

# 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 FRANCIS CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL** **Myers Lane, Bradford BD2 4ES**

School URN

107332

Date of S48 inspection and  
OE grade

21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> February, 2018  
OE Grade 1 Outstanding

E-mail address

office@stfrancis.bradford.sch.uk

Chair of Governors

Mrs. J. Reynard

Headteacher

Mr. D. Copley (Executive Head)  
Mrs. A. Haines (Head of School)

RE Subject Leader

Miss J. Trotter

Date and grade of last S48  
Inspection

14-15 February, 2013  
OE Grade 1 Outstanding

Section 48 Inspector/s

Mr. D. Gott

# 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 is the school in providing Catholic Education.

1

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

**CATHOLIC LIFE**

1

**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

1

**COLLECTIVE WORSHIP**

1

## Summary of key findings:

### **This is an Outstanding Catholic Primary School**

- The inspirational executive headteacher and the senior leadership team, including the head of school and Religious Education (RE) subject leader, lead by example. They are supported by a very committed governing body and extremely dedicated teaching and support staff. Morale is high at St. Francis’.
- The faithful stewardship of the governing body is clearly manifest throughout the school ensuring that its ethos remains true to the Catholic Church’s mission in education.
- The pastoral care provided by the parish priest helps to strengthen school / parish links. There is a strong sense of vocation at St. Francis’.
- This is a very welcoming and inclusive school. There is a very strong family feeling of belonging. The needs of individual and groups of pupils are met to an outstanding degree.
- The school mission statement: ‘Together we are exploring our special gifts; together we are growing towards God’ is prominently displayed in the main school entrance for all to see and is evidently lived out in the day to day classroom life of school.
- Pupil behaviour in RE lessons is outstanding because almost all pupils visibly enjoy their RE and are rarely off task.
- Pupils are very caring, for themselves, for others in need and for the wellbeing of the planet. They are particularly excited at the prospect of St. Francis’ becoming a Forest School.
- The majority of RE teaching is not yet outstanding, however it is never less than good and frequently exhibits outstanding aspects. No inadequate RE teaching was evidenced.
- From their varied starting points almost all pupils make good progress in RE in each key stage, with many achieving outstanding progress.
- Pupils’ RE attainment, as indicated by externally moderated teacher assessments, is outstanding.
- Collective Worship is outstanding and a central aspect of school life for all pupils, whatever their own particular faith background, and forms the heart of every school

celebration. Opportunities for communal and personal prayer are a valued everyday experience for pupils and staff at St. Francis'.

- The school has established a number of highly productive partnerships including St. Cuthbert & The First Martyrs', other educational institutions and charities.
- Key issues raised in the last Section 48 (S48) inspection have been addressed.
- The governing body has ensured that all canonical and statutory duties are fulfilled.

### **What the school needs to do to improve further.**

- Increase the proportion of RE teaching that is outstanding by sharing existing excellent practice across the school.
- Ensure more consistency in the effective use of time in RE lessons maximising opportunities for pupil learning.

### **Information about this inspection**

The Inspection of St Francis Catholic Primary School, Bradford was carried out under the requirements of the Education Act 2005, and in accordance with the Leeds Diocesan Framework and Schedule for Section 48 Inspections approved by the Bishop 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 2017).

The inspector reviewed in detail the following aspects:

- The extent to which any key issues identified for action in the previous S48 have been addressed.
- The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school.
- The quality of the school's Catholic Life provision.
- How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in RE.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in RE.
- How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship (CW).
- The quality of the school's CW provision.
- How well leaders and governors promote, monitor, and evaluate the school's Catholic Life, Religious Education and Collective Worship.
- The inspection was carried out by one inspector over one and a half days.
- During the inspection a series of joint teaching and learning walks were undertaken with senior leaders; 4 RE lessons and 4 acts of CW covering all key stages were observed; 1 voluntary staff prayer meeting, held before the start of the school day, and 1 voluntary Lenten prayer gathering for parents/carers and pupils were also evidenced.
- Formal meetings took place with the executive headteacher, head of school, RE subject leader, a group of teaching and support staff, a group of pupils, a group of parents and school governors.

