

**DIOCESE OF PLYMOUTH  
VICARIATE FOR EVANGELISATION CATECHESIS AND  
SCHOOLS**

**S48  
INSPECTION REPORT**



St. Augustine's Catholic Primary School  
Hardy Avenue  
Weymouth  
DT40RH

URN 140755

Head Teacher: Michael Lobo  
Chair of Governors: Rose Bruce

## Introduction

The inspection of St. Augustine's Catholic Primary School was carried out under the requirements of the Education Act 2005, and in accordance with Plymouth Diocesan Framework and Schedule for Diocesan Canonical Inspections (S48), approved by the Bishop of Plymouth.

## Context for the Inspection

St Augustine's is an average-sized primary school with 206 pupils on role. Of these 18% of children are in receipt of pupil premium with 13% of children receiving free school meals. 10% of children are on the SEN register and 3% of children have a statement of special educational needs. Significantly 14% of children have English as an additional language with 3% of children coming from British service families.

Since the last inspection the school has become an academy as part of CAST – a multi-academy trust incorporating all Catholic primary schools within the Diocese.

Since the last inspection St. Augustine's has had a high turnover of staff and in the past two years a significant increase in staff absence for circumstances which could not have been anticipated including maternity leave. The Head Teacher has been in post for the past six years.

### Key Finding Grade 2:

**John 13:34-35**

**'I give you a new commandment that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples if you love one another'. John 13:34-35**

*The greatest of all commandments is that we love one another. Living the Christian life is to live a life of love which ultimately leads to washing one another's feet. This is a journey. There are times when we succeed and there are times when we become distracted. Other priorities take over or we fall susceptible to the secular world which may be offering a different set of priorities or values. Fear, anxiety or a lack of confidence can impact on the capacity of those in leadership to fully respond to the Christian call above all other demands. As a result, although most of the time the community is responding to the call to love, there are times when this gets forgotten and anomalies creep in.*

St. Augustine's is a school firmly rooted in working for the Common Good. This is apparent in all aspects of school life. It is this focus which has maintained the equilibrium of the school during an unsettled period. New teachers, staff sickness and other absences have made it hard at times for the school to ensure that everyone within the community is fully equipped to consistently and effectively carry out their roles.

However, this is a community growing in confidence with each other and in their capacity to deliver the very best for the children in their care. As a consequence children are open, warm, confident and thriving. They are a joy to spend time with. There is a strong emphasis on nurture, children having a voice and staff being empowered to use their initiative.

St. Augustine's is a vibrant community with many strengths. Gospel values are lived out on a daily basis and reflected in the relationships within the school. Compassion, respect, forgiveness and reconciliation are paramount. Children are encouraged to support one another and they in turn are supported by the adults to respond generously. A rich and

spiritually uplifting prayer life binds the school as a community rooted in faith, hope and love. The school's mission statement 'Lead us Lord, to act justly, to love tenderly, to walk humbly' is a genuine statement of intent, embraced and expressed in the everyday conversations and actions of the community.

If there is any danger at all it is that this school hides its light under a bushel and does not recognise its strengths. It has much to offer the wider community in terms of what it means to be a Gospel orientated community fulfilling its mission in the world for the Church.

### **Summary of Key Findings**

- St. Augustine's is a school where Christ is at the centre and from whom all receive their direction.
- The Mission Statement is a sound reflection of the school's desire to be a community rooted in living out the mission of the Church
- The School's induction programme is supportive and focused on the needs of particular individuals.
- Curriculum RE has a high status and in most areas of the school it is being delivered effectively and creatively.
- The leadership team, with the governors is working with increasing confidence and effectiveness.
- The quality of care for vulnerable members of the community ensures that all children genuinely feel welcome, safe and at ease.
- The spiritual life of the school is strong. There is significant evidence that children and staff are committed to serving the Common Good. Strong relationships with the wider international community, support of 'Mary's Meals' and Fair Trade, indicate the desire of the community to grow as one that has service at its heart.
- Strong links between the Parish and the School are mutually beneficial.

