

# 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. STEPHEN'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY, A  
VOLUNTARY ACADEMY GARGRAVE ROAD, SKIPTON, NORTH  
YORKSHIRE BD23 1PT

School URN

142023

Date of S48 inspection and  
OE grade

17th-18<sup>th</sup> October, 2018  
OE Grade: Good

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Chair of Governors

Janet Sheehan

Headteacher

Clare Gardner Executive Head  
Tony Pye Head of School

RE Subject Leader

Tony Pye

Date and grade of last S48  
Inspection

11<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> October, 2012  
OE Grade: Outstanding

Section 48 Inspector/s

Roxanna Drake

# 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.

2

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

**CATHOLIC LIFE**

2

**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

2

**COLLECTIVE WORSHIP**

2

**Summary of key findings:**

**This is a Good Catholic school.**

- St. Stephen's Catholic Primary and Nursery is a good voluntary academy. It is a deeply caring and committed community united in promoting the Catholic mission of the school.
- The executive head teacher and governors give the promotion of the Catholic Life of the school the highest possible priority. They are passionate about their responsibility and lead by example.
- The school motto, '*Learning, living and loving one another in God's name*', is understood and lived out by the children, displayed proudly throughout the school and in each class base.
- Most pupils at St. Stephen's appreciate, actively contribute to and greatly benefit from the Catholic Life and mission the school offers.
- The quality of teaching in Religious Education is good overall with nothing inadequate.
- Most pupils, from their varied starting points, are making good progress in each key stage.
- The school's marking and feedback policy is rigorously applied.
- Good open-ended questioning during Religious Education lessons enables most pupils to use their knowledge, understanding and skills to reflect spiritually, to think ethically and theologically.
- The behaviour of almost all pupils during the inspection was good. The children are polite, friendly and supportive of each other.
- The parish priest is a regular visitor to school and promotes his priestly vocation within the classes.
- The school is in the final stages of adopting the Leeds Diocesan Relationships and Sex Education policy (RSE).

- The care and commitment to the pastoral needs of the pupils is very evident and pupils respond well to the opportunities the school provides for their personal support and development.
- Leaders and governors are proactive in forming and maintaining home, school and parish links. According to parents, the pastoral care shown to all members of the community is a strength of the school.
- Through monitoring and evaluation the governors' assessment of RE is accurate and well informed.
- Acts of Collective Worship observed showed that pupils act with reverence. They are keen to take part.
- Most pupils take part in reciting prayers with great confidence and enjoy singing.
- The recently formed school Liturgy Leaders are very happy about their role in school and the responsibility they share together to lead Acts of Collective Worship for children.
- All areas from the last Section 48 inspection have been addressed.
- All canonical and statutory duties are fulfilled.

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

Continue to improve the quality of teaching and learning in Religious Education (RE) by:

- Sharing existing best practice from within the school and the Bishop Wheeler Catholic Academy Trust (BWCAT).
- Ongoing professional development provision to further build teachers' subject knowledge, levels of confidence and expertise in terms of their understanding of effective learning in RE.

Continue to improve the quality of all aspects of Acts of Collective Worship by:

- Sharing existing best practice from within the school and the Bishop Wheeler Catholic Academy Trust.
- Providing further modelled and shared continuing professional development (CPD) for staff and pupils from within the school, from the Bishop Wheeler Catholic Academy Trust and the chaplaincy of Holy Family Catholic High School, Keighley.

### **Information about this inspection**

The Inspection of St Stephen's Catholic Primary School and Nursery 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 pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the School
- 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 acts of Collective Worship.
- The quality of the Collective Worship provided by the school.
- How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Catholic Life, Religious Education and Collective Worship.
- The extent to which any key issues identified for action in the previous S48 have been addressed.

