

**DENOMINATIONAL INSPECTION
REPORT (Section 48)**

on

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

School: St. Anthony's Catholic Primary School
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School URN: 119698

Headteacher: Mrs. B. Gardner

Chair of Governors: Mr. P. Thompson

Section 48 Inspector: Mrs. S. Starkie

Date of Inspection: 5th July 2013

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 AT THE SCHOOL

St Anthony's Catholic Primary School is a larger than average-size primary school, with a very large percentage of baptised Catholics. The school is over subscribed.

The vast majority of pupils are white British heritage, and the proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is well below average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average. The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for pupil premium funding (pupils known to be eligible for free school meals) is well below average.

The school mainly serves the parish of St. Anthony of Padua.

This year almost all Year 6 pupils are due to transfer to Our Lady's Catholic High School, Preston.

FACTUAL INFORMATION

Pupil Catchment:

Number of pupils on roll:	312
Planned Admission Number of Pupils:	45
Percentage of pupils baptised Catholics:	88%
Percentage of pupils from other Christian denominations:	5%
Percentage of pupils from other faith backgrounds:	4%
Percentage of pupils with no religious affiliation:	3%
Percentage of pupils from ethnic groups:	0%
Percentage of pupils with special needs:	7%

Staffing

Full-time teachers:	10
Part-time teachers:	7
Percentage of Catholic teachers:	90%
Percentage of teachers with CCRS:	65%

Percentage of learning time given to RE:

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

Parish served by the school:

1. St. Anthony of Padua

MAIN FINDINGS

St. Anthony's Catholic Primary is a very good Catholic school with many outstanding features: it is fully inclusive and everyone is welcomed, valued and affirmed. The Catholic mission underpins school life and is the driving force behind the school's desire to improve standards. All staff are committed to the ethos and mission of Catholic education, with a reasonable percentage of the staff having gained the Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies. It fully embraces its motto 'You are God's Work of Art', striving to put Christ at the heart of everything and valuing the uniqueness of each individual. Excellent relationships are a key strength of the school.

Pupils enjoy coming to school. They generally engage well in lessons and have positive attitudes to learning. From below average starting points, most pupils make good progress in Religious Education and attain standards that are in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2, with many pupils making good progress. A new electronic tracking system is helping the leadership and management team to focus on improving pupil progress even further, in particular achievement of individuals and different groups of pupils.

The school's provision for Catholic education is at least good. A variety of teaching styles, which enable pupils to make good progress, meet the needs of almost all pupils. There has been an improvement in the marking of pupils' RE work, with constructive and supportive comments being made in most year groups to guide pupils on the next steps in their learning.

The quality of Collective Worship has a considerable impact on the spiritual, moral and social development of the pupils. Pupils from an early age are given opportunities to be involved in Collective Worship, from helping the teacher to plan acts of worship and prepare resources to fully planning and leading acts of worship. The promotion of spiritual and moral development through the Catholic life and RE of the school is outstanding.

Leaders and managers in the school make a highly significant impact on provision for Catholic education for all the pupils in their care. A very clear vision, shared by all, ensures a common sense of purpose. The governing body plays a very active role in supporting and challenging the school continually to improve its provision. Leaders have a clear sense of direction in curriculum RE and are committed to raising standards. Parents are supportive of the school and the school has developed excellent links with the parish and the wider community.

The School's capacity for sustained improvement

1

The school demonstrates an outstanding capacity for sustained improvement through the strong, effective leadership of the headteacher, the staff and the governing body, and the dedication and quality of staff. All priorities for improvement identified in the last inspection have been successfully addressed. Leaders and managers have high expectations of staff and pupils and work purposefully to promote the clear vision they have for the school. The school now has effective reporting procedures in place, enabling governors to fulfil their monitoring responsibilities and have a good understanding of standards in curriculum RE. The school has a wide range of evidence to show that rigorous and accurate self evaluation procedures are in place which make a positive impact on the provision of RE and outcomes for pupils.

What the school needs to do to improve further

In order to improve standards the school now needs to:

- Continue to develop use of the newly introduced electronic pupil tracking system to include information on the progress and attainment of all groups, including more able pupils.
- Ensure that all able pupils achieve Level 3 by the end of Key Stage 1.
- Improve the quality of teaching across the school, by disseminating good practice in order to achieve greater consistency particularly in lower key stage 2.
- Incorporate improvement time in lessons, giving the children time to respond to comments and questions in marking in order to develop their learning and raise standards further.

PUPILS

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

2

Inspection judges that the standards of attainment and the progress of learning in RE for pupils, across all key stages, are at least good and often outstanding.

The vast majority of pupils enjoy RE. They speak confidently about their RE lessons and have positive attitudes towards their learning. Pupils refer to RE as being fun, and particularly enjoy the cross curricular approach being used to engage them in lessons, especially the use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT). They also enjoy other activities such as art, role play and 'hot seating'. The vibrant RE displays around the school and in the school entrance foyer, reflect the high quality of pupils' work and the pride they take in it. Discussions with pupils show that they are eager to do well and to improve their learning. Pupils enthusiastically participate in school activities, such as assemblies and liturgies. They particularly enjoy planning their own acts of worship and look forward to their turn in planning and delivering acts of worship in their class.

