

DIOCESE OF HALLAM SCHOOLS' DEPARTMENT



SECTION 48 INSPECTION REPORT

THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

ST JOSEPH & ST TERESA'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL WOODLANDS

School URN	106/769
Name of Chairman of Governors	Mr George Turton
Name of Headteacher	Mrs Shauna Hilton
Name of Federation Headteacher Designate	Mrs Nuala Nelis
Date of Inspection	25 th February 2008
Section 48 Inspector	Mr Stephen Owen

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

The inspection of St. Joseph and St. Teresa’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. Joseph and St. Teresa Catholic Primary School is part of a federation with Our Lady of Perpetual Help Catholic Primary School, Bentley. The school works in close partnership with the Diocese and the Local Authority. The school was founded in 1926 and serves two main parishes St. Joseph & St. Teresa’s and Blessed English Martyrs. It also serves the parishes of Carcroft and Burghwallis. Both priests are on the Board of Governors. In September 2006 the school became part of a federation with Our Lady’s Catholic Primary School, Bentley with one governing body. It serves a wide geographical area to the north of Doncaster. Many children travel by bus or are brought to school by car. Following a Diocesan review the admissions number has been reduced to 20.

Staffing consists of the headteacher, five full-time, four part-time teachers, one full-time nursery nurse and one full-time and four part-time teaching assistants. Foundation Stage 1 and 2 pupils are taught in the Foundation Stage Unit.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of School	Primary Voluntary Aided
Age Profile of the students	4 – 11
Number on role	199 (Inc Nursery)
Number of Students on Special Educational Needs register	23
Number of Students with a Statement of Special Educational Needs	4
Number of Other Christian Denominations	69
Number of Other faith	1
Address	Doncaster Lane, Woodlands, Doncaster, DN6 7QN
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OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL

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

The effectiveness and efficiency of the provision of Catholic education in meeting the needs of learners is good.

The headteacher, very ably supported by the Religious Education Co-ordinator, is focussed on raising standards for all. Relationships within the school are excellent and facilitate the promotion of inclusion and the strong, positive Catholic ethos. Pupils are respected and in turn show a great respect for others. They are well cared for and are afforded every opportunity to develop in the calm learning environment that prevails throughout the school. They acquire and absorb the skills and attitudes that enable them to develop spiritually and morally. Their knowledge of religious education is good. Children who need extra support and encouragement are helped by a very effective team of teaching assistants, who show great sensitivity and care to those in their charge.

The school, under the direction of the headteacher and the designate federation headteacher, work in close partnership with Our Lady's Catholic Primary School, Bentley. Excellent links have been forged between governors, staff and pupils that is of great benefit to both communities and has strengthened their educational provision. As part of this successful federation process, there have been many joint ventures experienced by the schools, including spiritual retreats and residential trips. The schools are wholeheartedly committed to the sharing of joint and inclusive practice and this is recorded on all relevant documentation.

The areas for development identified in the school's Self Evaluation Form (SEF) and the School Improvement Plan (SIP) are clearly stated and all staff feel a part of this developmental process.

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

The last inspection took place in March 2004 and the following issues for development were identified:

- Appoint a Religious Education co-ordinator who will monitor standards of teaching and learning to support the raising of attainment in Religious Education.
- Extend the assessment procedures to include systems for levelling children's work using the Levels of Attainment published by The National Board of Religious Inspectors and Advisors. This will assist teachers in making secure judgements in assessing, recording and reporting pupil progress. The diocese has materials which the governors might consider using.
- Ensure that the quality of children's work in some classes is of a similar standard to work produced in other core curriculum subjects.
- Ensure that the marking policy is consistently applied and gives children feedback on how they can improve their work.

Detailed and comprehensive evidence exist to show that each issue has been effectively responded to. These areas for development, the systems by which they would be achieved and the success criteria applied, were shared with parents in a very good Action Plan Report which was sent to all involved in the school community.

The capacity to further deepen the quality of Catholic education.

The school is well placed to further deepen the quality of Catholic education. Both headteachers are deeply committed to this aspect of the school's development and have the support of staff and governing body. Indeed, all key members of the school's community demonstrate a deep personal faith and commitment to this mission. The response to this call is very much a collegiate one. Federation documentation states quite clearly that: "The mission of our schools is to gain as a community through our faith in God, giving love and respect to all."

Religious Education is given a high priority within the school and the parents deeply appreciate all that is done to ensure they are involved and informed about what their children are experiencing, as part of an inclusive faith community. Parents feel welcome and valued.

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 effectiveness of leadership and management in the development of the Catholic life of the school is good.

The headteacher, staff and members of the Governing Body are all committed to the school's Catholic mission, and in creating a culture of shared responsibility. This collegiate approach affords opportunities for everyone to be involved in promoting and developing the Catholic ethos of the school.

