

DIOCESE OF MIDDLESBROUGH

Inspection of Religious Education
Collective Worship
and
The Catholic Life of the School



School: St. Mary's R.C. Primary School

Address: Cross Lanes
Richmond
North Yorkshire
DL10 7DZ

URN: 121655
Headteacher: Mrs. Katie Whitehead

Chair: Mrs. Anna White/Mrs. Arlene Kane

Date: 9th and 10th July 2018
Inspector: Mrs. Margaret Swinhoe

Date & Grade of Last Inspection: May 2013 **Grade: 2**

Overall Grade for this Inspection: **Grade: 2**

A Report from:
The Diocese of Middlesbrough Schools' Service
Section 48 Inspection Team
50a The Avenue
Linthorpe
Middlesbrough TS5 6QT

INTRODUCTION

This inspection was carried out under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005.

The report of the inspection is produced for the Bishop of Middlesbrough (Code of Canon Law 804 and 806) and for the governors of the school. 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 Religious Inspectors and Advisers.

What Inspection Grades mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding Catholic school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a Catholic school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Requires Improvement	These features, though of adequate quality, require improvement to be good.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate Catholic school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils.

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St. Mary's is a smaller than average primary school situated in a Georgian market town in North Yorkshire. It is on the neighbouring site to the Catholic secondary school, with which it has a close partnership. Pupils are primarily from white British backgrounds. The number of pupils with special educational needs is below the local and national average, as is the deprivation indicator. Mobility is relatively high since the school is situated close to a large army base. There has been a period of some turbulence with staffing issues over the last 3 years at both classroom and leadership levels. The headteacher has been in post since September 2016, having been promoted from deputy headteacher from within the school. The deputy headteacher, who is not classroom-based, was appointed in January 2017. Staffing has now stabilised.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION

- 7 lessons were observed
- whole-school Act of Collective Worship was observed
- 2 class Acts Collective Worship were observed
- meetings with the headteacher, who is also the Religious Education (RE) leader, pupils, parish priest, parents, governors; parishioners were held
- scrutiny of data and tracking from all classes took place
- diocesan self-evaluation document (DSED); school self-evaluation form (SEF), minutes of meetings; planning files, Collective Worship file; Catholic Life file; Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) floor books; Religious Education (RE) leader files, governors' monitoring file were analysed
- scrutiny of pupils' work-books from all classes took place.
- meetings with year two, year four, year six teachers were held

Pupil Catchment:

Number of pupils on roll: **171**

Planned Admission Number of Pupils: **30**

Percentage of pupils baptised RC: **45%**

Percentage of pupils from other Christian Denominations:**39%**

Percentage of pupils from other World Faiths: **1%**

Percentage of pupils with no religious affiliation: **15%**

Percentage of pupils with special needs: **5.3%**

Teaching Staff:

Full-time Teachers: **8** (including headteacher and deputy headteacher)

Part-time Teachers: **2**

Percentage of Catholic Teachers: **30%**

Support Staff:

Full-time Classroom Support Staff: **8**

Part-time Classroom Support Staff: **1** (an apprentice TA; one day at college)

Percentage of Catholic Classroom Support Staff: **0%**

Percentage of teachers with CCRS: **4%**

Percentage of learning time given to R.E:

10% in all key stages

Parishes served by the School:

St. Joseph and St. Francis Xavier Richmond; St. Mary's Wycliffe; St. Joan of Arc Catterick Garrison; St. Pater and St. Paul's Leyburn.

1. OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

2

MAIN FINDINGS

St Mary's is a good Catholic school with a number of outstanding features. The whole work of the school is rooted firmly in its mission statement, 'Omnia, vincit Caritas' (Charity conquers all) upon which the vision statement 'Learning with fun, friends, family and faith' is based. Jesus is very much at the heart of the school. The atmosphere in St. Mary's is one of warmth, ease and harmony. The pupils are articulate, caring and respectful towards each other and all adults associated with the school. Pupils demonstrate a confidence and belief in themselves which enables them to be resilient and responsive to challenge, whether in planning an Act of Collective Worship, a charity initiative or answering difficult questions in class. Pupils are extremely proud of their school and feel very safe. They are very appreciative of the work the staff do for them and of the opportunities offered to them by the school. Parents hold the school in the highest esteem, as one parent said, 'I just think it's the perfect school'. Parents recognise the journey the school has been on and support wholeheartedly parent meetings, charity events, Acts of Collective Worship, sports days and a host of other activities to which they are always invited, many of which are organised by an energetic parent-teacher group. Extra-curricular activities are wide-ranging and often based on the interests of staff. These have included Zumba, sewing, sports, golf and rugby. The 'wrap-around club' is a feature of the school and is run by dedicated, charismatic staff. Behaviour everywhere in the school is extremely good. Pupils' leadership is seen in the well-established Collective Worship and school council groups. The obvious skills that pupils have in leadership and team-work are not yet given sufficient acknowledgement.

Leadership of the school by senior leaders and governors is outstanding. The headteacher's determination and passion for the school has been the driving force behind school improvement and she is determined that this rapid progress will continue. The leadership know the school well and know how to continue the drive for improvement. However, regular, robust monitoring is not yet established sufficiently enough to ensure consistent forward impetus in school improvement. The leadership has worked hard to establish an ethos of justice, restitution and the highest of expectations, in every aspect, for all pupils. Pupils enjoy coming to school because of this. Pupils and parents know that everyone is different but that all are held in equal regard. This is because all vulnerable and disadvantaged pupils are well resourced and generally achieve well comparative to their peers. Teaching assistants are well deployed and play a key-role in supporting learning so that almost all pupils make good progress. Leadership is now working hard to establish partnerships within the local and Catholic community as the school becomes increasingly more outward-facing.

Attainment is good and progress is good overall, but this is not yet consistent across the whole school. Teaching is good overall and there are examples of outstanding practice. Most teachers have very high aspirations for their pupils in RE, and plan lessons which give pupils the opportunity to achieve highly. Staff are growing in confidence as their subject knowledge increases. Most lessons are well-managed, pacy, and aspirational. The recent RE topic on the stewardship of God's world, was received with great enthusiasm and empathy in all classes. Attitudes to learning are almost always of the highest calibre. Assessment and moderation is generally accurate but all staff are not yet confident in every aspect.

Collective Worship is outstanding and is central to the life of the school. Pupil-led worship is often creative and imaginative. Pupil-led Collective Worship has developed so well because of the guidance and encouragement of the staff. Staff attend all diocesan training and the impact of this training is apparent. Pupils have the confidence and skill to try new ideas and are not worried if things do not go exactly to plan. This means that Acts of Collective Worship

are very meaningful to the pupils. It is commendable how all staff, including those who do not have a background in the Catholic faith, are so committed to the work and the mission of St. Mary's.

What the school needs to do to improve further:

- Raise attainment further by:
 - providing training on moderating work and identifying next steps for progression
 - continuing to increase staff confidence and subject knowledge
 - ensuring that differentiation is consistently implemented across the school
 - visiting outstanding schools with a focus on raising attainment levels
 - including RE, Catholic Life and/or Collective Worship in staff performance management
- Ensure consistency of high-quality teaching and expectations across the school by continuing to develop rigorous monitoring of RE by leaders and governors
- Embed personalised programmes for those pupils who need focused interventions
- Extend pupil leadership by:
 - formalising, or introducing, student groups such as 'Minnie-Vinnies', 'Eco-warriors', buddy-systems, school council, chaplaincy groups
 - extending the Collective Worship pupil group by encouraging the group to set their own agendas; take their own minutes; monitor their activities (such as sacred spaces, displays and liturgical colours around the school); work with senior leadership to set an annual calendar; monitor and evaluate class and whole-school Acts of Collective Worship