### **Areas of Focus for Development**

*The school's mission as a Catholic School would be further enhanced by focusing planned development in the following areas.*

Continue to develop and fully embed the 'School as a Catholic Community' framework so that it becomes the heart of all decision making and flows from a desire to 'wash the feet of one another.'

### **St. Augustine's as a Catholic Community (Welcome, Welfare, and Witness)**

#### **Grade 2:**

#### **John 13: 34-35**

St. Augustine's is a school where there is a genuine belief in the dignity of every individual. Gospel values are recognised and seen as integral to the life of the school. Parents, governors and visitors comment on how strong the relationships are between the staff and children. This was observed on many occasions during the inspection. Children are encouraged and enabled to grow in their understanding of service to the community and

are happy to take on a variety of leadership roles such as prefects, school councillors, sports leaders and liturgy leaders. They take these roles seriously and demonstrate the 'Secrets of Success' by working hard, listening to others and trying out new things. The school council meets regularly and has as its focus not their own needs but the needs of others. It is the philosophy of the school that thinking about the needs of others is just as important as making decisions on school life.

The quality of welcome is strong. A new school entrance area has added to the warmth of this welcome, enabling parents and visitors to wait in a comfortable place and see the school's achievements displayed. Visitors and parents comment on how welcome they feel within the school. 14% of the children are from Eastern Europe. As a sign of how they are welcomed they are encouraged to share and celebrate important aspects of their culture. Recently this involved creating a carpet of flowers for Corpus Christi.

Another quality of welcome within the school is the open disposition of the adults and children. Throughout the inspection children and adults engaged with one another patiently, supportively and with a genuine sense of care for each other. At the same time, members of staff are consistently available to parents with an open door policy for them at the beginning and end of the day. In the morning this is particularly effective because children have a twenty minute window in which to arrive in class. This space allows for parents to speak to the teacher if they need to do so.

The Family Liaison worker is a valued member of the community and an asset to the school and parents. Within her role, she is enabling parents who may find it difficult, to engage more fully with the school. She supports them to overcome any fears or anxieties they may have of crossing the threshold. Regular communication and target-setting is working and hard to reach and vulnerable parents are grateful for her support. In addition vulnerable children are identified quickly and support is put in place within the form of ELSA, counselling, supervised playtimes and 1-1 support amongst other activities. Staff can share their concerns through 'MyConcern' to record any concerns or incidents. This information sharing results in a speedy response and action taken in a reflective manner.

The school has used staff training sessions and questionnaires to focus on the quality of welcome and welfare in the school. Through group activities, issues were raised and concerns identified. As a consequence it was possible to bring about appropriate changes so that not only did staff feel listened to but it brought about important improvements in relationships and practical issues.

Throughout the school there are many signs and symbols which show that St. Augustine's is rooted in Catholic Tradition. Both in the entrance hall, on the Welcome board and around the school signs and symbols reflect its mission and purpose as a Catholic School. A newly re-ordered Chapel within the school will once more provide a focal point for informal and formal prayer. In particular the school's commitment to charity and serving the Common Good is reflected in a variety of displays which further enhance the Catholic nature of the school.

Although fairly relaxed, the school induction programme serves the needs of people who join the school for the first time. Rather than providing a formal plan it is tailored to the needs of each individual. The school does not currently have any NQTs on the staff but there is a more formal process for their induction available should the needs arise. For the school induction is an important means to ensuring that all new members of staff can fully immerse themselves in the life of the school with confidence and a positive sense of well-being.

Children are happy at St. Augustine's and enjoy their lessons. They speak confidently about their learning and are keen to take on responsibility and participate constructively in the life of the school. This is seen in their engagement with Mary's Meals and the many and varied ways by which the children raise money for charity and take part in different events which raise awareness and appreciation of the needs of others.

Many activities reflect the commitment of the staff to reflect the face of Christ in all their interactions with the children, who learn from this modelling. Prayer, special liturgical events and a genuine appreciation of other faiths and beliefs adds to the growing rich and diverse nature of this school.

