
**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

**Holy Family Catholic School, a Catholic Voluntary Academy
Stainforth, Doncaster**

School URN	141056
Name of Chair of Governors	Peter O'Neill
Name of Head teacher	Bernadette Nesbit
Date of inspection	18 th February 2016
Section 48 Inspector	Alan Dewhurst

“ An enthusiasm for the things of God”

Introduction

The Inspection of Holy Family Catholic School, a 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

Holy Family Catholic Primary School is a Catholic Voluntary Academy, part of Our Lady of Doncaster Umbrella Trust, situated in Stainforth, Doncaster. The school serves the two parishes of Our Lady of the Assumption in Stainforth and St Joseph & St Nicholas, Moorends.

Pupils come predominantly from the local area, which includes some of the most deprived wards in the Doncaster local authority. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is above the national average. An increasing proportion of pupils (22%) are drawn from the local Traveller community. Currently 53% of the pupils are Catholic.

Type of School	Voluntary Academy
Age profile of students	3-11
Number on roll	219
Number of students on Special Needs and Disabilities Register	22
Number of students with a Statement of Special Educational Needs	1
Number of Catholics on roll	116
Number of Other Christian Denominations	66
Number of other Faiths No religious affiliation	37
School Address	Kirton Lane, Stainforth, Doncaster DN7 5BL
Telephone Number	01302 841283
Fax Number	01302 350855
Email	head@holyfamily.doncaster.sch.uk
School Website	www.holyfamily.doncaster.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.

- Pupils are fully committed to living out the motto of the school: “Learning together, praying together, playing together”. They support each other with great care and show admirable respect for all members of their school community. They are immensely proud of their school, which they describe as “a family”.
- They express their views confidently and coherently. They are able to discuss scripture and the teachings of Jesus in a mature manner, appropriate to their ages. They can relate the teachings of the gospel to their own situations, and apply these concepts to their own lives.
- Pupils take responsibility for activities within the school community enthusiastically, such as serving on the school council, or as a member of the liturgy, safety and welcoming committees. They see this service as a chance to share their talents with others and to help to develop the community.
- Pupils take advantage of the opportunities and support that the school offers, particularly through the planned spiritual and cultural activities, such as the visit of the In-Reality team or the Rainbows programme, to build their own confidence and to collaborate together.
- A well-established system of sanctions and rewards helps all pupils to take full responsibility for their actions, and, as a consequence, behaviour is characterised by exemplary manners and thought for others.
- Pupils freely participate in charitable activities that the school undertakes, such as supporting local fundraising initiatives or national campaigns.

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

- Pupils' keenness and commitment to their learning in Religious Education is very evident in the classroom and in their workbooks. They tackle a variety of tasks with enthusiasm, and are very willing to contribute to class discussions, to collaborative activities, such as taking on a role-play or a side of the argument in a debate, or to undertake sustained individual tasks.
- Pupils' attainment is good, with the standards mostly above average in the latter years of Key Stage 2. This represents good progress from the majority and outstanding progress from some, given their starting points on entry to the school. An increased focus by teachers on the importance of scripture within religious learning has contributed significantly to a rise in attainment.
- The school's introduction of a 'best practice' model for the teaching of Religious Education has impacted positively on pupils' enjoyment of their learning, particularly in regard to giving them more regular opportunity to reflect at the start of lessons.

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

- All pupils demonstrate a high degree of respect and reverence during Collective Worship, as recognised by staff, governors, parents and the pupils themselves. They recognise the significance of the special nature of liturgies, and respond accordingly.
- The recent introduction of a pupils' liturgy committee has had a significant impact on Collective Worship in the classroom, with older pupils assisting younger ones to plan and lead a liturgy on a regular basis. Pupils have responded enthusiastically, and understand very well the core elements of a liturgy, and how to choose appropriate themes and activities for the seasons of the Church's year and the given setting.
- The introduction of high-quality prayer journals for each child in Upper Key Stage 2 has helped these pupils to develop their own individual prayers and given them the opportunity to take time to pray privately on a regular basis.
- Pupils have responded very positively to the skilful use of artefacts in setting up a focused area for liturgy, as an aid to creating a reflective and spiritual context for each liturgy. They also recognise the small school chapel as a special and holy place.

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' subject knowledge within Religious Education is generally good. Lessons are planned with imagination, so as to best engage pupils' interest, and in response to their needs.
- There is some evidence of an increasing incidence of outstanding teaching. Where teaching is at its best, there is a careful balance between exposition by the teacher and active participation by the pupils in their learning. In these instances, expectations are always high, pupils are challenged to develop their religious vocabulary and to explain their ideas in detail and are schooled effectively in the use of scripture to show their understanding of key concepts within the teaching of the gospel. Scripture readings are matched effectively to issues relevant to pupils in the present day so that they can see how the gospel can influence their own lives.
- Good and imaginative use is generally made of a range of high quality resources, such as interactive whiteboards, video, bibles and religious artefacts. Learning is augmented by attractive learning environments with informative and thoughtful displays relevant to a current topic, drawing pupils into the key vocabulary and concepts.
- Where teaching is not yet outstanding, there is evidence of less challenging tasks, not matched as exactly as they could be to pupils' potential. There can also be less attention to detail in these instances, and less regular written work or other evidence of learning.
- The whole school marking policy is used well, for the most part, in supporting pupils' learning and focussing them on improvement of their work. The phrase "Today we are learning to be better at...", used as an introduction to the learning objective of each lesson, is a mark of how improvement and progress are key features of teaching.

