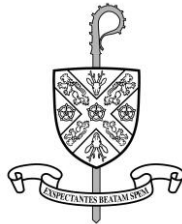


DIOCESE OF MIDDLESBROUGH

Inspection of Religious Education
Collective Worship
and
The Catholic Life of the School



School: St. Francis Xavier R.C/ C of E School.

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Headteacher: Mrs. Sharon Keelan-Beardsley

Chair: Dr. Jim Whiston

Date: 17th September 2012

Inspectors: Mrs. Anne Winfield (Catholic)
Mrs. Celia Roberts (Church of England 469)

INTRODUCTION

This inspection was carried out under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005.

The report of the inspection is produced for the Bishop of Middlesbrough, the Bishop of Bradford, Ripon and Leeds and for the governors of the school. The Inspection reviews, evaluates and plans further improvements in the school's witness to the Catholic and Anglican faith and Curriculum Religious Education. This process begins with the school's own self-evaluation.

What Inspection Grades mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils.

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This is a relatively small 11-16 joint Roman Catholic and Church of England secondary school with 463 pupils. It is highly regarded in the community and oversubscribed. The school admits pupils of both faiths and other backgrounds who live across a wide area including the town of Richmond and Catterick Garrison, serving 40 feeder primary schools. There are significant pockets of deprivation in this catchment area. Nearly all students are of White British heritage with very few speaking English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils on free school meals is well below average, as is the proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. 37% of pupils are baptised Catholics and 54% are baptised in the Church of England. The Headteacher has been in post since the beginning of this academic year.

Pupil Catchment:

Number of pupils on roll: 463

Planned Admission Number of Pupils: 90

Percentage of pupils baptised RC/CofE : 37%/54%

Percentage of pupils from other Christian Denominations: 3%

Percentage of pupils from other World Faiths: 2%

Percentage of pupils with no religious affiliation: 4%

Percentage of pupils with special needs: 8.5%

Teaching Staff:

Full-time Teachers: 25

Part-time Teachers: 8

Percentage of Catholic/CofE Teachers: 23%/47%

Support Staff:

Full-time Classroom Support Staff: 1

Part-time Classroom Support Staff: 10

Percentage of Catholic/CofE Classroom Support Staff: 0/100%

Percentage of teachers with CCRS:

Secondary School R.E. Dept. Staffing:

Number of Full-time R.E. Teachers: 2

Number of Part-time R.E. Teachers: 3

Percentage of Catholic R.E. Teachers: 80%

Percentage of R.E. teachers with CCRS: 20%

Percentage of learning time given to R.E: 10% in all years

Parishes served by the School: RC: St. Mary's, Corpus Christi, Holy Name of Mary, Sacred Heart, St. Alphonsus, St. Clare of Assisi, St. Francis of Assisi, St. Joseph, St. Thomas More, St. Bernadette, St. Gabriel, St. Joseph (Stokesley)

CofE: Parishes in the Richmond and Wensley Deaneries

1.OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

1

MAIN FINDINGS

This is an outstanding, high-achieving Christian school with excellent relationships at the heart of its successes. It has a distinctive identity – both Catholic and Anglican. The overall effectiveness and provision for Christian Education is outstanding. Pupils work hard and make excellent progress in Religious Education.

There is outstanding purposeful leadership at all levels with strong commitment to the school's ethos shown by governors, staff, pupils and parents. Leaders and Managers work well together to monitor and evaluate all facets of the life of this Christian school. The senior leadership team, led by the new Headteacher, shows signs of being an outstanding inspirational force for further improvement.

The mission of the school informs all policies, relating to the curriculum, pastoral care and the general life of the school. It is a highly inclusive school that ensures every pupil is seen as an individual in Christ's image and pastoral care is outstanding. All pupils are enabled to develop their academic, social and spiritual potential. Relationships based on respect ensure that behaviour is outstanding.

The leadership and management of RE is outstanding as are outcomes because of the high achievement and progress across both key stages. RE is a lead department in the school and a model of good practice.

The school has the good support of local parishes and clergy to help achieve the mission and outside partners to support pupils where appropriate.

What the school needs to do to improve further:

Through its own effective monitoring systems, the school has already identified some steps it wishes to take to further improve Religious Education and the provision of Christian Education. In order to develop further as a joint Faith school and enhance existing provision the school should:

- Promulgate a clearer Catholic and Church of England policy of Collective Worship, leading to greater pupil involvement in planning themes, collective worship, prayer and reflection. The employment of a chaplain may aid this process
- Ensure the Gospel message is proclaimed around school more clearly through Gospel quotations, images, prayers and art work.
- Strive to develop further links with the local, national and global community

2. PUPILS

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

1

Pupils learn exceptionally well in Religious Education (RE). Teachers have high expectations of pupils and this motivates pupils to produce extremely high quality work. Pupils have a strong sense of responsibility regarding their learning and work very hard to achieve their best. The strong Christian character of the school supports pupils in their learning, being underpinned by values of trust, courage, commitment and love. Consequently pupils support one another and are exemplary role models to visitors, new students and each other. Pupil voice questionnaires undertaken in RE show evidence that pupils feel they learn effectively and are helped to do as well as they can by staff.

