

**DENOMINATIONAL INSPECTION
REPORT (Section 48)**

on

**THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL
AND
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

School: St Cuthbert's Catholic Primary School

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School URN: 119597

Headteacher: Mr Des Kennedy

Chair of Governors: Mr Paul NJ Marley

Section 48 Inspector: Mrs Adrienne Delaney

Date of Inspection: November 15th 2013

The inspection report is produced for the Rt. Reverend Michael Campbell O.S.A., the Bishop of Lancaster (c.f. Code Canon Law, 804, 806), and for the Governing Body of the school (Education Act 2005, Section 48). The inspection reviews, evaluates and plans further improvements in the school's witness to the Catholic faith and Curriculum Religious Education. This process begins with the school's own self-evaluation.

The inspection schedule follows criteria set by the National Board of Advisers and Inspectors.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Cuthbert's Catholic Primary School is an average sized school situated just outside Blackpool town centre. It serves an area of high deprivation and the number of pupils eligible for free school meals is above the national average. There are a significant number of pupils in the school who are of east European heritage. The number of pupils joining or leaving during the school year is above average. The school is currently experiencing a period of staffing instability.

FACTUAL INFORMATION

Pupil Catchment:

Number of pupils on roll:	205
Planned Admission Number of Pupils:	30
Percentage of pupils baptised Catholics:	68%
Percentage of pupils from other Christian denominations:	15%
Percentage of pupils from other faith backgrounds:	3%
Percentage of pupils with no religious affiliation:	14%
Percentage of pupils from ethnic groups:	21%
Percentage of pupils with special needs:	18%

Staffing

Full-time teachers:	10
Part-time teachers:	4
Percentage of Catholic teachers:	61%
Percentage of teachers with CCRS:	71%

Percentage of learning time given to RE:

R	10%	Yr 4	10%
Yr 1	10%	Yr 5	10%
Yr 2	10%	Yr 6	10%
Yr 3	10%		

Parish served by the school:

1. St Cuthbert's

Overall Effectiveness

2

Capacity for sustained improvement

2

MAIN FINDINGS

St Cuthbert's is a good Catholic school. It is well led by a committed head teacher and its positive Catholic ethos results in well-behaved, polite pupils. The spiritual and moral development of pupils is given high priority. A strong, inclusive ethos pervades the school and all staff work effectively to ensure that pupils have the best possible care. The vision for Catholic education that the head teacher has for the school is shared by governors and by staff. Good relationships are evident and these are helping to build a harmonious and inclusive community.

Children are happy to come to St. Cuthbert's and they demonstrate pride in their school, which means that there are positive attitudes to learning. Progress across the school is good with improvement evident since the last RE inspection. Attainment is at least satisfactory from a very low baseline and pupils make good progress by the end of Key Stage Two. Pupils are well supported in their learning and the additional support is generally well-deployed. However, more able pupils are not always being sufficiently challenged.

The school provides pupils with opportunities to contribute to the Catholic life of St. Cuthbert's. Pupils show interest in the spiritual and moral values of others and respond in a caring manner to those in need. Their level of participation in the liturgical life of the school is good and this increases as they progress through the key stages. The promotion of spiritual and moral development is good.

Teaching is good and there is evidence of this in lessons that are generally well-planned to meet pupils' individual abilities. However, there is not always advice available to pupils as to how to improve their work. Assessment and monitoring systems are in place and are having a positive impact on individual pupil progress. Parents and carers are kept informed as to learning and progress. The Religious Education curriculum is good and it is enhanced by the use of some additional resources.

The head teacher, who is sharing the leadership role as a result of staff absence, has a clear vision for RE and for the Catholic life of St Cuthbert's. He is committed to improving outcomes for pupils. The head teacher is aware of the needs of his own, and his staff's, professional development. Governors are committed to discharging their responsibilities well and are

eager to both challenge and to support the school. Partnerships with other providers and organisations have been established and are promoting Catholic learning. Pupils are developing a sense of belonging to a wider community and an understanding of the common good.

Capacity for sustained improvement

The school's capacity for sustained improvement is good. All areas for improvement since the last inspection have now been acted upon and good procedures are in place.

The quality of self-evaluation is now good and governors, senior managers and staff demonstrate a clear understanding of areas for development. There is a focus on raising standards in RE and a general commitment to improvement.

What the school needs to do to improve further

Continue to raise standards in RE by:

- Ensuring that more able pupils are planned for, so that they are better challenged in RE.
- Ensuring that marking is consistently demonstrating the next steps for pupils to take to improve.

PUPILS

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

2

Outcomes for pupils at St Cuthbert's in terms of RE, Collective Worship and the Catholic life of the school are good. The majority of pupils enjoy RE and have positive attitudes towards their learning; they speak enthusiastically about their work.

Evidence shows that from low starting points, pupils make good progress in RE through the Foundation Stage and through Key Stages One and Two. Evidence also shows that progress has been improving since the last inspection at all key stages and by the end of Key Stage Two attainment in RE is at least in line with national expectations. However more able pupils need to be provided with more challenging tasks to enable them to achieve higher standards. Pupils eligible for free school meals or with learning difficulties are supported well, being given work to match their abilities, and make appropriate progress. Pupils who are new to England are also well supported and are making good progress from their starting

points. Vulnerable pupils are identified and their progress is tracked carefully.