2. PUPILS

How good outcomes are for pupils, taking into account variations between groups

The outcomes for the pupils at St. Mary's are outstanding overall. Pupils are encouraged to lead activities related to the Catholic Life of the school. They take this responsibility very seriously and with enthusiasm and increasing skill. This is seen in the work of the 'Minnie Vinnies' and in the school council who regularly meet to suggest activities for their school-mates. They send shoe-boxes at Christmas, sing and read stories at local nursing homes, raise funds for the Catholic Agency for Overseas Development (CAFOD), support Betty and her school in Uganda (a blind child whom the school has established a partnership with) and support numerous charities. They understand that in helping the poor and the lonely they are 'helping to do Jesus' work'. Pupils are extremely proud of their school and show a great respect for one another and for all the adults in the school. They say that they 'don't really have a behaviour policy because everyone shows respect for each other'. The atmosphere in and out of the classrooms is calm and relaxed. Pupils are very attentive in lessons. Pupils feel very safe in school and know what to do if they are worried about anything. Pupils understand the mission statement on their school uniform, 'Omnius Vincit Caritas' (Charity conquers all) and it is referred to very frequently by adults in the school. Pupils said that it feels 'like a big family because everyone knows each other and no one is left out'. Pupils are very keen to show appreciation of one another and will spontaneously give praise and encouragement. Pupils talk freely about the Catholic traditions and show tolerance and respect to those not of a Catholic background. They want to help others and look after God's world, 'for themselves and for when they are grown up' They don't want to 'just leave it to the grown-ups', and express the belief that that is what Jesus expects them to do.

Pupils' achievement is good and some is outstanding. There are some pockets of outstanding attainment, but this is not consistent overall. Pupils concentrate well in lessons and show a keenness to link the lesson objective to scripture, Catholic traditions, to well-known hymns and to their own lives. Progress is at least good at the end of each key stage and some pupils make exemplary progress, including those from a disadvantaged background. Pupils appreciate the efforts which teachers make for them. One pupil said that 'Teachers try to make our lessons really interesting for us and so we want to do our best because we know they have been thinking about us'. Another said, 'When the teacher starts the lesson she says things like "I know you are going to enjoy what we are going to do today" and it makes us want to like it for her' This was shown in well-planned lessons, suited to all the abilities in the class and consequent increasingly higher attainment and enjoyment. Pupils always respond well to teachers comments in their marking. Pupils with special educational needs are supported by trained and knowledgeable teaching assistants and consequently many make progress comparative to their peers. Pupils are encouraged to work independently, which they do. There is a reality to the pupils' aspirations for themselves, the world around them and what they are learning in their RE lessons which is very convincing.

Pupils' response to and participation in Acts of Collective Worship, is exceptional, in classrooms and in whole-school Acts of Collective Worship. All pupils fully understand the 4-part Act of Collective Worship and the older pupils understand the link to the liturgy of the Eucharist. Staff guide and lead pupils so that Collective Worship has become an outstanding feature of school-life. Pupils take every opportunity to prepare and lead Acts of Collective Worship and because of the encouragement and guidance of their teachers, pupils plan Acts of Collective Worship with gravity and imagination. This was seen in a class Act of Collective

Worship about 'Water' and related to their RE topic 'God's treasures'. Pupils in Year 2 spent time in an art lesson making blue tie-and- dye swatches which they used to great effect the next day in a simple liturgical dance to describe water as cloud, raindrops, wind, rain, storm, lakes, rivers, and finally the sea and related it to a chosen piece from scripture. An older class used personal items brought in from home, ranging from feathers to photographs, during a class Act of Collective Worship on 'Treasures' to demonstrate what was important to them and why. They then talked of God's treasure in the world he made and how they could help look after it. This ended with everyone writing one promise on a petal which pupils had made and which they then made into a flower. The pupils then handed out bottles of bubbles and asked everyone to blow their promise into the world. Both classes used the freedom of the outside spaces, as well as the beautiful weather, to enhance their worship. Pupils recognise the connection between the 4-part Act of Collective Worship and the parts of the Mass and the liturgy of the Word, and they know the responses to the readings. The ease, confidence and honesty with which pupils planned and led their Acts of Collective Worship is uplifting for everyone and is obviously a regular and eagerly anticipated time for pupils.

• 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 do pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship	1

3. PROVISION

2

How effective the provision is for Catholic education

Teaching is good and some of it is outstanding, but there are inconsistencies across the school. In the best lessons, teachers planned lessons which engaged the pupils in thoughtful debate and challenged them to give meaningful reasons for their answers. This was not seen in every lesson. Pupils make good progress over the school, but this progress is not yet consistent enough in all classes. Teachers moderate work in their cluster and use other schools to support their judgement. This is especially important as this is a single-form entry school and helps to ensure rigour of teacher judgements. There is not yet consistency in the accuracy of assessment across all classes. Feedback is given verbally during lessons and through marking. Feedback is positive and focused and therefore helps pupils to know where they are in their learning and how to improve on it. Teaching assistants are well deployed as there are a number of pupils who require individual support. The progress of these pupils is well monitored and their learning is well-planned and generally targeted to their needs and ability. Consequently, most pupils make good progress comparative to their peers. Teachers attend all diocesan training and this is seen in the increasing confidence and subject knowledge that teachers demonstrate during lessons, especially in high-quality questioning.