### **Areas of Focus for Development**

- When revisiting the school's Mission statement, as identified in the school action plan, ensure that this is done with all staff, governors and children and with a view to being a community rooted in the desire to 'wash the feet of one another'.
- To develop a strategic plan to engage more fully with parents to give them the confidence to feel a part of the community.
- To build upon the commitment to and embedded sense of serving the Common Good by sharing the many gifts and skills the school has to offer with NQTs, other teachers and TAs within CAST and further afield.

<b>St. Augustine's as a Catholic Community</b>
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<b>Leadership and Management</b>
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<b>Grade Two</b>
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<b>John 13:34-35</b>
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At the heart of the school's leadership team is a genuine desire to serve the community. For the most part it is working well with a Head Teacher who believes in delegation but ensures that people have the skills and knowledge that they need to take on designated roles and be effective in carrying them out. Although over the past two years there have been gaps due to maternity leave and illness, other members of staff have felt able to step up to the plate and take on whatever leadership roles are required. The capacity of the leadership team, to enable others to respond in this way, is strong.

With the leadership team is a committed understanding that they must lead by example and role model expectations that they have for the rest of the school. All of them attend liturgies and acts of worship and demonstrate their commitment to the school's vision and purpose.

A strength of the team is the desire that all staff should receive any appropriate CPD they need. Regular monitoring of all key subjects helps to identify any needs and provide the means for staff to access training. This is not limited to teachers but to all staff. Monitoring is an important dimension of the school's capacity to develop. Currently the school collects data termly for pupil progress meetings and measuring impact and uses daily assessment for learning to identify children who may not be keeping up academically. However, there is a need to be as clear as possible in articulating how the school monitors and records findings and to consider the role of quantitative data alongside soft data in order to effectively measure the impact of interventions for children at risk of under achieving.

Governors and the leadership team regularly review the school's action plans and priorities. The new RE governor is engaging fully with his role and has a sound understanding of what needs to be done and how he will work with the school to achieve these outcomes. Governors are well informed and some are regular visitors to the school and there is a growing confidence in the support that governors can offer the school.

The Head Teacher is a key member of the local CAST cluster group and often uses his experience to support and initiate new ways of doing things. He encourages collegiality and enables the staff to work with and learn from colleagues in the Cluster. In addition his commitment to global citizenship has led the school to have a wide range of links with other European schools. Children have had the opportunity to welcome children from Europe into their own homes and to spend time in schools abroad, learning about different cultures and ways of learning. Teachers have had the opportunity to experience different pedagogy that has enhanced their own work.

### **Focus for Development**

- To put in place a strategic plan to develop the confidence of all staff in all matters pertaining to RE teaching. In particular this would be to develop staff in relation to AT2 through pre-topic conversation.
- For the SLT to put in place a more precise monitoring process which all staff can own and implement.

<b>St. Augustine's as a Teaching and learning Community</b>
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<b>Word</b>
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<b>Grade 2</b>
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<b>John 13:34-35</b>
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Curriculum RE is given prominence in the school and is valued and seen as important by a large majority of parents, teachers, governors and the leadership team. Gradually the RE leader is gaining in her confidence to lead the subject and progress is being seen in many areas of RE. As a member of the SLT and Governing body, she is ideally placed to ensure that everyone appreciates and understands the importance of RE within the curriculum. As a consequence it has a high status within each class time-table and the staff take the subject seriously.

For the most part children are provided with rich and engaging RE lessons. Children often demonstrate a keen interest in what they were doing and a desire to do the best they can. Most lessons are well planned and although there is still work to be done on understanding how to deliver RE, most of the lessons do deliver opportunities for children to be really challenged. Deep questioning was a particular strength in some lessons observed and children engaged well. A variety of teaching strategies were employed and lessons were at their best when children were quickly engaged in purposeful activities, both challenging and achievable.

Although some found it difficult, most children are able to talk about their learning and are proud of what they have achieved. In particular the class books are a powerful reminder to the children of the many things that they have achieved in RE. It will be a positive step to ensure that these books go up with the children to their next class as an on-going resource for recalling previous work in any given topic.

