INSPECTION REPORT

Holy Family RC Primary School
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Headteacher: Dawn Breeze
Chair of Governors: Kevin Loud

Canonical Inspection under Canon 806 on behalf of the Diocese of Clifton and inspection of Denominational Education under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005

Date of inspection: June 8-9th 2017
Date of previous inspection: July 11-13th 2012

Reporting Inspector: Mr Joseph Skivington
Additional Inspector: Mrs Carol Baron

Description of the school

Holy Family is a smaller than average-sized primary school, with a current roll of 190. Of these children 60% are Catholic. It serves the parish of Holy Family, in North Bristol, an area of post war housing and established families over several generations, and it draws a growing number of pupils from deprived economic and social circumstances. The proportions of disadvantaged pupils, and those with special educational needs, is above the national average. The school has seen in recent years an increasing number of pupils with English as an additional language. Pupils join the school with a baseline level of prior knowledge and experience of religious practice below expectations.

Overall effectiveness of this Catholic school (summary statement)

Grade 2

This is a good school because:

- the governing body and all leaders are totally committed to the promotion and nurturing of the school's Catholic life and collective worship, and have sustained good provision and outcomes;
- it is a fully inclusive school where pupils, their parents and carers, from all faiths and none are made welcome, and all show respect and genuine interest and care towards each other;
- the behaviour of pupils and their care for others is good. They are role models for each other and this contributes enormously to the spirituality and ethos of the school. Their behaviour for learning is very positive, they enjoy their RE lessons, and they make good progress over time. This is the result of overall good teaching, with some outstanding practice.

The capacity of the school community to improve and develop is good

- The senior leadership team has sustained the previous good practice noted in the last inspection. The governors are an effective, challenging body, and know the school well, so are able to provide support and challenge. Through consultation with parents, staff, and pupils the school has a realistic view of what has to be done to improve even further, and follows this through.
- The embedded procedures for self evaluation enable strengths and weaknesses to be highlighted, and action taken to improve practice and outcomes. The school is working towards a more comprehensive and detailed development plan which is more rigorously monitored and re shaped as appropriate.
- The areas for development highlighted in the last inspection have been addressed. There is an embedded formative marking policy and much good practice which is being shared across the school. The quality of teaching is not yet outstanding but much teaching is good, and existing outstanding practice is being shared with other teachers. The links with the parish are now much stronger and more fruitful.
- The capacity to sustain and build on the present good provision and outcomes for Catholic Life and religious education is secure, because there are clear responsibilities and expectations of the whole staff and governing body.

What the school should do to improve further

- Disseminate those learning strategies that help pupils best, especially through probing and challenging questioning, and learning tasks which match more precisely the pupils' levels of attainment
- Encourage wider pupil ownership of Catholic life and collective worship, building on the good practice and modelling of the chaplaincy team.
- Establish a clear evidence base that demonstrates the quality of rigour and reliability of the existing monitoring and self evaluation processes.

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

Grade 2

a) The extent to which pupils understand, contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school

- Pupils have a good understanding of what it means to be in a Catholic school and how it differs from other schools. They can articulate, for instance, the impact that the prayer life of the school has on their actions and their relationship with others. This is amply demonstrated in the Holy Family Prayer Tree, the Getting along Together board, the Friendship Flower, and the Fizzy Forgiveness tablets.
- Pupils contribute not only by their good behaviour both in lessons and around the school, but also through pupil conferencing, providing essential feedback which is built into the school improvement plans. Pupils increasingly take on a range of responsibilities which show they are alert to the needs of others, and especially in becoming excellent carers and role models for the younger children;
- The chaplaincy team plays a vital role in sustaining and enriching the Catholic life of the school. The Chaplaincy Book details their planning and actions, such as the Mission statement assemblies and the Making a Difference programme. Other children see them leading assemblies and reflections and respond well. This good work could be widened to involve even more pupils in initiating and planning their own collective worship
- Pupils have a genuine respect for those from different backgrounds and a heightened moral sense of their obligation to help others. They are exploring Pope Francis 'Laudato Si' encyclical, and working with the Eco committee on putting together an action plan using CAFOD resources, highlighting concerns such as conserving the Brazilian rain forest. They support many other charities, both local and global.
- There are fruitful links with the parish, with pupils participating in and leading both school and parish liturgies.

