

DIOCESE OF LEEDS



DIOCESAN BOARD FOR INSPECTIONS **CANON LAW 806** **FINAL INSPECTION REPORT** **INCORPORATING** **SECTION 48** THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

ST. JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC VOLUNTARY ACADEMY
Newgate
Pontefract
WF84AA

School URN

3843333

Date of Inspection and OE
grade

29th March-30th March 2017
Outstanding

E-mail address

headteacher@sjp.bkcat.co.uk

Chair of Governors

Father Simon Lodge

Headteacher

Mr Darren Redfern

RE Subject Leader

Mrs Emma Everett

Date and grade of last S48
inspection

June 2012 Outstanding

Section 48 Inspector/s

Mrs Kath Spillane
Mrs Liz Taylor

INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS: how effective the school is in providing Catholic Education.

1

The above judgement on overall effectiveness is based on all the available evidence following the evaluation of:

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

OUTCOMES FOR PUPILS

1

THE PROVISION FOR CATHOLIC EDUCATION

1

LEADERS AND MANAGERS

1

Summary of key findings:

This is an outstanding school

- Leaders, governors and managers lead by example. They clearly demonstrate their firm commitment to the Church's mission in education. They have developed a learning environment where everyone - child or adult - is valued, respected and supported to be the very best person they can be.
- The school works in active partnership with the Diocese of Leeds and BKCAT (Bishop Konstant Catholic Academy Trust). Good sporting and transition links are also established with St. Wilfrid's Catholic High School.
- The staff and pupils are proud of the school and morale is high.
- This is a school which is highly valued and is at the centre of both the parish and the wider community.
- Parents speak highly of the school and feel privileged to be part of the 'joyful community' where pupils 'enjoy coming to school and friendships are very strong'.
- Support staff significantly contribute to the progress in Religious Education (RE) of those pupils with special educational needs.
- Standards in RE are very high by the time the pupils leave Key stage 2. Pupils are able to consider religious issues at a deep level and are challenged and supported to think of key issues of faith.
- School governors are very committed and have the experience to evaluate the work of the school and challenge leaders to ensure that the quality of Catholic Life, curricular RE and the centrality of the faith are the drivers of success of this Catholic school.
- Key issues identified in the last Section 48 (s48) RE inspection have been addressed.
- The school's RE curriculum meets Bishops' Conference requirements. All canonical and statutory duties are fulfilled.

What the school needs to do to improve further.

- Support the Academy Council in continuing to develop its role in monitoring and evaluating curriculum RE and the Catholic Life of the school, through providing opportunities for involvement in evaluating and moderating levels of attainment.
- Ensure a consistent use of the school's marking policy so all pupils are given opportunities to respond to marking and enabled to achieve higher levels in their learning.
- Continue to develop pupils' involvement in Collective Worship (CW), ensuring that they have opportunities to plan, as well as deliver CW.

Information about this inspection

The Inspection of St. Joseph's Voluntary Catholic Academy was carried out under the requirements of the Education Act 2005, and in accordance with the Leeds Diocesan Framework and Schedule for s48 Inspections approved by the Diocesan Administrator of Leeds. The inspection reviews and evaluates how effective the school is in providing Catholic Education. This process begins with the school's own self-evaluation and the inspection schedule follows the criteria set by the National Board of Religious Inspectors and Advisers (NBRIA 2012).

The inspectors reviewed in detail the following aspects:

- The extent to which key issues identified for action in the school's previous s48 RE inspection have been addressed.
- The extent to which pupils, contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the School.
- How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in RE.
- The quality of teaching and how purposeful pupil learning is in RE.
- The extent to which the RE curriculum promotes pupils' learning.
- The quality of CW provided at the school and pupils' active participation, preparation and leadership of it.
- The extent to which the leaders, governor and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Catholic Education and plan further improvements to outcomes for pupils.

The inspection was carried out by one s48 inspector who was "shadowed" by a trainee s48 inspector for the Diocese of Leeds. The inspection took place over a one and a half day period. All teaching areas were visited. A sample of 4 RE lessons, 3 CW's were observed. In addition, Benediction, two Circle Times, a meditation and a meeting of the parish/parent prayer group were observed. Meetings were held with the headteacher, RE subject leader, staff, parish priest (who is also the Chair of the Academy Council), Vice Chair, parents and pupils. A comprehensive selection of school RE documentation was scrutinised including the School Improvement Plan; RE policies; the RE subject leader's monitoring and evaluation File (including monitoring visit reports); pupil tracking/RE progress data; RE moderated portfolio and pupils' RE and literacy workbooks. The school's RE displays, website and newsletters were also sampled.