- Informal conversations were held with a wide range of pupils and staff throughout the school.
- Scrutiny of pupils' RE books, including teachers' marking and assessment of RE took place. The school's RE data, pupil progress and attainment tracking system were also scrutinised jointly with members of the leadership team, including the RE subject leader.
- Scrutiny of the School Development Plan including RE Action Plan, RE budget including the staff training and development log, the school website, newsletters, RE displays in classrooms and public areas, together with digital evidence of school religious activities held throughout the liturgical year were all noted during the inspection.

### **Information about this school**

- St Francis Catholic Primary School is an average sized, oversubscribed, one form entry Voluntary Aided school of the Diocese of Leeds. The school serves the parish of St. Francis of Assisi and Immaculate Conception, Bradford. The school educates pupils from 3-11 years.
- Currently there are 229 pupils on roll (including part time Foundation 1 nursery pupils); of these, 86% are Catholic pupils. (81% in 2013).
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium is broadly average. The proportion supported through action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- There are 9 full time and 2 part time teachers, 2 of whom hold the Catholic Certificate of Religious Studies (CCRS). The full time equivalent (f.t.e.) total number of Catholic teachers is 8.2. All teachers teach RE. St. Francis' also employs 9 (f.t.e.) classroom support staff and 1 Catholic Care worker on a part time basis.
- A number of significant staffing changes have taken place at St. Francis' since the last S48 inspection (2013). The current RE subject leader has held the responsibility since September 2014. The current executive headteacher was appointed in June 2015 and was designated as a national leader of education (NLE) in June 2017. The current parish priest took up his appointment to the parish in September 2016, since when he has also been a school governor. The current head of school took up her appointment in September 2017.
- The school provides a Breakfast Club and a very wide range of after school extra curricular activities.
- The school works in partnership with St. Cuthbert & The First Martyrs', a wide range of schools through the Catholic Schools Partnership Teaching School Alliance (CSPTSA) including St. Bede's and St. Joseph's Catholic College Bradford to which the majority of pupils transfer for their secondary education.
- St Francis' has achieved a number of externally accredited benchmarks including 'Active Mark', 'Healthy School', 'Speaker's School Council', and 'Music Mark'. Currently the school is working towards 'Forest School' status.

## **Full report - inspection judgements**

### **CATHOLIC LIFE**

#### **The Catholic Life of the school is Outstanding**

The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school.	1
The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school	1
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision of the Catholic Life of the school	1

- The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of St. Francis' is outstanding. Almost all pupils appreciate and actively participate in the vibrant Catholic Life and mission of the school. The school's vision statement for pupils, staff, and governors: 'To be an outstanding Catholic Primary School in everything we do every day' drives the school mission statement: 'Together we are exploring our special gifts; together we are growing towards God.'
- During Lent through the school's RE Council, pupils take an active lead in confidently and enthusiastically contributing to the school's 'Lenten Labyrinth' and promotion of its Catholic Life and mission.
- Pupils are particularly alert to the needs of others at the local, national and international levels. They readily participate in various charitable fund raising projects in support of Catholic Care, Cafod, the St. Vincent de Paul (SVP) society (Mini Vinnies), the Bradford Soup Kitchen, Martin House and Heart Research UK
- St. Francis' is a very welcoming school. Year 6 pupils seek out ways of helping pupils new to the school. They particularly enjoy being buddies to Foundation Stage pupils at lunchtimes. The RE Council and Year 6 ambassadors have even produced a series of welcoming videos for those new to the school.
- Pupils, staff, governors, parents and grandparents, comment positively on the strong family feeling of 'belonging' at St. Francis. Many parents are former pupils of the school and comment how pleased they are that the school has maintained its strong Catholic traditions.
- In 'living out' the school's mission in their day-to-day school lives the behaviour of almost all pupils is exemplary at all times. They show great respect for each other and treat each other as children of God. They particularly enjoy attending the school's Friday Celebration Merit Worship, where pupils, staff and parents gather to recognise and celebrate the gifts and talents of pupils and share in one another's successes over the week.
- The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school is outstanding. The whole school teaching and learning environment is of very high quality and joyfully proclaims the educational mission of the Church to its visitors and the whole school community alike. This is exemplified in the quotation: 'Every person in our school is Christ to our school community and beyond' which is prominently displayed alongside pupils' high quality religious artwork.
- The school's mission statement is prominently displayed in the school reception area, the main school hall and throughout the wider school teaching and learning areas. It also appears in the school's information brochure, newsletters, internal and external school notice boards, policy documentation and the school website.
- All staff are fully committed to playing their part in making the school mission statement a living reality at the school. They promote high standards of behaviour by their example. They enthusiastically take part and actively promote all school activities which reflect the Catholic Life and mission of the school, frequently offering their discretionary time to lead weekly voluntary staff prayer meetings before the start of the school day. Similarly, during the liturgical seasons of Advent and Lent they also lead and support voluntary opportunities for pupils and parents to attend prayer gatherings

