

Diocese of Hallam



SECTION 48 INSPECTION REPORT

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

**ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL,
HERRINGTHORPE, ROTHERHAM**

School URN	106930
Name of Chair of Governors	Mr Timothy Gillatt
Name of Headteacher	Mrs Helen McLaughlin
Date of inspection	4 December 2012
Section 48 Inspector	Mrs J.M. Bolton

“ An enthusiasm for the things of God”

Introduction

The Inspection of St.Mary's Catholic Primary School has been carried out under the requirements of the Education Act 2005, and in accordance with the Diocese of Hallam Framework and Schedule for Section 48 Inspections as approved by the Bishop of Hallam.

The process of inspection in the Diocese of Hallam has been developed as an activity of the Church to support schools in further deepening the quality of Catholic education provided.

Description of the School

St Mary's Catholic Primary School is situated in Rotherham and serves the parishes of The Immaculate Conception, Herringthorpe and Blessed Trinity, Wickersley. It is an average sized Primary School. A high proportion of the children are baptised Catholics. The school has a small but growing number of children of ethnic minority. Children come from a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds. The number of children with Special Educational Needs is average.

Information about the school

Type of School	Primary
Age profile of students	4-11
Number on roll	211
Number of students on Special Needs and Disabilities Register	36
Number of students with a Statement of Special Educational Needs	4
Number of Catholics on roll	176
Number of Other Christian Denominations	23
Number of other Faiths	1
School Address	Herringthorpe Valley Road S65 2NU
Telephone Number	01709 361502
Fax Number	
Email	stmarysherringthorp@rotherham.gov.uk

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL

How effective the school is in providing Catholic education	1
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The overall effectiveness of the school in providing Catholic education is outstanding. The pursuit of excellence is a driving force of all parts of the school community. Outcomes for pupils, the provision of Catholic education, the effectiveness of leaders and managers in developing the Catholic life of the school and the school's capacity to improve are all judged to be outstanding.

The school's capacity for sustained improvement	1
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The school's capacity for sustained improvement is outstanding. All members of the school community share the same vision, which is articulated in the school's mission statement and lived out in the daily life of the school community. Morale is high and everyone feels part of this happy, caring and successful community.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

1. Continue to demonstrate their common fundamental commitment to Catholic Education in its widest, all embracing sense.
2. Continue with their policy of being an outward looking school, so they can contribute to and benefit from, working in partnership with different groups in the wider society.
3. Continue to firmly embed into the curriculum the "Come and See" Catholic Programme. In developing this programme the school should continue to develop further the strategies to ensure that "Come and See" is a meaningful and effective programme for their school and moreover be prepared to share their experiences of the programme at Diocesan and national level.

PUPILS

How good outcomes are for pupils taking particular account of variations between different groups	1
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The outcomes for pupils taking account of variations between groups are outstanding. All pupils concentrate well and are engaged in their learning. When presented with challenging tasks, the children work well.

Children with Special Educational Needs are well integrated with their peers. Children are keen to do well and across the whole age range pupils are confident when talking about their work in Religious education.

All children are interested and enthusiastic about their learning.

The Rainbows programme is well established and fully integrated into the life of school. It is provided by teaching assistants who are totally committed to its purpose and value.

In addition teaching assistants provide a structured mentoring programme, which offers one to one support for children who are identified as having either an academic or a pastoral need.

Pastoral support for the children and their families is a real strength of this school.

Children achieve well in Religious Education and make very good progress. The work in their Religious Education books is at least of the same standard as the work in their English books and evidence indicates that they respond well to challenging and thought provoking marking on the part of their teachers.

PROVISION:

How effective the provision is in promoting Catholic education	1
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All learning and teaching is at least good and much of it is outstanding. A major factor in the high standard of teaching and learning is the way in which staff openly demonstrate their own faith. There is a depth to lessons which very effectively supports children's thinking and learning. Children are provided with a wide variety of tasks and activities to enhance their learning. Technology is fully integrated into lessons and is well used.

The school fulfils the requirements of the Bishops' Conference to devote 10% of the timetable to Religious Education.

Each classroom has a focal point for prayer. The children understand the importance of key celebrations in the Church's year. They have a keen sense of belonging to a parish community. The parish priest is a frequent visitor to the school and very much part of the school community. The children referred to him on a number of occasions when talking about the daily life of the school and the parish.

Comprehensive assessment in Religious Education involves lesson observations, good marking techniques, work scrutiny, pupil questionnaires and pupil interviews. The school is working very hard to ensure the "Come and See" programme serves the needs of the children. The model of Assessing Pupils' Progress (APP) is being used well to establish excellent and effective assessment of children's work.