Information about this school

- St. Joseph's is a one form entry Catholic Primary School which serves the parish of St. Joseph of Pontefract, which incorporates the churches of St. Michael, Knottingley and St. Joseph, Tanshelf.
- The school converted to an academy in 2012 and is part of the Bishop Konstant Catholic Academy Trust.

- There are 262 children in the school including nursery. 87% are Catholic.
- Attendance of pupils is very high at 96.4%
- The percentage of pupils with English as an additional language in July 2016 was below 7%
- The percentage of pupils with special needs is below the national average at 11.7%
- The percentage of pupils on free school meals is 3.3% which is below the national average.
- There are 12 members of the teaching staff, 67% of whom are Catholics.
- A breakfast club is provided before school and there are a variety of extra-curricular opportunities provided after school.

Full report - inspection judgements

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils are outstanding

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.	1
How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship.	2

- The pupils' contribution to the Catholic Life of St. Joseph's is outstanding. They are proud of their school and understand that the ethos helps them to understand how to respect and care for others.
- Behaviour of pupils in lessons and around the school is outstanding and pupils are polite, responsive and engaged in all aspects of school life. There is a culture of praise within the school and pupils respond well. However, when things do go wrong the pupils are all confident that their voices are heard and problems are rectified.
- The school provides an environment which is calm and secure with interesting and attractive displays in all areas of the school, which reflect its Catholic nature and Catholic Life.
- Pupils achieve in and enjoy their RE lessons. Teachers use a variety of learning resources and teaching methods to make lessons challenging and interesting for the pupils. Pupils are keen to share their thoughts and feelings in lessons and have a very deep understanding of religion which is evident in written work and during discussions.
- Pupils' attainment by the end of key stage 2 is high and they are aware of their 'I Can' statements and how they will help them make progress. Ensuring that there is a consistent approach to implementing the school's marking policy will contribute to raising standards for all pupils. The RE coordinator has reviewed the tracking system used for RE and the school now uses the same system as for Literacy and Maths and the system recommended by the BKCAT. Pupil progress meetings are held termly and progress in RE is discussed in addition to reading, writing and maths. This ensures that teachers have an up to date understanding of each pupil's progress and level of attainment.
- Pupils are reflective and respectful and benefit from both formal and informal acts of worship. It is obvious that they are in a community of prayer where their faith is nurtured, developed and supported by all the adults, staff, governors, parish priest and parents connected to the school.
- Pupils demonstrate a clear understanding of the Church's main liturgical celebrations and have many opportunities to participate in a range of acts of worship including liturgies, Masses, Benediction and the Stations of the Cross and meditation. Through these acts of worship the school actively plans to support the Mission

Statement...”inspired by centuries of Catholic teaching, we begin to learn how to serve each other and our world with the same joy which we see in Jesus, Our Saviour and Our Lord”.

- Older pupils lead worship confidently and there are plans in place to develop this in order to enable the pupils to plan liturgies for their peers.
- The school encourages participation in local and diocesan events, e.g. pupils recently attended the ordination of a former seminarian in the parish, who, after being on placement maintained links several years after 'moving on'.
- Children join in carol singing in the town at Christmas and also participate in the annual Batley Torchlight Procession.
- Pupils are encouraged to deepen their understanding of other world faiths through regular planned activities highlighting other faiths.
- The pupils are aware of the needs of others. They are keen to be part of the Mini Vinnies group in school and enthusiastically raise money for charities and the school.
- Parents are very supportive and speak enthusiastically about the ‘holistic’ experiences the pupils have whilst at the school. They say that the pupils enjoy coming to the school and relationships with all the community are very strong. The parents value the support they can give to the school. This was evidenced during the inspection when the very active ‘Friends of St. Joseph’s’ organised a very well attended coffee morning to raise money for furnishings for the joint school/parish hall.

The provision for Catholic Education is outstanding

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

- Teachers generally have good subject knowledge and in most lessons the pupils are challenged and inspired. Pupils’ behaviour is exemplary in lessons and around the school.
- Where teaching is strongest a wide variety of approaches are used, so that pupils have an opportunity to learn, think deeply and apply their learning to their own experiences.
- In an inspirational Year 6 lesson, pupils were asked to write a report on Holy Week and were challenged to think at different levels. The atmosphere in the class was very secure with pupils being given the opportunity to answer questions and ask their own questions to fill gaps in their knowledge. The pace of the teaching was such that all the pupils were completely immersed in their learning and were engaged throughout the lesson. Resources are used effectively and additional members of staff support the pupils and encourage them to do their best.
- In a Year 3 lesson pupils had to make links between the Last Supper and the Mass. The atmosphere in the class was very informal and relaxed and there was a very good atmosphere of learning in the class. The expectations were clearly established by the teacher and challenge and differentiation were clear from the outset. Pupils are encouraged to think deeply and are able to articulate their answers clearly.
- Monitoring of RE is part of the school’s annual cycle of monitoring and evaluation and the RE Co-ordinator takes part in moderation of RE with members of the BKCAT. The school has taken the decision to review the system of tracking of the standards of attainment in RE to bring it into line with the school system of tracking for literacy and maths.
- Pupils have ‘I Can’ statements which they know, and they are aware of their targets to raise their attainment; however there is some inconsistency in implementing the school’s

marking policy. The best marking indicates the next steps the pupils should take to improve their work and achieve their targets. A consistent approach to the implementation of the school's marking policy would provide support for all pupils and ensure that high quality marking is evident in all books and used to raise attainment.

