

**DENOMINATIONAL INSPECTION
REPORT (Section 48)**

on

**THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL
AND
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

School: St Augustine's Catholic Primary School

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School URN: 119607

Headteacher: Mrs Angela Pye

Chair of Governors: Mr David Cox

Section 48 Inspector: Mrs Ela Wort

Date of Inspection: 13th June 2012

The inspection report is produced for the Rt. Reverend Michael Campbell O.S.A., the Bishop of Lancaster (c.f. Code Canon Law, 804, 806), and for the Governing Body of the school (Education Act 2005, Section 48). The inspection reviews, evaluates and plans further improvements in the school's witness to the Catholic faith and Curriculum Religious Education. This process begins with the school's own self-evaluation.

The inspection schedule follows criteria set by the National Board of Advisers and Inspectors.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

FACTUAL INFORMATION

Pupil Catchment:

Number of pupils on roll:	260
Planned Admission Number of Pupils:	38
Percentage of pupils baptised RC:	22%
Percentage of pupils from other Christian denominations:	10%
Percentage of pupils from other faith backgrounds:	50%
Percentage of pupils with no religious affiliation:	4%
Percentage of pupils from ethnic groups:	49%
Percentage of pupils with special needs:	14%

Staffing

Full-time teachers:	9
Part-time teachers:	3
Total FTE	11.8
Percentage of Catholic teachers FTE:	65%
Percentage of teachers with CCRS:	56%

Percentage of learning time given to RE:

NR	10%	Yr 4	10%
Yr 1	10%	Yr 5	10%
Yr 2	10%	Yr 6	10%
Yr 3	10%		

Parishes served by the school:

St Augustine of Canterbury - within the Parish of Christ the King.

Overall Effectiveness

1

Capacity for sustained improvement

1

MAIN FINDINGS

St Augustine's is an outstanding Catholic school. It is well led by an inspirational headteacher who, together with a highly committed senior leadership team, governors and parents, ensures that outcomes for pupils and the school's capacity for sustained improvement are outstanding. The Catholic mission underpins all aspects of school life and is clearly articulated by the head and her staff, as well as by governors and parents. It is a fully inclusive school where everyone is welcomed and valued including a substantial number of pupils from other faiths and for whom English is an additional language; as the children themselves put it, "everyone does everything together here".

Pupils are happy to come to St Augustine's and they demonstrate pride in their school, which results in them having positive attitudes to learning. They expressed great pleasure in the teaching of RE and clearly enjoyed their learning, with one pupil commenting that, "There are always lots of different things to do in RE, it's really good".

Outcomes for pupils are outstanding; most pupils attain significantly above average levels in RE from below average starting points and there is no significant variation between the various groups. Since the last inspection, work has been done to ensure that a rigorous assessment system identifies children's abilities clearly and they work at appropriate levels, ensuring that there is both support and challenge for the more able.

Pupils are offered a variety of opportunities to contribute to the Catholic life of the school and do so with respect and reverence. The school provides an excellent Catholic education. Teaching is consistently of a high quality and this results in purposeful learning which enables pupils to make excellent progress. The Religious Education curriculum provided is rich and varied and is focused on meeting the needs of all pupils and on raising standards.

Capacity for sustained improvement

The school's capacity for sustained improvement is outstanding. Governors are effective and fully committed in their support for the school. The school has acted on the key issues from the last inspection: assessment is clearer and there are many opportunities to enhance and

extend learning in order to raise attainment. The governors, managers, teachers and the staff working in the school demonstrate a clear understanding of areas for development. The quality of self-evaluation is very good, although inspection finds it to be unnecessarily modest in places. Governors and staff are committed to ensuring that continuing to improve standards is of the highest priority. The subject leaders monitor RE standards very well in order to drive forward good planning and best practice, thus securing the best possible outcomes for pupils.

What the school needs to do to improve further

- The assessment system would benefit from further development to ensure that the year on year progress in RE is tracked more clearly, in a similar way to other core subjects.
- Continue to develop the expertise of staff for Collective Worship with younger pupils.
- Complete the work begun on developing the Sex and Relationship Education policy so that it meets the needs of pupils and remains faithful to explicit diocesan guidelines.