Progress in RE is rapid especially as some pupils score quite low in the baseline assessment test in Year 7. There is little variation between different groups within RE as almost all pupils achieve their very best. Pupils with special educational needs are given appropriate support and strategies to enable them to succeed, eg through differentiated work and targeted, well-deployed learning support assistants. The RE department have incorporated Philosophy for Children into RE lessons and are now ensuring it is in the scheme of work. They are constantly updating these schemes to ensure they are engaging, relevant and challenging. Lesson plans are detailed and show clear progress and continuity

RE makes an outstanding contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils, through stilling, Philosophy for Children, meditation and guided journeys and writing prayers and reflecting on a variety of topics such as crime and punishment.

Academic standards are high across both Key Stage 3 and 4. Pupils at KS3 make excellent progress, many reaching level 6 by the end of year 7. At the end of KS3 the end of level attainment indicates that the great majority of pupils make expected levels of progress or better in Religious Education. The evidence of lessons observed and student interviews give further witness to the fact that Religious Education is a highly successful department where progress is very good and students enjoy their learning. GCSE results have been consistently outstanding since the last Section 48 inspection - over 80% of pupils gained a grade A* to C from 2009 to 2011. All pupils are entered for a GCSE full course. Most pupils exceed their targets. All groups of pupils whether gifted and talented or with special educational needs achieve very well.

Pupils contribute to and benefit from the Christian Life of the school through a range of roles and opportunities provided by a dedicated team of staff and clergy seeking to develop pupils' achievement, interests and spiritual, moral, social and cultural needs. There is a good range of provision despite the after-school difficulties brought about by the distances many pupils have to travel home, mainly because the lunchtime is a full hour and pupils are welcome to stay in school. Such trust is well-rewarded as the environment is pristine with no sign of litter or other problems.

Pupils have many sporting opportunities and clubs to enhance their personal development, like Music, Drama and Philosophy Clubs – all well-attended. Up to 50 pupils attend the voluntary Eucharist service every week, alternating Catholic and Church of England, and the local clergy are very supportive of the school, often leading assemblies. The chapel is well-fitted out, a good venue for these services.

Pupils speak of the school with pride, exhibiting a clear sense of belonging. They articulate the vision very clearly, e.g. “We are taught good manners as that is loving your neighbour. If you open a door for someone, maybe they will open the door for someone else” and “We are a small school so you know everyone in about two weeks – just like a family”. Relationships within the school are outstanding with everyone giving true value to respect for the individual. The climate of mutual respect and a strong commitment to learning contributes to a high level of attendance, a climate of enjoyment in learning in a safe and well-fitted out environment that meets all needs and contributes to outstandingly good behaviour.

There have been no permanent exclusion of pupils since the last inspection and the pupil currently not in school is having their learning needs met by collaborative work with a PRU. If a child falls ill, the school provides outreach tuition. There is a strong commitment to the worth of the individual felt by all. All pupils go on to Education, Training or Employment.

All pupils feel safe and one pupil gives testimony that: “There is no bullying in this school”, and the experiences of another pupil who experienced one distressing incident in Y7, spoke to someone so that the matter was dealt with swiftly and effectively, attest to the effectiveness of the school’s procedures and the pupils’ strong allegiance to respecting all in the school community.

Pupils take on responsibilities in the school eg. Prefects and mentors, and are generous fundraisers. They are alert to the needs of others. Each form has a chosen charity for the year and pupils have supported Help for Heroes, Macmillan Cancer Support and the Sick Children’s Trust, all of which benefit people within or close to the community. It would help develop pupils’ understanding of the world if they were encouraged to fundraise for a wider community, or have a school-wide focus on a particular charity.

Pupils are very articulate when expressing their Faith, as when one described the Sermon on the Mount as a blueprint for Christian Life. Pupils enjoy events such as the week- long Mission in the school last academic year and participate in such events actively. There is a new “Celebrations Squad” of pupils now actively engaged in planning worship for the community. There is good display of pupils’ work including thoughts and beliefs regarding issues of faith, but the school would benefit if there were more such displays around the school corridors.

Pupils participate very well in worship, being willing to read prayers to the class and joining in discussion at registration. They always show respect for their own and others’ beliefs and say that there is plenty of food for thought in worship. They particularly enjoy worship involving Drama on the theme of being grateful to God, and they enjoy periods of reflection during an RE lesson.

