of planning, quantity of written work expected from each age group, standards of presentation and the consistent use of an effective marking policy. Parents are informed of the content of the curriculum that their children will be studying at the beginning of each term and receive a progress report at the end of each year.

Standards should improve when assessment becomes routine and consistent throughout the school so that all pupils understand the level they are working at and know how to improve. The monitoring of teaching and learning in Religious Education needs to be undertaken by the RE Co-ordinator so that areas for development can be identified and staff can receive the appropriate training. A planned process of lesson observations should be put in place. The school does not meet the requirements of the Bishops' Conference to ensure ten percent of curriculum time is devoted to Religious Education.

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

Overall the curriculum provision is satisfactory. The content of the Religious Education curriculum follows the 'Here I Am' programme, although not all teachers use the recommended planning sheets provided by the diocese. Ethos statements are used throughout the school and this together with the Religious Education curriculum contributes to the spiritual and moral development of the learners. Differentiation was observed but most lessons lacked sufficient degree of challenge to enable more able pupils to make the progress expected of them. The school is socially inclusive and provides equality of access. The school extends a warm welcome to parents and children and there are good relationships between adults and pupils. Pupils gain a knowledge of the Catholic Faith and an appropriate understanding of the beliefs and values of other Christian Churches. Other world faiths are taught, but over the past year this has been fairly haphazard and now needs to be planned at the start of each year on the whole school calendar. A budget for Religious Education needs to be allocated so that resources are purchased and spending in Religious Education is linked to the priorities identified in the action plan.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

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

The school has three good policies for Religious Education, Collective Worship and Spiritual Development that have been approved by governors in the past and which are coming up for review and could be a good starting point from which governors could develop their own monitoring procedures.

There is no evidence of monitoring of Religious Education by the Headteacher or Religious Education coordinator for the past year and there is no Religious Education action plan which identifies areas for development. An action plan needs to be put in place to ensure the strategic development of the life of the Catholic School so that standards in all aspects are raised.

Information about the school

Type of School	Primary, Voluntary Aided
Age profile of Students	3 – 11
Number on roll	98
Number of Students on Special Educational Needs Register	23
Number of Students with a Statement of Special Educational Needs	0
Number of Catholics on roll	35
Number of Other Christian Denominations	61
Number of other Faiths	2
School address	Whitehouse Road, Harworth-Bircotes, Notts DN11 8EF
Telephone Number	01302 743145
Fax Number	01302 743145
Email	admin@st-patricks.notts.sch.uk
Website	

Summary of Inspection Judgements:	
Overall Effectiveness	Satisfactory
The Catholic Life of the School	
How effective are leadership and management in developing the Catholic life of the school?	Unsatisfactory
How good is the quality of Collective Worship?	Satisfactory
Religious Education	
How well do learners achieve in Religious Education?	Satisfactory
How effective are teaching and learning in Religious Education?	Satisfactory
How well does the RE curriculum meet the needs and interests of learners?	Satisfactory
How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners in Religious Education?	Unsatisfactory

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