PUPILS

How good outcomes are for pupils, taking particular account of variations between different groups

1

Pupils enjoy Religious Education and have very positive attitudes towards their learning. The children said of their RE lessons that they, “learned lots of things in different ways, not just writing” and also were eager to talk about their work and spoke with pride. Most pupils’ standard of attainment in knowledge and understanding of religion (AT1) and their ability to reflect on meaning (AT2) is outstanding, as observed in lessons. Pupils were knowledgeable and able to relate prior learning to the tasks in hand on the day. For example the younger children were able to relate what they had previously learned about the story of Peter in prison, in order to consider difficult questions about the means of his release. Older pupils spoke thoughtfully about their own experiences and the questions and choices that they would face in the future. They considered how their faith would help them to make the right choices, and how the gifts of the Holy Spirit could help them in this. All pupils across the school who were observed are confident in talking about what they are learning and are able to articulate what their faith means to them and how it impacts on their lives, giving examples from situations from their own experiences.

Assessment data, lesson observations and scrutiny of pupils’ work give evidence that standards of attainment are above average in all strands of each attainment target (AT) across the school and there are no significant variations between groups. The assessment data gives clear guidance to the teachers about each child’s level of ability and attainment, so that teaching can be well matched to provide both sufficient support and challenge. However, the tracking of the pupils’ attainment is focused on achievement within each strand of attainment, whereas being able to track an individual’s progress over time, as happens in other core subjects, is less clear, and could be further developed.

Pupils make an outstanding contribution to the Catholic life of school, talking with confidence about their understanding of the Catholic faith and how they can engage with it, often in addition to, and with due respect to, their own faith background. They are able to refer confidently to the teachings of Christ when discussing life in school. The excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development in school also enables all pupils to express their own views and beliefs with confidence. Behaviour in class and around the school is excellent.

The parents who met with the inspector were fully appreciative of the very special qualities of the school, and how it led to a harmonious and inclusive respect for other faiths, whilst holding at the centre the teachings of Christ through His Gospel values.

Pupils' response to and participation in Collective Worship was demonstrated in class observations, one being led entirely by the pupils themselves. It was a privilege to be able to join with the older pupils, who used a mixture of readings from other faiths, and made excellent use of resources, including music and information technology (ICT). Their response was both sincere and moving, and they were reflective and thoughtful. In a class Mass, the children were engaged and prayerful and this contributed to their spiritual and moral growth. Pupils understand the importance of key celebrations in the Church's year both in school and in the parish community throughout the liturgical year.

The parish structure has recently undergone a series of challenging changes but the school remains steadfast at the centre of its community, resolved in its mission, to provide a very special opportunity for pupils to live and learn through the teachings of Christ.

LEADERS AND MANAGERS

How effective leaders and managers are in developing the Catholic life of the School

1

Leadership and management of the Catholic life of the school are outstanding. The headteacher, and deputy, who jointly share the subject leadership, have a clear vision which is shared by governors and other stakeholders. Self-evaluation is very thorough and identifies clearly strengths and areas for development, although leaders are often modest in their self-evaluations. A rich, broad and balanced curriculum is provided, with pupils' spiritual and moral development being at the heart of what is planned. There is ample evidence of formal and informal monitoring activities, conducted by leaders and managers, which have helped staff to move forward in their provision for pupils, thus impacting on outcomes, and also for their own professional development.

Assessment of learning is very thorough, meticulous records kept and pupils are able to understand what they must do to improve through the use of 'I Can' statements linked directly to their work for each strand of attainment. This consistent use of targets enables pupils to have a clear understanding of their tasks, impacting positively on their learning, progress and standards.

Governors provide a high level of professional challenge and support. This was shown in meetings with two governors who spoke with authority, enthusiasm and experience about their role in the school. They are very proactive and well informed, meeting termly with the staff and subject leaders to discuss all of the core subjects including RE. They are able to clearly articulate an understanding of the work of the school: they have high levels of expertise and experience and are thorough in their approach. The chairman of governors is aware of the identified priorities for improvement and provides a level of challenge for leaders and managers within the school. There has been much work recently, with diocesan support, on the Sex and Relationship Education policy and there is a high level of commitment to ensuring that when this work is completed, it fully meets the needs of the pupils from community it serves.