- The school uses the diocesan approved RE scheme, 'The Way, the Truth and the Life' and a substantial part of the curriculum budget has been used to ensure appropriate materials have been purchased to supplement the scheme. 'Statements to Live by,' work on other faiths and opportunities to visit Myddleton Grange, The Batley Torchlight Procession and the Bishops' Mass at Ripon Cathedral all help to enrich the pupils' religious experiences.
- The school's self-evaluation system is accurate and the Action Plan for RE clearly details areas for development and the key steps required to effect progress and improvement.
- There is evidence through the monitoring of pupils' books and displays, and in discussion with the pupils, that they are very confident and are able to articulate their thoughts clearly and with maturity. They make good progress in RE and speak with conviction of their faith journey.
- The school works very closely with the BKCAT and parish and this promotes learning and engagement with the community. The collaborative work within the partnership and with other agencies extends and enriches the curriculum and the experience of the pupils.
- Parents are appreciative of the work of the school and report that their pupils enjoy coming to school and are well prepared to take their place in the community when they leave the school and transfer to secondary education. The school is highly regarded in the local community and the school takes part in both local and parish events outside school.
- The pupils appreciate the opportunities they are given to develop their spiritual and moral understanding through being given responsibilities, such as being Mini Vinnies and School Councillors. Children know that they can speak of their worries and concerns and who they can speak to. They also learn to respect the feelings and thoughts of others and know through the teaching of Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) how to become healthy, independent and responsible members of society
- The parish community supports the school by acting as catechists for sacramental preparation, attending 'Stay and Play' sessions in school and also by taking part in the weekly prayer group meetings led by the RE Co-ordinator before school.

The Leadership and Management are outstanding

How well leaders, governors and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Catholic Education and plan and implement improvement to outcomes for pupils.	1
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- The Headteacher, managers and governors are deeply committed to the church's mission in education and they are obviously very proud of the success of the school. Supportive home/school/parish links exist and there is high morale running through the school.
- The Catholic mission of the school is totally supported by an enthusiastic and committed Academy Council who have a high level of expertise and competency and complement the skills of the staff of the school.
- Leadership of RE and Catholic Life is purposeful, analytical and enthusiastic. The RE Co-ordinator ensures that RE and CW are central and effective in the life of the school, and she is ambitious to continue giving all the pupils, and all the school community, every opportunity to access high quality and meaningful opportunities. For example, a prayer

group meets before school each week and is led by the coordinator to provide a time for peaceful prayer and reflection outside of school time for parents and parishioners.

- The Chair of the Academy Council is the parish priest and is a regular visitor to the school. He has very clear expectations of the Academy Council and the importance their work has on the Catholic Life of the school. It is clear that governors know their role is to support the development and maintenance of RE in the school and that RE and the Catholic Life is the focus for all work in this school community. They appreciate the 'Designated Governor Day' when the governors are able to come into school and see it in action, and they can also have a designated time to discuss the curriculum with each member of staff.
- Over the past three years RE has been given high importance in budgeting and this has enabled the school to purchase display resources around the school, buy the diocesan recommended scheme, The Way, the Truth and the Life, and also support attendance at diocesan celebrations for both staff and pupils.
- Governors fulfil their role as 'critical friends' by holding the school to account. They are fully involved in reviewing performance and understand key performance data issues. Governors regularly review policies in relation to RE and the Catholic Life of the school and implement changes to stay in line with diocesan and government expectations. Most recently the Academy Council have reviewed and agreed the new diocesan Relationships and Sex Education Policy.
- Regular reports to the governors by the RE Co-ordinator ensure that they have the knowledge and information to evaluate RE and the Catholic Life, and they use this to challenge and support leaders in the school and hold them to account. Governors involvement in work scrutiny and moderation of attainment in RE would increase their knowledge of the RE curriculum, and help them become more informed of the levels of attainment.
- RE has a high profile in the school and this is illustrated by the excellent, rich spiritual environment provided by leaders. Because RE has a high priority in the budget resources are extensive and of a high quality. The opportunity which the shared hall gives for collaborative work between parish and school exemplifies the close partnership working and this is fundamental to the success of the school in the community.
- Governors have ensured that all canonical and statutory requirements are fulfilled by the school.