• How well do pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education?	1
❖ <i>the quality of pupils' learning and their progress</i>	1
❖ <i>the quality of learning for pupils with particular learning needs and/or disabilities and their progress in Religious Education</i>	1
❖ <i>pupils' attainment in Religious Education</i>	1
• To what extent do pupils contribute to and benefit from the Christian life of the school?	1
• How well do pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship?	1

3. PROVISION

How effective the provision is for Christian education 1

In lessons observed standards were generally outstanding and lesson observation records from the department show that this is the norm. All lessons are very well planned with clear learning objectives and the pace is very demanding. Topics and themes are interesting, relevant and engaging for young people. For example Year 8 pupils were challenged in one lesson to discuss why there are cultural differences in the way Jesus is portrayed by different artists across the world. Similarly pupils in all year groups are challenged with higher level questioning and discussions. Gifted and Talented pupils, and those with Special Educational Needs make excellent progress because of the differentiated work, the quality of support and engaging lesson activities.

Pupils are clear about what they are learning in lessons, through learning objectives and learning outcomes being explicitly shared with them. Learning objectives are based on a good balance of both Attainment Target 1 and 2 (learning about and learning from religion). They are set targets that are realistic, achievable, and yet challenging, moving learning up to the next level of attainment.

Through a very clear assessment policy, teachers have excellent knowledge of pupils' prior learning and their capabilities. Resources are of very good quality, including interactive whiteboards and religious artefacts. This ensures pupils are engaged and find lessons exciting and interesting. Many pupils say they enjoy RE and can express why it is helpful to their lives and lives of others. For example pupils said 'you can express yourself and learn about others', 'it sums everything up' and 'RE is important because it helps with knowledge and understanding of others and not to judge others'.

Assessment is a clear strength of the department. There is a clear policy and consistent practice across all staff in RE. Regular appropriate, creative and engaging assessment takes place in RE including baseline assessment. Activities are creative and enjoyable, on themes such as "What does it mean to be religious?" Pupils are also engaged in peer assessment. Data from assessment is analysed on a regular basis and is used to plan future lessons and ensure pupils achieve their very best.

The extent to which the Religious Education curriculum meets pupils' needs is outstanding. A great deal of thought, time and commitment has gone into

developing a scheme of work that takes into account both the Catholic and Anglican syllabuses for RE. Learning experiences are varied and relevant to the lives of the pupils, eg exploring Who am I? The topics and themes challenge pupils to reflect on a wide range of spiritual, moral, social, cultural and religious ideas. As a result almost all pupils are focused, listen carefully to the views of others and engage in dialogue maturely with fellow pupils and staff. All year groups receive 10% of curriculum time for Religious Education.

Collective worship has a high profile in the life of the school. Staff pray at their briefings, they pray with pupils at registration and in assemblies and other collective worship opportunities such as the Mission and Feast Days. There is a voluntary weekly Eucharist for alternately Catholics and Anglicans. Member of the clergy are very supportive of the school in providing these opportunities and often leading assemblies.

The school has designated themes for each week of the school year and worship is based around these. The themes are consistent with the school's character as a caring community with Christian values. Pupils are encouraged to lead prayer as well as participate. Monitoring of registration worship has started to ensure all pupils get the same meaningful experience of worship at the start of the day. However, the school would benefit from employing a dedicated chaplain so that worship could be planned with pupils to observe liturgical themes/days and encourage more diverse participation such as music, drama and dance to make worship a more meaningful experience for all and give greater opportunity for pupils to use their talents to praise God.

The fabric of the school environment is outstanding; the learning spaces are engaging and stimulating, with good ICT facilities. They reflect the Christian nature of the school with the cross and Mission statement clearly displayed. The Chapel is a welcoming prayer space which is available for all.

There are opportunities for pupils to attend retreat programmes and the school has also sent a contingent of Y9 and Y10 students on the Diocesan Youth Pilgrimage.

The recent Mission has led to the formation of the Celebration Squad and there has recently been some involvement with parish events, e.g. The Fun-Key Church@St. Mary's Richmond where pupils will attend a service led by the Archbishop of York, Dr. John Sentamu.

The pastoral care system is very strong and personalised, meeting the needs of all pupils, especially those who are more vulnerable

• The quality of teaching and purposeful learning in Religious Education	1
• The effectiveness of assessment and academic guidance in Religious Education	1
• The extent to which the Religious Education curriculum meets pupils' needs	1
• The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school	2
• The quality of provision for the Christian life of the school	1

4. LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

How effective leaders and managers are in developing the Christian life of the school

The quality of leadership and management of the school is outstanding and inspirational. The Governors, Headteacher and Senior Leaders have a strong sense of the educational mission of the church and the role of the Religious Education department in contributing to the school's role in this. They communicate a strong sense of spiritual purpose with a focus on promoting high standards and the fullest personal development of pupils. Self-evaluation is a coherent reflection of rigorous monitoring analysis and self-challenge and there are robust systems of performance management and competency procedures in place. The Mission Statement is fully owned by all. Inclusion is paramount.