The pupils at St. Anthony's are able to express their own views and beliefs with confidence and are knowledgeable about Bible stories and the teachings of Jesus. Pupils act in a manner consistent with their beliefs and show respect and reverence for religious objects and artefacts. The behaviour of most pupils is outstanding. Pupils are well mannered, polite and very caring towards one another. Evidence of work completed on 'Faith and Justice Days' shows that pupils have a good understanding of right and wrong and of the need to forgive and to be forgiven.

Pupil tracking information indicates that most pupils enter the school with little understanding and experience of religion. However, given their starting points, a large majority of pupils make good progress through Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. Evidence in pupils' books and in the school's RE portfolio shows that most pupils' standards of attainment in knowledge and understanding of religion (AT1) and in their ability to reflect on meaning (AT2) is good. Attainment in RE at the end of Key Stage 1 is in line with that of attainment in other core subjects, with a large majority achieving Level 2, although very few pupils achieve Level 3 by the end of Key Stage 1. However, progress made by pupils in lower key stage 2, as indicated in pupils' books and in monitoring files, lacks consistency and is an area for future development. Pupils continue to make good progress in Key Stage 2 so that attainment in RE by the end of the key stage is in line with attainment in other core subjects. Most pupils achieve Level 4 or better, with the more able pupils attaining Level 5. Pupils with special educational needs receive very effective additional help from classroom support staff and, as a result, make good progress from their starting points.

Pupils value and respect the Catholic tradition of the school and its links with the parish. They enjoy their visits to the local church and many willingly attend additional services to celebrate festivals of the Church's year and key seasons. Pupils readily take part in the regular and developing prayer life of the school. They sing joyfully, are able to reflect in silence and to join in community prayers with confidence. They are at ease when praying and appreciate what is taking place. Pupils and staff are encouraged to respond to the school mission statement, 'You are

God's work of art', for example, the whole school assembly at the end of the school week celebrates pupils' achievements, skills and talents, reflecting the uniqueness of each pupil.

Pupils across the school use a common framework to plan and lead acts of worship. Acts of worship observed during the inspection were relevant to the age and background of the pupils. The whole school celebration assembly and the observed Year 3/4 pupil-led act of worship showed that pupils are able to participate thoughtfully and are able to reflect quietly. There was a calm, prayerful atmosphere and pupils were encouraged to reflect on the teachings of scripture and focus on the school's designated weekly theme. During the Year 3/4 collective worship time, with the theme of 'Welcome', pupils showed that they are able to relate the welcoming message to their own experience and to reflect in silence on how welcoming they are to others and what they can do to be more welcoming in the future. Pupils share their own thoughtful prayers with the class and there are examples in classrooms of pupils' own prayers which are often displayed around the class prayer tables. Each class has a focus area for worship, which includes religious artefacts and prayer books, and displays are used effectively to celebrate pupils' work. The school has recently established a prayer room, which has a calm, tranquil atmosphere and is beginning to be used by pupils for quiet thinking or to pray and talk to Jesus.

Pupils are eager to support their local community and to make a difference. They respond enthusiastically to opportunities to raise funds or to organise activities, drawing up business plans to raise funds for CAFOD and for Kidney Research.

LEADERS AND MANAGERS

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

1

The school judges the quality of leadership and management to be good, however inspections judges it to be outstanding. Leaders and managers are deeply committed to the Church's mission in education. There is explicit evidence that the Catholic mission of the school is a priority and this is reflected in the school improvement plan, the school's self-evaluation process and the governing body minutes. The senior leadership team, including the RE subject leader, conduct a range of rigorous monitoring activities, for example, scrutiny of pupils' work, internal and external moderation and data analysis. Evidence of monitoring is reported to the governing body and informs well targeted planning and actions being taken to address areas for development. Self-evaluation at all levels within the school is founded on sound evidence and data, involving

relevant major partners. As a result outcomes in RE and well-being for most pupils are very good.

The headteacher shares her vision for the Catholic life of the school with staff and this ensures that all staff have a firm commitment to the Catholic mission. Along with senior staff and governors, she has high expectations and a strong desire to promote Catholic values, which are clearly articulated throughout the school; she is supported by an able school leadership team and staff.

The work of the governing body is outstanding: they are committed, organised and visible in the school community. Governors attend many school events, with the Chair of Governors attending the Year 6 annual residential trip to Borwick Hall. Governors make a highly significant contribution to the work and to the Catholic dimension of the school, discharging their statutory and canonical duties effectively. They are fully involved in evaluating the school and in supporting the work of the staff in improving outcomes for all pupils. They know the strengths and areas for development within the school, understand the challenges it faces and are directly involved in setting appropriate priorities for improvement. They are confident in providing high levels of professional challenge for RE and hold the school and the headteacher to account for its success.

The hard working RE subject leader has good subject knowledge and leads the subject well. She is very well respected by the staff, being supportive of their professional development and offering advice and guidance across the school. She has a good understanding of the school's newly introduced electronic tracking system that is being used by senior managers to track the progress of individuals and groups of children.