The school runs smoothly in a caring, friendly and orderly way. Inclusion is a lived reality within the school community and pupils of all abilities are effectively integrated in to every aspect of school life. Governors work closely with the headteachers and management team and are actively involved in the life of the school. The governing body is led by a well informed Chair, who is a frequent and welcome visitor to the school. He is deeply committed to the life of the school and its continued development. He appreciates the value of the school's work in supporting the faith journey of the children and the wider community.

THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL: COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

How good is the quality of Collective Worship?

The quality of Collective Worship observed during the inspection is good and meets statutory requirements. Detailed and comprehensive documentation shows that this aspect of the school's development is carefully planned and given a high priority. The children experience a variety of opportunities for Collective Worship and this has a positive impact on their spiritual and moral

development. The school's prospectus has clear guidelines for Collective Worship and there are a good range of resources to ensure this particular aspect of the school's life is meaningfully shared. The policy for Collective Worship is renewed biannually.

Prayer is central to the life of the school and the children are given many opportunities to say or write their own prayers. A significant number of children meet every week on a voluntary basis during Lent simply to pray and reflect on what it means to be part of a faith community. They offer their thoughts to God in a sincere and reflective way and guided by the headteacher, think and pray for those who need help. This is good practice and serves to enhance their spiritual and moral development.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION: ACHIEVEMENT AND STANDARDS

How well do learners achieve in Religious Education?

Learner achievement in Religious Education is good and in line with achievement in other subjects including English. Children's written work is also good and from a young age they are confident in recording in Religious Education lessons. The school makes appropriate use of the "Here I Am" programme and ensures children of all abilities are able to achieve their potential. In this way, the pupils acquire knowledge and develop concepts, skills and attitudes appropriate to their age and need. Pupils with special needs are well catered for and make good progress.

Pupil behaviour is excellent and the children express their views and thoughts with confidence and competence. There is a positive atmosphere for learning in the classrooms and the children respond well to the challenges set them. Assessment procedures are in place and portfolios of work are kept to show consistency of development throughout the school. This is good practice.

A clear and revealing aspect of learner achievement is when the whole school produces work around the idea of "Take One Parable". Once a year every child produces work on a chosen parable. During the time of inspection it was "The Fruitless Fig Tree" and a variety of work was displayed, showing consistency and progression in writing, art and other creative media. This is also good practice

QUALITY OF PROVISION OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

How effective are teaching and learning in Religious Education?

Teaching and learning in Religious Education is good.

Teaching and Learning observed ranged from satisfactory to good with outstanding features. Where the Teaching and Learning were good, there was a clear rhythm and pace to delivery, with the children having a clear understanding of what was expected of them. Teachers' planning shows clear evidence of differentiation by task, outcome or support. When asked, a number of children said how much they looked forward to the next topic. The younger children undertook a variety of interesting and stimulating tasks, covering many areas of the topic "Thanksgiving". Their vocabulary about the life of Jesus and about the work they were doing was impressive and there was some lively discussions. In these classes, the teachers' expectations were robust and challenging and the children responded positively and with enthusiasm.

Throughout the inspection, teachers adopted a variety of teaching styles and those children who found any of the work too challenging were ably supported by sympathetic and competent teaching assistants. In all classes observed, there was clear evidence of thoughtful and reflective planning, ensuring an appropriateness of matching content with teaching style.

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

The manner in which the school ensures the Religious Education curriculum meets the needs and interests of all learners is good, with some outstanding features. It has a significant impact on the children's spiritual and moral development.

The Religious Education curriculum fulfils the requirements of the Bishop's Conference by devoting ten percent of teaching time to this subject area. Relationships throughout the school community are excellent and the children acquire and absorb the knowledge and understanding that enables them to reflect on what they learned in an atmosphere of tolerance and inclusion. Parents are regarded as playing a vital role in their children's religious education and the communication systems, both oral and written, are very effective. Parents value and speak highly of the support given to them by the school. The children and their families show a knowledge and respect for those of other faith cultures and other faiths.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

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

Leadership and management are good in raising achievement and supporting all learners in Religious Education. Religious Education is given a high profile in the school and the headteacher and Religious Education Co-ordinator have a strong and explicit commitment to the Catholic faith, which they share openly with the entire school community. Governors are well informed, involved, supportive and fulfil their role effectively.

Resources for Religious Education are good and effectively used by staff to enhance the children's learning. Staff are given appropriate training opportunities to ensure they have the knowledge and confidence to deliver lessons effectively.

Policy documents and other detailed and comprehensive documentation ensures an understanding of what has been done and of what still needs to be developed.

The Religious Education Co-ordinator plays a strong role in the development of this subject through lesson observation, monitoring teachers' planning and work scrutiny.

SUMMARY OF INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

Further copies of this report are obtainable from St. Joseph and St. Teresa'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