
The Diocese of Hallam Section 48 Report

The Catholic Life of the School and Religious Education

Diocese of Hallam



SECTION 48 INSPECTION REPORT

THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Saint Patrick's Catholic Voluntary Academy

School URN	139347
Name of Chair of Governors	Mrs Gill Brown
Name of Head teacher	Finnuala Nelis
Date of inspection	14 June 2016
Section 48 Inspector	Michael D'Rozario

“ An enthusiasm for the things of God”

Introduction

The Inspection of St Patrick's Catholic Voluntary Academy 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 Catholic Voluntary Academy, converting to academy status in March 2013. It is a larger than average-sized primary school with nursery, within the parish of St Patrick's, Sheffield and shares the site with the church. The vast majority of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds, well-above the national average, with a high proportion of children speaking English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with disabilities and special educational needs are currently higher than the national average.

Type of School	Primary Academy Converter
Age profile of students	3 – 11 years
Number on roll	320 including Nursery
Number of students on Special Needs and Disabilities Register	38
Number of students with a Statement of Special Educational Needs	4
Number of Catholics on roll	150
Number of Other Christian Denominations	135
Number of other Faiths	35
No religious affiliation	
School Address	Barnsley Road, Sheffield S5 0QF
Telephone Number	01142 2456183
Fax Number	01142 2571463
Email	enquiries@st-patricks.sheffield.sch.uk
School Website	www.st-patricks.sheffield.sch.uk

SUMMARY JUDGEMENTS

OUTCOMES FOR PUPILS

1

THE PROVISION FOR CATHOLIC EDUCATION

1

LEADERS AND MANAGERS

1

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

1

The overall effectiveness judgement is based on all the evidence available.

- Outcomes for pupils,
- The provision for Catholic Education
- Leaders and Managers

Inspection Grades: 1 is Outstanding, 2 is Good, 3 requires improvement in order to be good, 4 is Inadequate

OUTCOMES FOR PUPILS

How good outcomes are for pupils, taking into account variations between groups.

The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life of the school.	1
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education.	2
How well pupils respond to and participate in the schools' Collective Worship	1

The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life of the school is OUTSTANDING

- Since the school converted to academy status in 2013, the revised Mission Statement provides a definition of how the school is distinctive and sets a framework as to how this community, including the children, may fulfil its role in promoting the Catholic life of the school.
- Children are proud of their school and diverse community and understand that religious belief and spiritual values are important to many people. They show an interest in the religious beliefs of others and have the opportunity to lead activities with a religious character in school and the wider community, such as on Feast days.
- There are numerous opportunities for children to take a lead in the Catholic life of the school, such as Class Ambassadors who welcome visitors to school, School Councillors who address school matters and Fair Trade Councillors who lead fundraising activities during the Autumn Term each year.
- School liturgies take place throughout the liturgical year, to which parents and the community are invited, as well in the parish church on a termly basis. Parents comment on how much they appreciate the opportunity to attend these Acts of Worship and participate in the Catholic life of the school and that they are always well attended.
- Parents confirm that they are welcomed into the school; Christian families and those with other faiths feel valued and benefit from being part of this Catholic community. They acknowledge that there is a strong sense of spirituality and recognise that "school, parish and home work as one" for the benefit of the children. This models the Catholic life of the school to children and they can play their part.
- Children can empathise with and appreciate the circumstances of those less fortunate than themselves when presented with spiritual, moral and ethical issues and have the ability to express their reasoning. Some families are refugees fleeing war-torn countries and find the school a sanctuary.
- Parents comment that the children not only embrace the Catholic life of the school but promote it, developing useful skills and positive attitudes for life in school and beyond.
- The promotion of community cohesion in the wider community is outstanding as pupils have a sense of the wider world, other people's beliefs, cultures and needs.

- There are many opportunities for children to contribute to the Common Good through fundraising events and charitable works. The children raise funds to support Cafod, Mission Together, a local children's hospital and the Hallam Caring Service. The older children entertain the elderly during Advent and forge even stronger links with the parish as they work alongside the parish St Vincent De Paul Society.
- The Parish Priest witnesses the Catholic life of the school on his fortnightly visits to classes where he works alongside the children. He states that 'all the children are children of God, no matter their faith or cultural difference' and that children are treated as individuals. He commends the work of the school in supporting some of the most vulnerable families locally through its mission and what it does to support community cohesion.
- The school is continuing to implement the Rainbows Programme to further support vulnerable children in school.