before the start of the school day. As evidenced during the inspection, these are attended by a significant number of parents and children. "I look forward to coming. It is such a lovely start to our day", one parent commented.

- School leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the Catholic Life of the school to an outstanding degree. They are deeply committed to the Church's mission in education. They are energised by their tasks and strongly inspire the sense of vocation which is notably present at all levels at St. Francis'.
- The School Development Plan clearly prioritises increasing the development of Catholic Life across the school for all those with leadership responsibility.
- The RE subject leader is tireless in her monitoring and evaluating of Catholic Life of the school. Inspection evidence confirms that all the teaching areas visited support the Catholic Life of the school. Seasonal artefacts associated with the Church's Liturgical Year, imagery containing pupils own work/prayers and artefacts associated with the relevant topic of study, all complement the RE focal point where the day-to-day celebration of the spiritual dimension of classroom life is celebrated.
- Pupils are very knowledgeable about their school's patron saint and are proud to wear his image on their school uniform.
- Pupils know that the Feast Day of St. Francis is celebrated on 4<sup>th</sup> October with a whole school Mass in the school.
- One pupil recalled the visit of a Franciscan friar to their class. He remembered the story of how St. Francis helped a leper. Other pupils recalled that the friar tries to follow St. Francis' example by helping to care for the homeless people in Bradford.
- The governing body work hard to provide a safe, secure, well maintained and cared for teaching and learning environment for pupils and staff, reflecting the Church's teaching regarding the dignity of the human person and the obligation to care for the human needs of one another.
- Following the premature death of a pupil the governors and the school have worked with the whole school community to create a dedicated area within the school's Peace Garden to honour his memory. Similarly a new media suite, constructed within the school, is to be named after him. The school also fund raises for the Martin House charity which cared for him.
- The school has established good communication systems with parents and carers about the Catholic Life of the school through regular newsletters, the school website, Twitter, the Wednesday Word, parent-teacher review meetings, annual written reports and the circulation of religious artefacts at seasonal times of the year, for example travelling cribs.
- The RE curriculum is also enriched by retreat and mission experiences. Most recently, the Sion community led a week long mission in the school. Very positive comments were made about the mission to the inspector by pupils, staff and parents.
- The RE curriculum also encompasses the study of other faiths, which helps to promote greater understanding and social cohesion between people of differing beliefs and practices.
- The school greatly values the chaplaincy provision provided for the school by the parish priest. Class and whole school Masses are regularly celebrated throughout the year in school and in the parish church. Parishioners are always invited into school Masses. Pupils are also altar servers. Seasonal non eucharistic liturgies are also held, to mark significant events in the Church's year.
- The school also works in active partnership with the parish priest, parents and parish catechists in the preparation of pupils for the Sacrament of Reconciliation and Holy Communion. Home, school, parish links are strongly promoted by all of the above. The school is also fortunate to have parish catechists, members of the SVP and parish children's liturgy leaders on the school staff.