The imagination and drive of the leadership of the school and particularly the headteacher, enable the staff to present an imaginative and meaningful curriculum. Pupils are clearly very articulate, and the school is working hard to capitalise on this. Expectations are high for their pupils. The RE topics studied at present have provided a deep understanding of the social teachings of the Church, global goals, the encyclical of Pope Francis and its roots in the 'Canticle of the Sun'. The wide-range of extra-curricular activities which are offered are accessed by many pupils and thoroughly enjoyed. The breakfast and after-school club is very much appreciated by parents and pupils and run with aplomb by two members of staff.

Collective Worship is central to the life of the school. Prayer is integral to all that happens at St. Mary's. The staff are well trained in planning for the Church's year and in planning liturgical events. Pupils are therefore guided into developing interesting and meaningful liturgies. All staff actively join in whole-school Acts of Collective Worship and all are visible in their participation.

• The quality of teaching and how purposeful learning is in Religious Education	2
• The extent to which the Religious Education curriculum promotes pupils' learning	2
• The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school	1

4. LEADERS, MANAGERS AND GOVERNORS

1

How effective leaders, managers and governors are in developing the Catholic life of the school

The leadership at St Mary's school is outstanding overall. The headteacher particularly has worked tirelessly to ensure that the foundations of the school and all its activities are rooted firmly in the school's mission statement. Pupils' spiritual, moral and emotional development is given the highest priority. This was also noted in the school's recent Ofsted visit. Systematic monitoring of Catholic Life by governors and the internal leadership is still in its infancy. Evaluation and planning for future improvements is therefore not as robust as it could be and leaves the school open to a fluctuating future. However, although systematic evaluation is not yet developed, the school knows itself extremely well. Everyone understands and articulates the educational mission of St. Mary's. Staff demonstrate this in their relationships and attitudes with each other, the pupils and with everyone in the school community. All staff are involved in professional development and participate and evaluate all diocesan programmes. Staff who are not from a Catholic background are well mentored and supported. The headteacher has a well-developed induction programme in place.

The Collective Worship in the school is led with energy and imagination. Staff are encouraged to move away from a formulaic representation so that Collective Worship is peer-led, developed and guided by staff and led by the headteacher. This has enabled pupils and staff to have a deeper understanding of Collective Worship and it has become very meaningful to the pupils. During whole-school Collective Worship the partnership with the secondary school next door was exemplified when a group came into St. Mary's and discussed, with great enthusiasm, how pupils could act as stewards of God's creation. Whole school Collective Worship uses: 'Big Questions', 'Statements to live by' and RE topics in order to extend pupils' knowledge. Leaders show a willingness to engage in parish activities, as in the recent First Holy Communion celebration, for which preparation takes place in the parish, but which all staff attended and offered refreshments afterwards. Parishioners told of how pleased and impressed they were by the attitude of the staff, particularly those not from a Catholic background. Staff make good use of music to enhance Collective Worship and pupils really enjoy this. Systematic monitoring and evaluation of Collective Worship is not yet consistent.

Leadership of RE is outstanding. Monitoring of RE outcomes is through a variety of methods: lesson observations; work scrutiny; moderation; scrutiny of data; learning walks. It is regular and of a high quality. Leaders know the school very well and are working hard to ensure complete consistency across school in all aspects of teaching and assessment in order to raise attainment further. The headteacher is determined that there is education for all and that all achieve to their potential. This drives the funding for teaching assistants and resources so that individual programmes can be implemented where needed. This is still the development stage in some aspects, as where there is specific, individual need.

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How well leaders, managers and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic life of the school, including collective worship, and plan improvement to outcomes for pupils	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How well leaders, managers and governors monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education and plan for improvement to outcomes for pupils	1