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education is GOOD

- The school has fully implemented the Come and See Religious Education programme and is introducing a range of interesting activities to engage children and support them in accessing topics.
- Class portfolios record pupils' achievements in Religious Education and show progression over time and across the age and ability range. These include samples of classwork from the Come and See programme, prayers and reflections, photographs of associated events and Acts of Collective Worship as well as appropriate cross-curricular links to deepen pupils' understanding.
- The marking and feedback policy has been applied to pupils' work in Religious Education and there are examples of this within class portfolios. The school is in the process of implementing this fully, including providing opportunities for children to respond to feedback. Marking is a strength and is analytical in responding to aspects of faith.
- Children are religiously literate and are developing knowledge and understanding appropriate to their age and ability. In some instances, individual children demonstrate knowledge of scripture beyond that which would be expected of them and school comments that a number of families introduce scripture and Christian doctrine within the home from an early age.
- Assessment and in-school moderation judges attainment in Religious Education to match that in English and mathematics. School is considering future external moderation through the Umbrella Trust and Catholic Family of Sheffield Schools. The latter has been prioritised within the School Evaluation Document.
- Lesson observations record that most pupils concentrate well and remain focussed on their tasks without direction from an adult. Differentiated activities enable access to Religious Education lessons for a wide range of learners, and teachers are considering how to make these even more interesting. In good or better lessons, children are actively involved and enjoy discussing some of the issues raised in class and find multi-media resources and practical tasks enjoyable. Here, they are challenged further to explain their thinking or to undertake their own research.
- Class Ambassadors spoke of some of the Religious Education lessons and themes that they found most interesting and of the liturgies they witnessed, such as Advent, Easter and Pentecost. They were keen to talk

about the class activities that led to these liturgical feasts and celebrations. Some children commented on the Religious Education work they undertake at home and all looked forward to the Parish Priest visiting their classrooms to help them with their work.

- Religious Education is given a high priority and children are encouraged to become independent and to think for themselves. School has done much to apply Bloom's Taxonomy to the curriculum as a whole and questioning is incorporated within the planning for Religious Education lessons.
- Systems are in place for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning by the Religious Education Co-ordinator and are becoming more robust with the guidance and support of the headteacher. An annual report on Religious Education produced by the Religious Education Co-ordinator for the school governors is planned for the next academic year.

How well pupils respond to and participate in the schools' Collective Worship is OUTSTANDING

- Children demonstrate reverence and respect during Collective Worship, such as in the whole school assembly with the theme of 'Community', as well as in class-based liturgies in school or in church that focus on 'Hope' and 'The Year of Mercy'. In all cases, children are invited to pray and reflect, with prompts for them to apply these themes to their daily lives.
- Pupils are given numerous opportunities to prepare, lead and participate in Acts of Collective Worship in school or in church. The Parish Priest values these opportunities for children, their families and the community to come together.
- Pupils are developing a good awareness of a variety of styles and forms of prayer and their liturgical formation is also developing well.
- The prayer life of the school makes a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual and moral development and their respect and behaviour at all liturgical celebrations is outstanding. Their praise through music and song is inspirational and the school choir sings at the parish mass. The School Evaluation Document states that, 'Music and drama is at the heart of theological understanding' and invites the entire community to participate.
- The school incorporates many languages within Collective Worship, celebrating the diversity of languages and cultures within the school community, giving a sense of belonging.

PROVISION

How effective the provision is for Catholic Education

The quality of teaching and how purposeful learning is in Religious Education.	2
The extent to which the Religious Education curriculum promotes pupils' learning.	1
The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school.	1

The Quality of teaching and how purposeful learning is in Religious Education is GOOD.

- Teachers and other adults are aware of pupils' capabilities, their prior learning and understanding and are adapting lessons to make them more interesting and accessible to the children. In good or better lessons, children are interested and engaged and this leads to motivated pupils and purposeful learning.
- Good quality resources, including access to scripture through a variety of forms such as new technologies, sustain pupils' concentration and they enjoy their work. This can support them in meeting challenging expectations.
- Teacher subject knowledge is being strengthened through bespoke Curriculum and Professional Development and peer support provided in-school and with the aid of Diocesan resources and organised topic days. The Religious Education Co-ordinator is in the process of designing and making further resources to support classwork.
- The positive relationship between teachers and children is a strength of the school and supports collaborative learning. The school applies the Kagan Principles to promote social interaction, interdependence and engagement in learning and this is having a positive effect during Religious Education lessons.
- Lesson plans have clear learning objectives and success criteria and take account of the needs of pupils, including those with Special Educational Needs, English as an Additional Language and Black Mixed Ethnicity and considers suitable adjustments to allow them to access activities.
- In good or better lessons, other adults are used effectively to empower and make a very positive contribution to the lesson by supporting learners well, modelling tasks and reviewing the learning objectives for the lesson.
- Teachers frequently affirm pupils and give them confidence when responding to questions or completing classwork. In good or better lessons, time is given for pupils to respond fully and verbalise their thoughts as many have English as an additional language.

The extent to which the Religious Education Curriculum promotes pupils' learning is OUTSTANDING

- The Religious Education curriculum, through the Come and See programme, meets the needs of pupils through differentiated activities and personalised resources.
- Expertise within and beyond the school is sought to enrich the curriculum and provide experiences that are memorable. The school makes use of the other faith traditions within the local community to enhance this aspect of the Come and See programme.
- There are opportunities for children to deepen their thinking and empathy for others and themes raised in Religious Education lessons are further discussed within the home, such as justice, reconciliation and hope.