- The school has a well established self evaluation system which includes pupil /parent/ governor voice feedback via questionnaire surveys.
- The school actively supports and promotes the Bishop’s vision for the Catholic Life of the diocese throughout the school. Pupils make visits to St. Anne’s Cathedral and have led a diocesan Good Shepherd liturgy on behalf of Catholic Care. They also take a particularly active part in promoting the musical aspects of Catholic Life. The school choir and dancers perform at local senior citizen care homes. A growing group of pupils have joined the Bradford Boys and Girls Choirs and regularly sing at Mass at St. Walburga’s and St. Joseph’s Bradford. Senior leaders meet and greet pupils at the beginning and end of the school day to help model and build positive relationships as children of God.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

### Religious Education is Outstanding

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education	<b>1</b>
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education	<b>2</b>
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education	<b>1</b>

- Religious education at St. Francis’ is outstanding. Direct classroom observations including conversations with pupils and staff evidence that individual and groups of pupils are keen to achieve. Almost all pupils concentrate exceptionally well and have an accurate view of their RE level of attainment.
- Teachers follow the school marking policy and consequently pupils know what they need to do to achieve their next RE attainment target.
- The excellent provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage gives the children a very good grounding in the Catholic Life, RE and Collective Worship of the school. From their RE starting points the majority of pupils make accelerated progress by Key Stage 1.
- From their various starting points, almost all pupils make good progress in RE in all key stages with many achieving outstanding progress. Pupils’ attainment over time shows an improving trend. Almost all pupils achieve above average attainment in RE using available moderated data from the partnership cluster of schools to which St. Francis’ belongs (CSPTSA).
- Almost all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs, are also making progress comparable to the progress of other pupils.
- Scrutiny evidence of RE books indicates that pupils generally take a pride in the presentation of their RE work and that relative to their age and abilities, they are making consistently good progress or above.
- Planning is very effectively linked to current assessment of pupils’ prior learning. Teachers know their pupils very well and appropriately differentiate learning outcomes to ensure that they are meeting every child’s needs. More able pupils are appropriately challenged.

- Whilst there is some outstanding RE teaching, the majority of RE teaching is not yet outstanding, but it is never less than good. No inadequate RE teaching was evidenced.
- Where outstanding teaching was evidenced teachers consistently used time highly effectively, spending less time on teacher talk and allowing more time for pupils to become actively engaged in their learning activities earlier in the lesson, such that they could fully experience success within the lesson time available. Similarly, opportunities for learning reviews and individual lesson feedback were far more effective in outstanding lessons.
- All teachers teach RE with confidence because of their high levels of subject knowledge and their visible interest, enjoyment and enthusiasm for teaching the subject. All teachers effectively utilise the RE driver words linked to the particular RE topic.
- Pupil behaviour evidenced during RE lessons is of a very high order, especially when working collaboratively without close supervision. This enabled pupils to make very good progress. In conversations with pupils, they are quick to say that RE is one of their favourite subjects.
- There is very effective use of other adults to support learning. They actively share in the RE lesson planning and greatly contribute to the team learning ethos evidenced in classrooms across the whole school. They play a very strong part in building up the confidence of the pupils placed in their care.
- Leaders and governors exhibit an outstanding commitment to promoting, monitoring and evaluating the provision for RE at St. Francis'. They see self evaluation as a fundamental aspect of their role in promoting the Church's mission in Education.
- They work as a very cohesive team to ensure that the school's RE curriculum is given the highest priority and that it meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales and that any additional requirements of the Bishop of Leeds are also met in every respect and in every Key Stage. The school uses the diocesan approved RE programme of study: The Way, the truth & the Life. This is supplemented by a variety of other RE resources such as RE Today, Cafod and Catholic Care materials. The school supplements the RE curriculum with the weekly 'statements to live by'.
- At least 10% of the taught week is allocated to the teaching of RE as evidenced in this inspection.
- The school is fortunate to have a full governing body with a wide range of skills and experience. Under the strong leadership of the chair of governors, they are effective in holding the school's senior management to account. A very comprehensive staff handbook is in use.
- The governing body have established good succession management initiatives in conjunction with Leeds Trinity University's student teacher placement links.
- Governors and leaders have appropriately reviewed and approved a school Education for Personal Relationships (EPR) Policy, in line with current diocesan guidance. An appropriate programme of study is in place rooted within the school's Personal Social and Health Education (PSHE) framework.
- The school's performance management system incorporates aspects of Catholic Life, RE and Collective Worship, including access to appropriate CPD.
- Governors ensure that the RE budget is in line with or above other core curriculum subjects. Recent expenditure has covered the purchase of additional high quality seasonal CW / teaching and learning resources (Lenten Labyrinth and Godly Play); subscriptions to The Wednesday Word and RE Today; access to a weekly Catholic Care Worker; provision of The Sion Community Mission Week; The Diocesan Choral Service; and attendance at Creative RE CPD courses for teachers.