Relationships between children and teachers are very positive, not least because the teachers model Christ in all of their interactions. Their patience, compassion and appreciation of different needs allows every child to feel valued and cared for. They are gradually growing in their confidence with teaching RE and are keen to develop further.

Assessment of RE is an on-going area of development with the staff keen to understand how to moderate and assess the work that children produce. In addition in some classes AFL is a strength.

### **Focus for Development**

- To develop the capacity of teachers to develop assessment and learning procedures linked to planning that will enable them to meet the needs of all pupils through differentiation and appropriate pitch.
- Develop working walls as part of RE teaching and learning.

<b>St. Augustine's as a Celebrating Community</b> <b>Moral Development</b>
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<b>Worship, Spiritual and</b>
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<b>Grade 1</b>
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<b>John 13:14-15</b>
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The Spiritual life of St. Augustine's is deeply rooted and very evident throughout the school. Many aspects of school life contribute to a genuine sense that this is a school fulfilling the mission of the Church. The prayer life is all encompassing. Early morning staff prayer is offered as a voluntary activity on a daily basis and led by one of the school's teaching assistants. Anyone can attend this and people do in varying degrees. As it takes place, everyone is reminded that even if they cannot attend there are others who are praying for them. From this daily act of worship other prayer flows.

Acts of worship are developing in a variety of ways with children and adults taking on positive roles. Music, use of ICT, Scripture and Prayer support the desire to engage the children in meaningful liturgy. Children are reflective and well behaved. They enjoy being exposed to different forms of prayer such as opportunities to pray the rosary and taking part in the Corpus Christi procession. All acts of worship experienced during the inspection were joyful, reflective and inclusive. Mass is celebrated monthly in the school and adds to the Catholic Tradition of the school. Children are well-versed in how to participate and join in appropriately with the responses.

The school is strongly supported by the Parish and in particular the local Deacon. His role is supportive, pastoral and educative. Children relate well to him and staff are encouraged to seek support for their teaching from him. He comes into school weekly, so is a well-known face around the school. In addition the parish newsletter often has sections which let the parish know what the school is doing beyond the remit of teaching. A parish sister has also played a significant role in serving the community over many years and is highly respected by all. The school is supported by a number of parishioners who come into the school to hear reading and be with children who may need extra support. First Communion preparation is shared between the school and the Parish leading to a strong sense of community and belonging to one another.

Within classes, prayer, meditation and times of reflection are an important element of the spiritual life of the school. These are rich experiences and point to the commitment of the staff to provide children with a rich and varied prayer life. Whilst focal points and display boards around the general areas of the school are pertinent and engaging, classroom focal points are less dynamic. They tend to be uniform in approach and do not engage children in a meaningful way. They are often hidden and not easy to access. This is an area which if developed would further enhance the engagement of children in their own prayer life.

Through the traditions and practices of the Catholic Church, children have a context for learning what is right and just. They are able to develop a critical conscience which ultimately gives them freedom because they know how to live and what gives them life. Their commitment to serving others and caring for their world is very strong and is supported by the many and varied activities on offer to them including those of prayer and worship.

### **Focus for Development**

1. To look at how focal points in classrooms can be more meaningful and child orientated and develop the skills of the staff to facilitate these.
2. Create more opportunities for voluntary prayer particularly for the children including a possible retreat programme.