Pupils are making a good contribution to the Catholic life of the school and derive benefit from it. Older pupils interviewed spoke with pride of their involvement in the school council. Pupils are considerate towards each other and have a good understanding of right and wrong. Behaviour towards each other is outstanding and playground behaviour demonstrates the Catholic ethos of the school. Pupils were observed consoling each other and they spoke about "Listening to Jesus' words in our kind and caring school".

Pupils' response to the religious life of others is good; they are able to express their own spiritual beliefs and those of others. This was illustrated in discussions with pupils during the inspection when they spoke knowledgeably about their own faith and world faiths, particularly those of monotheistic traditions.

Pupils are attentive and actively participate in a variety of prayerful settings. They understand the main celebrations in the liturgical year and celebrate them within their parish community. Many pupils are able to plan aspects of worship and in acts of worship seen during the inspection they showed a sense of consideration and justice for others: this is also demonstrated by the good relationships shared within the whole school, the parish, local and global community. Pupils sing joyfully and can engage in silent reflection. They understand religious seasons and show respect for religious artefacts. They understand and appreciate traditional prayers and liturgy. Inclusion is a strength of school life; prayer, Collective Worship and liturgy are fully inclusive. Pupils say they are part of God's family in St Cuthbert's.

LEADERS AND MANAGERS

How effective leaders and managers are in developing the Catholic life of the School

2

The school's leaders and managers promote the Catholic life of the school well. The head teacher, governors and staff give the Catholic mission of the school priority and pupils' moral and spiritual development is generally at the heart of school improvement. Monitoring and evaluation of provision for RE are good overall. The head and senior leadership team have put plans in place to ensure that outcomes have a positive impact on teaching, learning, progress and standards. They have high expectations of staff and pupils in school.

Plans are in place to ensure that there is continuous improvement, as is evidenced by the improving results. The head teacher and his staff's dedication are instrumental in the drive to provide good teaching and learning in RE. Improvements are ongoing and are making a positive impact on standards.

Governors challenge and support the Catholic life of the school effectively. They are active in planning for continuous improvement. The parish priest is a regular visitor to the school, supporting staff, parents and pupils. Governors are committed to upholding their statutory and canonical duties, fulfilling their responsibilities as questioner and supporter of the head teacher. Training for governors, and leadership within the school has enabled this to happen.

Leaders and managers develop effective partnerships with other providers and services to promote Catholic learning and pupil well-being. Good and exciting opportunities have been shared with neighbouring Catholic schools to develop curriculum ideas and facilitate pupils' access to inter schools projects. The school works well with the parish and local community to provide good learning opportunities for the pupils to enjoy.

PROVISION

How effective the provision is for Catholic Education

2

The quality of teaching and learning in RE is good. In lessons observed, the teachers used good questioning techniques, gave clear explanations and made sound use of resources, including information technology (ICT), to ensure that pupils make sound progress. The subject knowledge of teachers is good and plans are in place for further professional development. Planning activities suited to pupils' individual abilities and the provision of challenging tasks is not yet fully embedded but assessment and monitoring procedures are now good. Tracking progress in RE has become an integral part of the school's monitoring system and is now part of the target setting process.

The school provides a good RE curriculum. Relevant strategies are employed to ensure that pupils' learning needs are met. However, pupils are not consistently given the necessary advice on how to improve their work. Long and short term planning is now being monitored to ensure that pupils make good progress.

Teachers use visits and visitors to enhance learning and this has a positive impact on progress and enriches the curriculum. There are plans to make further links with other faith communities. The moral and spiritual development of pupils is enriched by the opportunities offered. With respect to the time allocated in the timetable the curriculum is meeting the requirements of the Bishops' Conference in full.

The quality of Collective Worship in the school is given high priority and staff ensure that the needs of the pupils are met. There is evidence of pupils' development in the preparation and delivery of this worship. Prayer is central to the life of the school and formal and informal opportunities for prayer are offered, for example, a Rosary Group which was well attended in October. Acts of Collective Worship have a significant impact on pupils, parents and the parish. They are public demonstrations of the ethos of the school.

SUMMARY OF INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Key for inspection grades:

Grade 1 **Outstanding** Grade 2 **Good** Grade 3 **Satisfactory** Grade 4 **Unsatisfactory**

Overall effectiveness	2
The school's capacity for sustained improvement	2
PUPILS How good outcomes are for pupils, taking particular account of variations between different groups	2
• how well do pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education?	2
❖ the quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
❖ the quality of learning for pupils with particular learning needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
❖ pupils' attainment in Religious Education	2
• to what extent do pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life of the school?	2
• how well do pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship?	2
LEADERS AND MANAGERS How effective are leaders and managers in developing the Catholic life of the School?	2
• how well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic life of the school and plan improvement to outcomes for pupils?	2
• how well leaders and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education and plan for improvement to outcomes for pupils?	2
• the extent to which the governing body provides effective challenge and support for the Catholic dimension of the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory and canonical responsibilities met?	2
• how well leaders and managers develop partnerships with other providers, organisations and services in order to promote Catholic learning and well being?	2
• how effectively leaders and managers promote Community Cohesion?	2
PROVISION How effective is the provision for Catholic Education?	2
• the quality of teaching and purposeful learning in Religious Education?	2
• the effectiveness of assessment and academic guidance in Religious Education?	2
• the extent to which Religious Education curriculum meets pupils' needs?	2
• the quality of Collective Worship provided by the school?	2