Religious Education serves the children's needs very well. The school's self-evaluation document states that: the curriculum is far more than what is taught in lessons and as such we provide many opportunities for children to live their faith. This is accurate. A key feature of this is the sharp sense of responsibility to others that the children have. The school has a very active Human Rights Group. Children spoke with an impressive understanding of global problems and their responsibilities in working towards helping others.

Collective worship is outstanding. The assembly which was observed demonstrated a sound knowledge of and meaningful use of both formal and informal prayer, enthusiastic hymn singing and a school community joined as one in their worship.

The behaviour of the children is excellent. Pupils are given a high degree of responsibility in preparing for an assembly and are very actively engaged in leading worship. The sense of the school's place in its own community and also the wider community is very evident in the prayer life of the school.

LEADERS AND MANAGERS

How effective leaders and managers are in developing the Catholic life of the school	1
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Leaders and managers are outstanding in developing the Catholic life of the school.

Governors are very aware of being part of a continuum of Catholic Education in this community. The Chairman of the Governors spoke in terms of Governors being custodian of a Catholic heritage that must be enabled to go on into the future. Senior staff spoke of how the school had benefitted greatly from a succession of deeply spiritual men of faith in their parish priests, including the present parish priest.

Governors are keenly aware of the skills and commitment of all the people who play their part in this vibrant community. They demonstrate the extent to which they value the school staff and affirm their respect for them in many ways.

Governors also spoke passionately about the need to work in creative and realistic ways to maintain effective Catholic Education at all levels. This commitment is evidenced in the many ways in which the school operates with other agencies, enabling them to grow and develop together.

The deputy head is a Specialist Leader in Education (SLE) in the Hallam Teaching Alliance and has provided training for other schools. The Religious Education Co-ordinator is actively involved in the St. Bernard's Learning Community and is a member of the Chaplaincy Driver Group of the St. Bernard's and St. Pius Joint Learning Community.

Working with Warwick University, the school is an Enterprise Champion School. The community is a Rights Respecting school.

The faith of the headteacher and senior leaders is clearly influential in developing the Catholic life of the school. They spoke in terms of their Catholicity being instinctive and also of how they were very aware of how their actions impacted on others. Theirs is a faith in action.

Parents and carers greatly value the way in which gospel values are demonstrated in the daily life of the school. They recognise and appreciate the high standards of discipline in school and value immensely the way in which children are always given the chance to draw a line under any bad behaviour and to start again. Mothers who

were not Catholic themselves but married to Catholic partners spoke of their initial anxiety about involvement in a Catholic community and how they had found a consistently warm welcome and practical support from both school and clergy to enable them to be fully integrated.

The Governors are very influential in ensuring the strong Catholic nature of this school. They are constantly seeking to improve the school and have introduced a Community Committee into the structure of the Governing Body. The terms of reference of this committee are matters specifically relating to the school, the parish and the wider community. Point one of the terms is “to promote and protect the Catholicity of the school”. They do this most effectively.

Children, staff, parents and carers all spoke of the love, warmth and support of this community. Everyone feels valued. Therefore everyone gives of their best. This is an outstanding Catholic school.

SUMMARY OF INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Key for inspection grades:

Grade 1 Outstanding Grade 2 Good Grade 3 Satisfactory Grade 4 Inadequate

Overall effectiveness	1
The school's capacity for sustained improvement	1
How good outcomes are for pupils, taking particular account of variations between different groups	1
<input type="checkbox"/> how well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education	1
<input type="checkbox"/> the quality of pupils' learning and their progress	1
<input type="checkbox"/> the quality of learning for pupils with particular learning needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
<input type="checkbox"/> pupils' attainment in Religious Education	1
<input type="checkbox"/> the extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life of the school	1
<input type="checkbox"/> how well pupils respond to and participate in the school's collective worship	1
How effective the provision is in promoting Catholic Education	1
<input type="checkbox"/> the quality of teaching and purposeful learning in Religious Education	1
<input type="checkbox"/> the effectiveness of assessment and academic guidance in Religious Education	1
<input type="checkbox"/> the extent to which the Religious Education curriculum meets pupils' needs	1
<input type="checkbox"/> the quality of collective worship provided by the school	1
How effective leaders and managers are in developing the Catholic life of the school	1
<input type="checkbox"/> 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	1
<input type="checkbox"/> how well leaders and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education and plan for improvement to outcomes for pupils	1
<input type="checkbox"/> 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 are met	1
<input type="checkbox"/> how well leaders and managers develop partnerships with other providers, organisations and services in order to promote Catholic learning and well-being	1
<input type="checkbox"/> how effectively leaders and managers promote community cohesion.	1

Further copies of this report are obtainable from St Mary's Catholic Primary School or from the Diocese of Hallam Schools' Department, The Hallam Pastoral Centre, St Charles Street, Sheffield S9 3WU Tel: 0114 2566440.