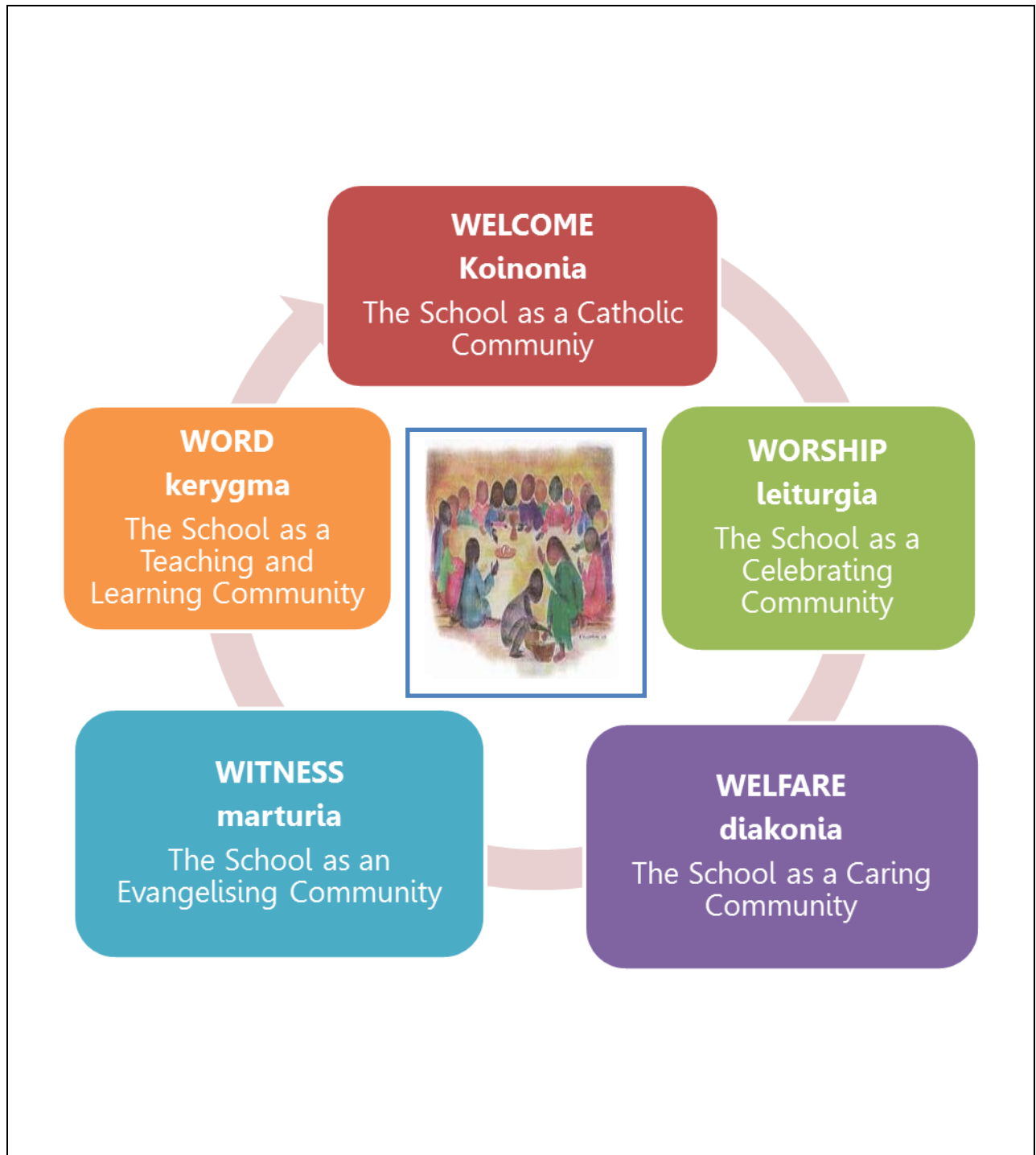
### **Conclusion**

This inspection has allowed St. Augustine's to show just how strong the faith life of the school is and how it is developing. This is a school with many riches. As the community grows in its self-belief it is hoped that it will grow to become a school which truly seeks to serve not only those within but the wider community. It is a school where parents can feel confident about the experience their children are having. The Bishop and the Diocese can feel confident that this is a school striving to live the mission of the Church in its fullness.

**Sarah Adams**  
**June 2016**



## THE SCHOOL AS A CATHOLIC COMMUNITY



## **Introduction**

The Catholic community is one that is rooted in Baptism, Eucharist and an on-going call to Conversion. The areas of Welcome, Worship, Word, Welfare and Witness can be described as the key components of what it means to live the Christian life. As such, the school as a Catholic community, is called to embrace these as a way of being community and living the mission of the Church. The manner in which these are expressed reveal for us the heart of where the community lies.