Governors monitor worship through the Worship Committee and registration activities are now being monitored by senior leaders. Pupils' views are sought regarding the Christian Life of the school – the suggestion that the Mission Week should be repeated for younger pupils was well-received and will be acted upon. The school is well-supported by local clergy, but it has already been planning to appoint a lay chaplain to further develop the Christian Life of the school. The Headteacher has plans for a new garden space which will enhance areas for prayer and reflection.

The RE department is led by an outstanding, committed and hard- working teacher. The department, together with the Leadership team, plans rigorously for improvement and the departmental development plan accurately reflects strengths and areas for development, with all members of the department keen to enhance their professional expertise, which is already considerable. Lesson planning and approaches to assessment are undertaken collaboratively, ensuring a consistent approach across the department. Their introduction of "Philosophy for Children" for Y8 has already been evaluated as successful and will be expanded. Well-developed schemes of work are in place, catering for the needs of all. Special care is taken to ensuring that those with Special Educational Needs can benefit from RE and extension work for the most able is embedded in the schemes. The quality of teaching and learning and the progress of pupils is very well monitored, and pupils have the opportunity to give feedback on their experience in RE. Governors and senior leaders fully support the work of the team and there is a Governor attached to the Department.

Personal, Health, Social and Cultural Education is also overseen by a member of the RE team, leading to excellent monitoring and evaluation and a good programme of Sex and Relationships Education in line with Church policy as well as the law.

Governors have an excellent knowledge of the school and are frequent visitors, speaking to pupils and staff to ascertain views and monitor the Christian life of the school from day-to-day. The Governing Body is a mix of long-serving and newer governors, ensuring expertise and stability as well as freshness and innovation in their contribution to leadership. They are supportive but always willing to challenge to as to be fully knowledgeable before taking action – as in the possibility of appointing a chaplain, or questioning future plans to enhance bereavement counselling in the school. They accept their responsibilities willingly and ensure all statutory and canonical obligations are met.

There are a variety of partnership activities which make an excellent contribution to pupils' achievement and wellbeing - from the Study Skills Days from an external provider to help pupils improve their GCSE performance, through local rugby and cricket coaches to the involvement with mental health services, the school nurse, social workers and police to educate and support pupils to live safe and healthy lives. There are strong partnerships with some parishes and the school was linked with the local parish to provide training for confirmands. Outside agencies such as the Wycliff centre provide venues for retreats, and outside agencies are used to provide good professional development for staff, like the national Middle Leaders' course. The school works with other schools in the area in the North Yorkshire collaborative to share good practice.

Inclusion of all is a central and shared vision in the school. An excellent pastoral care system with small year groups ensures that all pupils are known to the staff and this contributes to pupils ability to understand diversity and celebrate it. The joint faith status of the school ensures that collective worship and RE are inclusive of both faiths and others. They are taught about world faiths and have had visits e.g. India week introduced pupils to a follower of Buddhism. The teaching of RE encourages respect for all faiths, mutual understanding and integrity alongside the ability to challenge and discuss the beliefs and values of others.

The community is invited into school for Musical Concerts at Christmas and Summer and there is a Christmas Fair. Some pupils also sing carols at local older people's care homes at Christmas. All parents are involved as fully as possible in the school, with regular newsletters and individual information about their child. The school is looking to develop more links with the wider community.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Christian life of the school, including chaplaincy provision, and plan improvement to outcomes for pupils 	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How well leaders and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education and plan for improvement to outcomes for pupils 	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The extent to which the governing body provides effective challenge and support for the Christian dimension of the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory and canonical responsibilities met 	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How well leaders and managers develop partnerships with other providers, organisations and services in order to promote Christian learning and pupil well-being 	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How effectively leaders and managers promote and develop Community Cohesion 	2

5. THE SCHOOL'S CAPACITY FOR SUSTAINED IMPROVEMENT

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement is Outstanding. Since the last inspection, the school has achieved and maintained its full quota of Foundation Governors and has extended the participation of pupils in planning and participating in collective worship.

The school's self-evaluation is of a very high order and shows a clear vision of appropriate priorities for the Christian Life of the school and RE.

The recently appointed Headteacher and her Leadership Team have already set in place actions to monitor and evaluate the Christian Life of the school to maintain improvement. They are a strong team with an ambitious vision for the school who work well together. The strong Governing Body is skilled, supportive and committed. The school's effectiveness as a joint Faith school will be well sustained by this team of leaders working in harmony.