b) How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education

- Pupils enter the school at varied levels of attainment and understanding of religious knowledge and practice. Taking account of their starting points, pupils make steady progress through the early years so that by the end of Key Stage 1 they have achieved in line with expectation. The quality and quantity of work, and the pace of progress over time, is good and sometimes better.
- Progress at Key Stage 2 matches the quality of work seen in the earlier years, so that by the end of Key Stage 2 the outcomes in both attainment and achievement are good. There is a deepening of understanding of the theology behind each topic, and the pupils are able to reflect on the meaning of the Gospel accounts and make links between Scripture and their life experiences.
- Disadvantaged pupils, and those with special educational needs, make similar progress to the other pupils because of effective, planned interventions, differentiated tasks and the pro-active support of learning assistants.
- The pupils' oral contributions in lessons are thoughtful and show good understanding, but these gains need to be captured and referenced to ensure accurate assessment. There is some good practice involving the learning assistants, who use post it notes to record advances in understanding.
- In the best lessons progress is advanced particularly through independent and group learning because this engages and challenges them appropriately. There is, however, inconsistency in the level of teachers' challenge across the classes, confirmed by some pupils spoken to who feel they rarely move from their 'comfort zone' to the 'stretch zone'. This fluctuation has been identified by the school and is being currently addressed.
- Pupils are proud of their achievements and demonstrate a positive interest in learning new things and ideas. Their good conduct in lessons and around the school reflects the school's successful promotion of its core values and ethos.

c) How well pupils lead, respond to and participate in the Prayer Life of the School

- All pupils irrespective of faith background participate fully, and feel included, in the prayer life of the school. They showed reverence, attentiveness, and willingness to play their part in a beautiful whole school reflection, where the children sat in a concentric circle for a candle lit reflective assembly, organised and led by the chaplaincy team. Silent reflection and enthusiastic singing made for a memorable experience.
- The chaplaincy team takes the lead in promoting prayer life, and they are excellent role models as well as animators. They have introduced Shibashi (dance) as a way of praying, have led assemblies on Vocation, organised a Lenten Trail for the whole school, and organised a chaplaincy week on the theme of the Good Samaritan.
- There are key stage and class liturgies held annually. Pupils have made up their own grace before meals and set it to popular tunes. The Mass is celebrated regularly and is well planned, ensuring all pupils are included. Pupils are helped to develop their understanding of the sacramental life of the Church not only in lessons, but through the liturgical seasons and the meaning of the Mass and the sacraments of first Holy Communion, Confirmation, and Reconciliation.

- The pupils value the many prayer opportunities which punctuate the school day. They compose their own heartfelt prayers and reflections, which are displayed on the pupil- monitored prayer tables. The school's prayer life contributes significantly to the spiritual and moral development of the pupils. There is nevertheless more scope for more pupils to develop the skills of initiating, planning and the presenting their liturgies and assemblies.

How effective are leaders and governors in developing the Catholic Life of the school?

Grade 2

a) How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school and plan and implement improvement to outcomes for pupils

- Leaders and governors effectively promote, nurture, and sustain the Catholic ethos of the school as their primary concern and care, which is the main focus of their strategic planning. They meet all statutory, canonical, and diocesan requirements fully, and strive to bring to reality the call to be a People of Hope.
- The governing body is a knowledgeable and hands on influence in the life of the school. They are well informed and active in all aspects of school life. The governors have benefitted from diocesan training and reflection on the People of Hope document as well as the Bishop's Pastoral Plan. There is some evidence of challenge and accountability in the governors' minutes and the reports on governors' school visits.
- There is a commitment from every member of the staff to work together to achieve the best for the pupils, as well as promoting Catholic values across all the subjects. Staff morale and their investment in the school is good and they are role models for their charges.
- There are processes in place to monitor and evaluate provision and outcomes for the Catholic life of the school. However, these could be better documented so that the school leadership can more accurately assess and record the impact of its actions, and can quickly re shape its improvement planning where necessary, acting on the feedback from pupils and parents. Parents are kept informed of school events through regular newsletters and email. They attend Masses and assemblies whenever they can.
- The spiritual life of the staff is well nurtured and celebrated, through regular Inset on Catholic life and spirituality. The school shared an inspiring talk given by Father Adrian Porter, with the other schools in the Emmaus partnership. This helped bind staff, Catholic and non-Catholic, together in commitment and unity of purpose, sharing the same goals and values of the school's mission.
- Links with the parish are strong. The parish priest is a welcome and supportive presence in the school, and is working closely with the new chair of the governing body.

b) How well leaders and governors monitor and evaluate the curriculum for <u>Religious Education and relationship education</u>, and plan and implement improvement to outcomes for pupils

- Leaders and governors use data and monitoring information to ensure careful oversight of the RE curriculum and learning outcomes. The governors receive termly reports from the head teacher, but are also kept closely informed through feedback from governor visits to the school. Governors challenge, question, and hold senior leaders and staff to account, although this is not always recorded or its impact assessed.
- Lesson observations and book scrutinies are used to monitor progress, and these feed into INSET and support for teachers. Staff feedback on this support is very positive. Parents are full of praise for the teaching their children receive.
- Subject development plans are drawn up based on the monitoring data gathered and used as working documents. Their impact on outcomes would be even greater by using more precise, measurable objectives, and using the monitoring column to track implementation of the plans more closely so they can be added to or re shaped during the course of each term.
- The provision for staff induction, in service training, and diocesan training is particularly supportive for the teaching of RE. The school is aware of pockets of weaker subject knowledge and is addressing this area with extra support. This has resulted in teachers becoming more confident in assessment and in setting learning objectives. There is similar work being done in building levelling skills, which is supported by joint moderation with other schools in the Emmaus Partnership.