The school engages well with parents and responds to their views and any concerns they may have. Information from the parental questionnaire indicates that parents are generally supportive of the school.

Leaders seek to raise pupils' awareness of cultural and religious diversity in society. Pupils are given the opportunity to take part in a variety of community activities, such as raising funds for CAFOD, SVP, the Preston Guild celebrations, the local cluster school Advent Service and the local music festival. The school has very good links with Our Lady's Catholic High School, having an effective transition programme in place which promotes pupils' spiritual and academic development.

The parish priest and deacons have developed a very positive relationship with staff and pupils: links between school and the local church are excellent. The parish priest and deacons are frequent visitors to the school and regularly support the pupils in their learning.

The RE curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to learn about other faiths. It promotes attitudes of respect and tolerance for all faiths. Acts of Collective Worship are inclusive and each pupil's spiritual identity is

respected. Many opportunities exist for groups and individuals within the school to engage and collaborate with each other. Pupils, staff, governors and parents feel a sense of belonging within the school community.

PROVISION

How effective the provision is for Catholic Education

2

Very good teaching, with outstanding features, was observed during the inspection. The pupils in Year 1/2 were engaged and interested in their learning. The teacher has a sound subject knowledge which she uses to inspire and challenge the pupils in her class resulting in good progress. The effective use of questioning, by pupils and by the teacher, enabled pupils to identify times when Jesus showed them love when they asked for help. Pupils were able to explain that Jesus can help them make new friends when they are lonely by giving them the courage to talk to new people, asking them to be friends. Evidence of lesson observations by the senior leadership team show that teachers, across the school, are aware of the needs of pupils in their class and are effective in ensuring that pupils build on prior learning. As a result of good assessment procedures teachers plan well to meet the needs of all pupils.

Teachers use of activities such as drama, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and art make learning exciting and engage and motivate pupils. High quality resources, including the use of ICT, are used effectively, together with the support of other adults, to engage pupils and optimise learning. Effective use is made of activities, for example hot seating, to focus pupils' learning, encouraging them to empathise with and understand the actions of others. Pupils in Year 1/2 class discussed how Bartimaeus would have felt when Jesus cured his blindness and how they would have felt if they had been blind, making links to their recovery after an illness.

Pupils are given feedback, both orally and through marking, which encourages them to reflect on their work and to extend their learning. They are informed about their progress and given suggestions on how to improve. However, pupils now need to be given planned time to respond to questions and suggestions in the marking, in order to develop their understanding further.

The school has an accurate picture of pupils' achievements with year groups being tracked termly and the information is analysed by the senior leadership team. The recently introduced electronic tracking system will add to the accuracy of assessment in that it will identify variations in attainment and the progress made by groups of pupils. These will include, for example, any differences between boys and girls, pupils eligible for free school meals, those with special needs and looked after children. Inspection has shown that the inclusion of more able pupils as a group to

be monitored in this way will ensure that standards are improved even further. Introduction of this monitoring strategy will enable all staff to modify their teaching and planning and address areas for development for pupils of all abilities.

The RE curriculum is creative and enriched through imaginative and well planned strategies to build on expertise within and beyond the school, for example with the parish priest and the deacons, working alongside staff and pupils to plan and deliver the work to celebrate the Feast of St. Anthony. The RE curriculum is well-planned and suitably matched to pupils' need and interests. Staff ensure activities and tasks are motivating and the majority of pupils speak enthusiastically and passionately about RE. The curriculum is responsive to the local context and variation of faith backgrounds of the school community. It fully meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference with respect to the time allocated to it.

Prayer is central to the life of the school and is a key part of every school celebration. Acts of Collective Worship are given a high profile and are well resourced. Pupils' liturgical formation is well-planned, appropriate to their faith backgrounds and shows progression. Class-based Collective Worship follows a simple format, which focuses on gospel values and on the use of scripture. The format is consistent across the school and is varied according to year group and to the amount of adult input. An observed act of worship showed the children to be skilled and equipped in leading prayer. Discussions with pupils about acts of worship indicate a deep understanding of the Church's mission and reflect the Catholic character of the school. Staff and pupils pray reverently together and whole school and year group gatherings provide the opportunity for a variety of forms of prayer. There is a range of formal and informal opportunities for daily prayer. Staff encourage parents to attend spiritual events, for example school Masses, liturgies and seasonal services.

SUMMARY OF INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Key for inspection grades:

Grade 1 **Outstanding**

Grade 2 **Good**

Grade 3 **Satisfactory**

Grade 4 **Unsatisfactory**

Overall effectiveness	2
The school's capacity for sustained improvement	1
PUPILS How good outcomes are for pupils, taking particular account of variations between different groups	2
• 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	2
❖ pupils' attainment in RE	2
• 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?	1
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?	2
• the quality of teaching and purposeful learning in Religious Education	2
• the effectiveness of assessment and academic guidance in Religious Education?	2
• the extent to which Religious Education curriculum meets pupils' needs?	1
• the quality of Collective Worship provided by the school?	1