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

- The school approaches the Religious Education curriculum with much innovation and imagination. The framework of the “Come and See” scheme of work is adapted to ensure that it can be delivered effectively according to the local situation of the school and in response to seasonal variation and other national or international initiatives.
- For example, the Year of Mercy has been skilfully intertwined with the current start of Lent, giving the opportunity for classes to explore and deepen their understanding of the concepts of forgiveness, contrition and compassion. The children are recognising the significance of this important event, and are responding to it effectively, for instance, with the use of Lenten promises or the consideration of the plight of refugees.
- The Religious Education curriculum fully meets the requirements of the Bishops' conference in forming 10% of the school timetable.
- The curriculum is enhanced by a number of enrichment activities designed to broaden experience and bring the religious context into external activity. Examples of these are the annual retreat by Year 6 to Holy Island and the Big Sing Liturgy Thing event.
- The school is developing its partnership with the local Catholic family of schools, utilising lead Religious Education teachers to spread best practice and sharing staff development days.

The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school is outstanding.

- The school staff works hard to provide the pupils with a range of collective worship opportunities that develop their understanding of Catholic tradition and the purpose of liturgy. Significant points in the Church's year, such as Advent or Lent, are marked with a whole-school approach, with the use of vehicles such as Advent wreaths or Lenten promise trees to focus worship. Masses for pairs of classes are organised at least twice for each child throughout the year, and these are held at church so as to share the liturgy with parents and parish members. Other activities, such as the travelling crib in Advent, are used to strengthen home-school links.
- Themes chosen by pupils and staff for classroom worship reflect their clear understanding of how the church uses scripture to reflect on the Christian message,

and expects its people to respond appropriately and take a sense of mission out into the world.

- The recent focus on developing the leadership of liturgy by pupils has been highly effective, enthusing all of the classes and helping them to plan and evaluate worship with confidence. The document produced by the school to aid staff – “Celebrating the liturgical year in school” – is a high-quality resource to support teachers.
- Despite the absence of a resident parish priest for several years, the school has managed to maintain contacts with its feeder parishes, through its involvement in supporting the sacramental programme for example and through its regular school newsletter to parishes. The school has been well supported by other local clergy in providing Eucharistic celebrations at regular intervals.

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
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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.

- The Senior Leadership team, staff and the governors are united in ensuring the expectation that the Catholic mission of the school be realised in all that it undertakes. They actively promote the ‘family’ community of the school, living out the gospel each day, very effectively. This can be seen in the quality of the relationships between all members of the community, staff with pupils, pupils with each other, and the welcome given to parents and other visitors to the school.
- The School Improvement Plan has the development of the Catholic Life of the school as its first priority, and its action points within the plan reflect the findings of rigorous and regular monitoring. This enables the school to focus effectively on its current needs.

- Governors are frequent visitors to the school. Foundation governors from both feeder parishes, interviewed during the inspection, recognise their important role in ensuring the catholic mission is implemented. They are well-informed and respond to their role in holding the school to account through challenge and enquiry on a regular basis. Questionnaires have been used to elicit the views of parents, and learning walks have focussed on initiatives that the school has undertaken.
- Because of high quality support and advice given to them, staff members are clear in the understanding of their mission in developing the Catholic life of the school, and are enthusiastic in promoting it effectively.

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.

- The plans for improvement in the provision for Religious Education are also included as first priority in the School Improvement Plan. Regular monitoring exercises, such as through the scrutiny of Religious Education books and moderation of assessment with other schools, have informed leaders with the necessary knowledge of how to move the school forward, and action has been decisive and successful.
- The ‘Best Practice’ approach to teaching Religious Education, shared with all staff, is a highly effective model of how to make Religious Education distinctive, in contrast to the teaching of other core subjects such as English and Maths. This blueprint has guided teachers in setting the scene for Religious Education lessons in a special way that enables pupils to understand the special nature of the subject. It has also focussed strongly on giving pupils a thorough schooling and experience of access to scripture as a key factor in the development of understanding.
- High-quality support, pastoral care and guidance, often led by effective teaching assistants, are having a positive impact on standards, building pupils’ confidence in their learning and bolstering self-esteem, particularly in difficult circumstances.
- Assessment is being used effectively and consistently to monitor achievement. Diocesan requirements and developments have been effectively disseminated by the head teacher, as Religious Education subject leader, to teachers so that they have become increasingly confident in this area.
- Regular opportunities for staff development, including attendance at diocesan courses and shared events with other Catholic schools are helping to build the knowledge and understanding of teachers.

- The school's own self evaluation of its strengths and priority areas for improvement is an accurate picture of its position, resulting in well targeted strategic action.

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
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The overall effectiveness of Holy Family Catholic Primary School is outstanding.

- Outcomes for pupils are reflected in the way in which parents, staff, governors and pupils themselves view the school as a highly effective, welcoming, supportive Catholic community, imbuing the children with strong values and excellent skills and understanding of Religious Education and the expectations of Catholic practice.
- The provision offered by the school in developing pupils according to the school’s mission is outstanding because the Religious Education curriculum and the opportunities for participation in high-quality Collective Worship are very effective. This is enshrined in the new Vision Statement that states that “Holy Family is a place that is committed to create challenging, stimulating and effective learning..(where)..Christ is our inspiration”.
- Leaders and governors are outstandingly effective in monitoring, evaluating and improving the Catholic life of the school through accurate analysis of the school’s needs and effective strategic action in implementing improvement.

What the school should do to make further improvements:

- Continue to develop opportunities for children of all ages to lead Acts of Collective Worship, as modelled by the present Liturgy Committee.
- Ensure that outstanding practice in the teaching of Religious Education is shared effectively with all teachers