All involved with the school work tirelessly to achieve community cohesion. A member of staff summarised this by saying that it is a "very special place doing very special things", and the promotion of community cohesion is outstanding. Parents commented on the fact that the school is oversubscribed because "No matter where we come from or what we believe, we are all welcome here, and have the same moral values". This reflected the very positive views of most of the parents.

Diversity is celebrated and valued in a very positive way and there are many opportunities for the school to work in partnership with others in the local community. For example, there are strong working links with other local Catholic primary schools, the linked Catholic high school and Catholic 6th form college. In addition to this the school has excellent relationships with the local Jamea Mosque and the Hindu temple. There are also numerous opportunities for pupils to respond to others in need, both locally and further afield eg Foxton Centre and CAFOD.

PROVISION

How effective the provision is for Catholic education

1

The quality of teaching and learning in Religious Education as shown in class observations, book scrutinies, and discussions with pupils is outstanding overall. Teaching observed was outstanding and resulted in excellent quality learning. Teachers show flexible and imaginative use of resources, including ICT and deliver well-paced lessons with good clear objectives and a range of interesting activities. Planning is thorough and leads to lessons which meet the needs of all abilities and build on prior knowledge. Most marking is positive and leads to next step learning and advice towards objectives.

The recent work on assessment has included using 'I can' statements with the pupils in order to help them to see what they must do to improve their work and to see where they must go next to achieve higher standards. This is effective and has a positive impact on outcomes for pupils, giving good guidance for their learning.

In one of the lessons observed, the subject knowledge and enthusiasm of the teacher was infectious, inspiring the pupils to search deeply for answers and to think carefully about how the gifts of the Holy Spirit could help them in their future. The passion of the teacher was met with equal enthusiasm from the pupils, leading to a highly motivating and engaging lesson. In the lessons observed, support staff worked discretely and very effectively to help pupils in their tasks and were well led and managed by the class teachers.

The Religious Education curriculum meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference fully and includes many opportunities for creative adaptations to meet the needs of all pupils. It includes a variety of imaginative and well-planned activities and excellent use of resources, which engage and motivate the pupils. Long and short-term planning ensure full coverage of the RE curriculum. Parents are informed through newsletters what their children are learning and how they can support and become involved. Parents met during the inspection said that they learned alongside their children, especially if they were not Catholics and it was also where they could learn about each others' faiths. They all saw this as very special and valued it highly.

The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school and seen during the inspection, was good and in parts outstanding, particularly at the upper end of the school. Dissemination of this excellent practice should in time influence teachers positively across the school. Much time has been spent on recent training to ensure that the acts of worship are meaningful and reflective, giving pupils time for their spiritual needs to be met. It is

fully inclusive and well-planned, enabling pupils to take an active part. Prayer is central to the life of the school and this is reflected in the way the pupils are enabled, from a very early age, to contribute actively to their own acts of collective worship. The introduction of 'monthly values' as themes for collective worship, unifies the worship throughout the school and it may be possible to use this as a vehicle to share good practice across the school, so that staff may develop their skills with each other.

SUMMARY OF INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Key for inspection grades:

Grade 1 **Outstanding** Grade 2 **Good** Grade 3 **Satisfactory** Grade 4 **Unsatisfactory**

Overall effectiveness	1
The school's capacity for sustained improvement	1
PUPILS How good outcomes are for pupils, taking particular account of variations between different groups	1
• how well do pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education?	1
❖ the quality of pupils' learning and their progress	1
❖ the quality of learning for pupils with particular learning needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
❖ pupils' attainment in RE	1
• to what extent do pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life of the school?	1
• how well do pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship?	2
LEADERS AND MANAGERS How effective are leaders and managers in developing the Catholic life of the School?	1
• how well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic life of the school and plan improvement to outcomes for pupils?	1
• how well leaders and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for RE and plan for improvement to outcomes for pupils?	1
• the extent to which the governing body provides effective challenge and support for the Catholic dimension of the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory and canonical responsibilities met?	1
• how well leaders and managers develop partnerships with other providers, organisations and services in order to promote Catholic learning and well being?	1
• how effectively leaders and managers promote Community Cohesion?	1
PROVISION How effective is the provision for Catholic Education?	1
• the quality of teaching and purposeful learning in RE	1
• the effectiveness of assessment and academic guidance in Religious Education?	1
• the extent to which Religious Education curriculum meets pupils' needs?	1
• the quality of Collective Worship provided by the school?	2