- The extremely dedicated RE subject leader ensures that assessment in RE is well embedded within the school's RE curriculum. As a Specialist Leader of Education, she has an inspiring vision of outstanding teaching and learning. She has a very high level of RE teaching expertise and is focused on securing this vision of excellence to enable each pupil to achieve their full potential throughout the school. She is tireless in leading and supporting staff in the tracking, evaluating and moderating of their pupils' progress and attainment in RE. Where data suggests that an individual pupil or particular groups of pupils are underachieving, review systems are in place to make sure that the pupils' learning needs are being sufficiently met. Equally if an individual or group of pupils is making accelerated progress checks are made to ensure that the level of challenge is appropriate.
- The governing body has a link governor for the Catholic Life, RE and CW of the school. She is a regular visitor in school and meets with the RE subject leader on a regular basis.
- Foundation governors have ensured that the canonical requirements of the school's foundation trust continue to be adhered to: Religion Education and Religious Worship conducted at St. Francis' are in accordance with the teachings and rites of the Catholic Church.

## COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

### Collective Worship is Outstanding

<b>How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The quality of provision for Collective Worship</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship</b>	<b>1</b>

- At the start of the school year a detailed liturgical calendar for the year is planned out by the school in consultation with the parish priest.
- There is genuine enthusiasm for collective worship both on the part of the staff and of the pupils. It is given high priority and is central to the life of the school for all pupils, whatever their own particular faith background, and forms the heart of all school celebrations.
- Praying together is part of the daily experience of all pupils and staff at St. Francis' and takes many different forms including class, key stage and whole school workshops. In addition class prayers are said at the beginning of the school day, lunchtimes and at the end of the school day.
- From their earliest years pupils gain experience in actively participating in acts of Collective Worship. This is most evident in the vibrant singing and signing of hymns.
- An outstanding whole school/non-eucharistic liturgy led by the head of school introduced station 1 of the school's 'Lenten Labyrinth'- using the artefacts on the RE focal point as a discussion prompt. One volunteer from each class was invited to pick up a stone from the display and to drop it gently into the water and watch it sink. The children reflected in silence upon how Jesus promises us that we will never be left alone with our worries (rocks). If we call upon his help, we will feel our worries fall away just as the stone falls away in water. We will feel freer and lighter and stronger to

walk and talk with Jesus as our friend. Pupils were invited to visit the Lenten Labyrinth in the school's Peace Garden to drop their stone and talk to Jesus if they have worries.

- The executive headteacher, head of school and RE subject leader are very visible leaders of CW. They are passionate models of outstanding practice for staff and pupils. They have expert knowledge in how to plan, prepare and deliver highly effective CW and are very keen to pass on and train up new staff and pupils to do the same.
- Scrutiny of the RE subject leader's files evidence that a programme of regular monitoring of CW takes place. This evidences that the Diocese of Leeds' guidelines on CW, including formats for teacher and pupil led planning, are in use across all Key Stages. Similarly, the vibrant quality of the school's RE displays evidences that diocesan guidelines on Displays in Catholic Schools have also been put into practice across the school.
- St Francis' is visibly a school where 'Christ is at the Centre' of all that leaders and governors seek to achieve.