### **Koinonia - (κοινωνία) Welcome**

Koinonia is the Greek word for communion, for participation, for the sharing with one another. It is to be welcome an 'other' in fellowship and love. It is to be of an open disposition to receive from another and to respond in love. Within the community it can be minimalized to the gesture of greeting at the front entrance. In school it might simply be seen as the role of the receptionist. Koinonia however, requires a much greater vision of what it means to welcome. Ultimately it speaks of the disposition of every member of the community to be open to the needs of another, be that to listen, to hear, to respond, to act. The idea of welcome will be embedded in all aspects of the school's way of doing things.

### **Leiturgia – (Λειτουργία) Worship**

The Greek word 'leiturgia' means public activity or in a religious sense it means 'respect' or 'service'. When it was adopted by the Church it meant to carry out a religious service. It is a public service as opposed to private prayer and concerns the Christian community gathering first and foremost to celebrate the paschal mystery of Jesus Christ. It is also a time when the community gathers to be reconciled, to celebrate, to be fed, and to be sent out in mission. Central to the Catholic School is its call to be a Eucharistic community in the widest sense – that is to be the body of Christ ready to serve the world in its fullness. All prayer, all liturgy ultimately is intended to lead to this. It is not something that happens once a week and has no further meaning. It is an invitation to live each day what has been received through Word and Eucharist.

### **Marturia – (μαρτυρία) Witness**

The core meaning of the Greek word marturia means to testify, to give witness, from which we get the word martyr. Simply it means to share our values and faith with the world and our local community so that others may come to know the love of Christ. Within the Catholic School community this will mean promoting a shared vision and shared values which stem from a shared sense of the teaching of the Gospel. The Christian is called to witness to Christ's teaching in the way they live their life. Like John the Baptist these values are those which direct others to Christ.

### **Diakonia - (διακονία) Welfare**

The word 'diakonia' comes from the Greek word to mean to serve the poor and the oppressed. The emphasis within the word is on service and care for others. Within the Christian community diakonia is a way of being with others. It encourages care and concern for every person regardless of who they are or where they come from. Within the Catholic school, service lies at the heart of the community. It is about how children are supported in their learning, shown compassion when their behaviour is challenging and cared for when

they are unhappy or in need. Equally it is about how adults are cared for and care for one another. At the same time the community is one that reaches out to the local community and the wider world, recognising the needs of others and responding to these generously.

### **Kerygma – (κήρυγμα) Word**

Kerygma is the New Testament Greek word for preaching or proclaiming the message of Christ. Within the context of the school this is expressed both in how we expose young people to the person of Christ as revealed in scripture, and the manner in which we teach. Access to the WORD of God through scripture and Christian tradition is considered to be a significant part of what the Christian community is about. By the way they are taught children come to know that God speaks to us in the way that we experience and engage with kindness, beauty, justice, the wonders of the natural world, relationships and the needs of others. It is therefore seen as important that in every subject, every lesson, positive values and attitudes are communicated. A confident and open attitude to teaching of lessons well thought about and prepared is central to achieving this.

### **Self-Review**

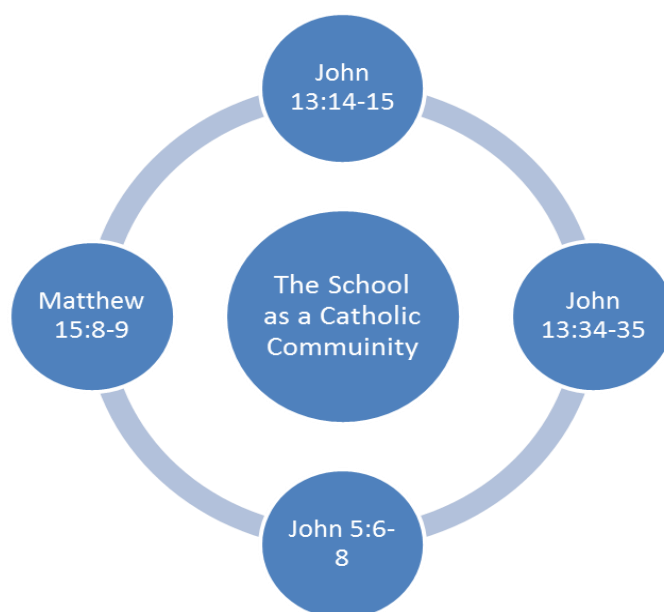
There will be three key areas within which these five elements will be reviewed:

- The School as a Catholic Community (Welcome, Witness and Welfare)
- The School as a Teaching and Learning Community (Word)
- The School as a Celebrating Community (Worship)

For each of these sections focus areas for evaluation are offered and means of gathering evidence to support this work. See appendix for further guidance.