How effective is the provision for Catholic Education?

Grade 2

a) The quality of teaching and how purposeful learning is in Religious Education

- The quality of teaching is good overall, with some weaker and some outstanding practice observed during the inspection. Teaching which is outstanding is highly effective in promoting purposeful learning, the engagement of the pupils, their enjoyment, and their overall good and better results. The pupils' very positive attitudes to learning have a strong impact on their progress and achievement. Learning assistants are involved in planning lessons with the teacher, so that interventions clearly have a positive effect. Where there are occasional weaknesses in planning for learning, or subject knowledge, teachers receive swift and effective support.
- Teachers have a good rapport with their pupils and in the best practice have high expectations of pupils' presentation of work and intellectual effort. As a result ,the pupils rise to the challenge and are able to contribute their own arguments and opinions. Where teaching has less impact on progress, the challenge is not there because teachers do not ask probing questions to challenge or check understanding, or pitch the learning tasks to meet the pupils' attainment levels.
- The marking of pupils' work is well embedded and where the response to formative comments is thoughtful, progress over time is very evident. There is some inconsistency in practice which is being addressed through training sessions.

- Teachers' skills and expertise in assessing pupils' attainment and progress are growing thanks to CPD, but also the joint moderation days within the Emmaus Partnership, so that they can arrive at reliable judgements on individual achievement and progress over time, and to ensure assessment has a real impact on learning.

b) The extent to which the Curriculum promotes pupils' learning

- The RE curriculum meets all Bishops Conference's requirements. It is broad and balanced so that pupils can explore and develop their own values and beliefs. The school is currently re-appraising the RE syllabus to find a more relevant approach to the teaching of RE.
- Pupils discuss themes such as peace, fairness, compassion and injustice, which they then link to the objects of their charity fundraising, and outreach to others in society who are more needy. Learning from religion is a strength of the school.
- Consistency and continuity in progression across the curriculum is not always evident in the pupils' written work, but in conversation they display a good depth of understanding of the topics they have studied.
- The study of other world faiths through the annual Faith Week and visits to other places of worship is a real strength of this inclusive school, because it ensures ample time to explore and understand other major world religions, and to promote tolerance, understanding, and respect for others' beliefs. Pupils give presentations to the others on what they have learnt. There have also been visits to local Christian churches.
- Provision for sex and relationship education, using the Journey in Love programme, is in place and approved by the governors adhering to diocesan guidelines. The wider curriculum successfully promotes spiritual, moral and vocational development, and is taught through the lens of the Faith. The First Holy Communion preparation is run by the parish with support from the school.

c) The quality of the Prayer life provided by the School

- The quality of the prayer life of the school is good. It is fully inclusive and joyful. Prayer punctuates the school day and is part of every celebration. A well planned timetable of Masses and assemblies follows the liturgical year, including traditional Catholic practices such as the Rosary, Advent and Lent celebrations, and the Stations of the Cross.
- Pupils' knowledge of the traditional Catholic prayers is good because it is progressive and age related. Prayers are laminated and prominently displayed near the prayer tables in the classrooms and recited daily. Mass responses are taught and the different parts of the Mass are explained.
- The parish priest makes an important and valued contribution to the spiritual life of the school, supporting its role in the wider mission of the parish and the universal Church. The parish church, close by the school, is an excellent resource and draws the school into the life of the parish. Teachers and pupils have created colourful and thought-provoking displays around the school, which remind the whole community of the liturgical cycle, and the topics the pupils are currently studying;
- Parents and carers are invited to attend Mass and assemblies and many do. The school is keen to encourage more parents to become involved in the prayer life of the school and in this way to support their children. The newsletter keeps parents fully informed

about what is going on in school. Every opportunity is taken for joint worship with the other schools in the Emmaus partnership.

Summary of Parental Questionnaires

There were 21 parental questionnaires returned. All were positive about the school and the quality of their children's education. Some typical responses included:

'There is a focus of family and belonging. A belief that God is at the centre of all that happens in the day-to-day life of the school. How we translate learning RE into how we live our lives is an area I feel Holy Family comes into its own'.

'I have noticed a change in my child since he started. He is a lot more caring and thinks about other children's feelings'.

'The combination of education with spiritual development is very important to us as practising Catholics'.

'I share my son's learning of RE by having conversations with him, as together we can talk about the messages God has for us'.

'The size of the school allows those working there, from teacher to receptionist, to know individual pupils well'.