- The school meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference in allocating at least 10% curriculum time to the teaching of Religious Education.
- Religious Education builds upon pupils' own experiences and allows them to relate directly with the themes covered in lessons, with some teachers sharing their personal experiences in order to illustrate a point raised in class.
- The many cross curricular links established in school, deepens pupils' learning and promotes further discussion, often providing a relevance for the themes covered in class, such as Harvest and Fair Trade.
- The Religious Education curriculum provides further opportunities for spiritual, moral, and vocation development through themes covered within Come and See.
- When speaking with Class Ambassadors, one pupil stated that within St Patrick's 'everyone is talented' and that 'everyone is equal and welcome'.

The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school is OUTSTANDING

- Acts of Collective Worship are given high profile and are well resourced and include drama, music and visual aids that relate to scripture. They reflect the strong Catholic character of the school.
- The school takes into account the variety of faith backgrounds, creating opportunities for children to learn about other world faiths, some practised within the local community.
- Opportunities are provided for children to pray both in a formal setting and also informally when expressing their private intentions to their classmates.
- Children take pride in leading Worship such as during end of topic liturgies, school assemblies and during Advent, Easter and Pentecost.
- The Religious Education Co-ordinator and Headteacher take a lead in guiding children in their planning for worship.
- Strong links are maintained with the local parish and faith communities as stated by the Parish Priest.
- Parents appreciate the welcome they receive when they attend and participate in Acts of Collective Worship and comment on the spiritual nature of these.

LEADERS AND MANAGERS

How effective the provision is for Catholic education

How well leaders, governors and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school and plan and implement improvement to outcomes for pupils.	1
How well leaders, governors and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education and plan and implement for improvement to outcomes for pupils.	1

How well leaders, governors and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school and plan and implement improvement to outcomes for pupils is OUTSTANDING..

- School leaders and governors promote the Catholic life of the school through their involvement in governance and fulfilment of the legal requirements.
- The recently appointed Religious Education Co-ordinator is monitoring provision and school leaders are engaged in the process of evaluating outcomes.
- School leaders and governors strongly support the Catholic life of the school and parents say they are invited to respond by way of questionnaires on how they see themselves as part of the school community.
- The Chair of Governors is pro-active in fulfilling her role in monitoring the provision for the Catholic life of the school and in keeping the Governing Body fully informed.
- The school continues to make good use of Curriculum and Professional Development opportunities provided by the Diocese, such as teaching resources and attendance at topic days.
- School leaders and governors are in the process of monitoring and evaluating the impact of actions identified within the School Self-Evaluation Document.
- Staff and pupils have a high regard for the Catholic Life of the school.

How well leaders, governors and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education and plan and implement for improvement to outcomes for pupils is OUTSTANDING.

- School leaders and governors have undertaken self-review when compiling the Self Evaluation Document and have identified appropriate targets and strategic action. Impact statements, when actions have been completed, will make explicit the progress made in meeting these targets and how it promotes positive outcomes for pupils.
- The school has introduced systems for monitoring and evaluating the impact of teaching and learning and this is undertaken in the main by the Religious Education Co-ordinator. The Headteacher has a mentoring and coaching role within this activity.
- Pupils generally make at least good progress, with some outstanding, as evidenced in class portfolios of work.
- Spiritual and moral development is promoted well as school leaders are committed to the Catholic values at the heart of the school's Mission Statement.

- Pupils and school staff understand the importance of making a positive contribution to the community and to the Catholic life of the school.
- The Religious Education Co-ordinator is playing a significant and effective part in leading the improvement of provision.
- Governors discharge their canonical and statutory duties effectively and formal and informal monitoring of the Catholic life of the school results in priorities for improvement being identified and acted upon. Consequently, outcomes for children are improving.

This final section draws together all the evidence and judgements made in the preceding sections

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

How effective the school is in providing Catholic Education	1
--	----------

The overall effectiveness of St Patrick's Voluntary Academy is OUTSTANDING

- The school lives out its Mission Statement as evidenced by the high quality care and strong relationships within the school and its diverse community. Parents speak very highly of their school.
- Children are eager to please and have a real pride in their faith. They are confident when they share this with friends and school staff.
- The Headteacher has worked hard to support the successful implementation of the 'Come and See' programme. The recently appointed Religious Education Co-ordinator is developing his role in order to ensure high quality practice in Religious Education.
- Collective Worship is a strength of the school with children having opportunities to plan and lead liturgies and assemblies.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good and better and continues to further improve with the support and guidance of the Headteacher and Religious Education Co-ordinator.
- Teachers continue to develop good subject knowledge and are supported well in this by the Headteacher and Religious Education Co-ordinator.
- School leaders and governors strive to improve provision and have accurately identified strengths and areas for development.

Recommendations:

- To ensure continued high quality provision in Religious Education including teaching, learning and assessment so as to maintain its current outstanding judgement.
- To provide continued opportunities to further develop assessment and moderation in Religious Education, including within the Umbrella Trust, where assessment is fully embedded and all staff have confidence in accurately levelling work.
- To develop children's response to their faith journey by introducing Liturgy Leaders as described by the school.