### **Scripture Passages**

Scripture passages have been selected to highlight where the focus for the community may be at any one time. These will act as a guideline for the self-review process when schools consider the health of its community. The approach to these is best considered within the context of a cycle. Any any one time the school may find different areas of its life at different points on the cycle:



### CONTEXT FOR THE CHOICE OF SPECIFIC SCRIPTURE REFERENCES –

Scripture has throughout history been interpreted in a variety of ways and is constantly being reinterpreted. The interpretations given here are one way of looking at how the passages may be understood within our own context. Equally there are many other passages which may have been selected but for now these reflect what is at the heart of our mission and seem appropriate.

**Grade 1: 'If I, your Lord and Teacher have washed your feet, you are also to wash one another's feet. For I have set you an example, that you should also do as I have done to you'. John 13 14-15**

The night before he died Jesus washed the feet of his disciples. Peter, one of the disciples was affronted. To wash another's feet was the lowest job of all, one done by the servants. Jesus, as the leader of the community he was about to establish, was very clear. The call to Christian ministry is a call to service, a humbling act of giving to one another. Unless we can serve our brothers and sisters we can have no part of in the life of Christ. A secular understanding of leadership often results in a top down mentality and little shared responsibility. The Christian community however, is one where those in authority act out of their desire to serve, not to be served. As a consequence the message of serving one another permeates the whole community.

**Grade 2: 'I give you a new commandment that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples if you love one another'. John 13:34-35**

The greatest of all commandments is that we love one another. Living the Christian life is to live a life of love which ultimately leads to washing one another's feet. This is a journey. There are times when we succeed and there are times when we become distracted. Other priorities take over or we fall susceptible to the secular world which may be offering a different set of priorities or values. Fear, anxiety or a lack of confidence can impact on the

capacity of those in leadership to fully respond to the Christian call above all other demands. As a result, although most of the time the community is responding to the call to love, there are times when this gets forgotten and anomalies creep in.

**Grade: 3 'Do you want to be made well? The sick man answered him, 'Sir, I have no one to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up; and while I am making my way someone else steps down ahead of me.' Jesus said to him, 'Stand up, take your mat and walk.' John 5:6-8'**

The sick man lying by the pool of Bethsaida has been there for a many years, stuck in the one place. Although he wants to be better he appears not to be able to move without some help. Jesus offers this to him and orders him to get up and walk. It could be said that the sick man has resided for too long in a 'blame someone else way of being'. Sometimes leaders and school communities do become 'stuck'. Leaders blame teachers, teachers blame students or leaders and the culture prevents an honest engagement in what needs to be done for any progress to be made. Schools stuck or struggling in this kind of cycle need help and support to break free. Healing and reconciliation may need to be a part of this journey. Honest clarification of priorities and challenging self-searching needs to take place for change to occur.

**Grade 4: 'This people honour me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me; in vain do they worship me, teaching human precepts as doctrines. Matthew 15:8-9**

The Pharisees and scribes accuse Jesus and his disciples of breaking the rules. The rules have become more important and the heart has been lost. The Pharisees and Scribes may appear to follow the law but they have forgotten what it all means. Where there is little service, no attention to love and no understanding of what it means to live a fully developed Christian life, there is little heart. When this is the case the school has lost sight of its meaning and purpose. As a consequence children are being failed and adults not supported to do what is right. Only a radical re-evaluation of what it means to be a Catholic community and a Catholic school will lead to a rediscovery of the commandment: 'Love one another' and ultimately to people washing one another's feet.