One inspector carried out the inspection over one and a half days:

- An RE focused learning walk of all the teaching areas was jointly undertaken with the executive head teacher and head of school (who is also the newly appointed RE subject leader).
- RE teaching and learning was jointly observed in five classes, covering all key stages, and five acts of Collective Worship were observed, covering all key stages. These included two pupil led and two teacher led acts of worship and one shared teacher and pupil act of worship.
- Detailed discussions and meetings were conducted with the executive head teacher; head of school/RE subject leader; chair of governors, a parent governor, parish priest, teaching and support members of staff, pupils and parents.
- A very wide range of school Catholic Life, Religious Education and Collective Worship planning, monitoring and evaluation documentation was scrutinised, including the school's Diocesan Self Evaluation Form (DSEF) and the School Improvement Plan (SIP).
- The pupil voice questionnaire survey results, head teacher reports to governors, the school's RE budget, including staff/governor training, were also scrutinised.
- The schools' RE pupil progress and attainment tracking system was scrutinised and demonstrated by the head of school.
- A detailed scrutiny of pupils' RE workbooks along with additional evidence was analysed that covered all key stages.

### **Information about this school**

- St Stephen's Catholic Primary School and Nursery, is a smaller than average, one form entry sponsored voluntary academy. It is part of the Bishop Wheeler Catholic Academy Trust (BWCAAT) located in Skipton, a market town situated on the borders of North and West Yorkshire. It serves the parishes of St Stephen's Skipton, St Margaret Clitherow in Threshfield and The Chapel of the Sacred Heart at Broughton Hall.
- The school is smaller than the average sized primary school and has a nursery. The majority of pupils come from a White British background. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils in receipt of Pupil Premium funding is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who receive Special Educational Need and Disability support (SEND) is below the national average and pupils who have an Education, Health and Care plan is well below the average. An increasing number of children receive additional interventions for a range of specific learning needs.
- Pupil mobility has been high in recent times – between June 2017 and March 2018 it was above the national average.
- Pupil attendance was above the national average in 2017 and absence rates were just below the average.

- There are 8.5 full time teachers, including a recently qualified teacher (RQT) and part time teacher, three of whom hold the Catholic Certificate of Religious Studies (CCRS) or equivalent.
- The academy council consists of 5 foundation governors, parent governor, one staff governor, the executive head teacher, head of school and two associate members. A Strategic Intervention Board was in place from August 2015 until February 2017, when an Academy Council replaced it.
- The current staffing consists of the executive head teacher, head of school, seven class teachers, nine teaching assistants and two office staff. All teachers teach RE.
- The school received a canonical review in February 2017 and evidence suggested that the school was not making sufficient progress towards the recommendations since the last inspection in 2012.
- The school's most recent inspection, under Section 5 in May 2018, graded the school 'requires improvement'.
- School numbers are lower than in previous years and Key Stage 2 mixed age classes are in place for afternoon sessions.
- The school works closely and collaboratively with other schools in the BWCAT and with the chaplaincy at Holy Family Catholic High School, Keighley.
- The school provides a breakfast club and an after school club.

## Full report - inspection judgements

### CATHOLIC LIFE

#### The Catholic Life of the school is good.

The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school.	2
The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school	2
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision of the Catholic Life of the school	2

- Most pupils at St. Stephen's appreciate, actively contribute to and greatly benefit from the Catholic Life and mission the school offers.
- Through pupil interviews and pupil voice data most pupils have a clear understanding of the Catholic Life and mission of the school and via the school council are part of planning improvements for it.
- The behaviour of most pupils during the inspection was good. The children are polite, friendly and supportive of each other.
- They have a strong understanding of right and wrong as one member of the school council said, 'We know how to treat each other. We do it for good reasons'.

- The school has recently introduced pupil Liturgy Leaders to lead Collective Worship. Good planning with lively questioning by the leaders engages all pupils. A Year 5 team leading an act of worship posed the question to the class, 'How would you feel if you were visited by an angel?' This produced various responses: - 'amazed, frightened, why me'.
- The pupils are aware of the needs of others and throughout the year proactively support a number of charitable organisations at local, national and international level such as the Diocese of Leeds Catholic Care Good Shepherd Fund, Cafod and sending a pupil to high school for a year in Malawi.
- The school operates a house point system and pupils are very proud to receive these for their good works and deeds in school and the community, the house names being St Bernadette, St Margaret Clitheroe, St Francis and St Peter. A board in school welcomes nominations for pupils, from pupils, when they see someone doing a good deed. There is an achievement assembly each week during which pupils' notable works and deeds are acknowledged. Parents are frequent visitors to these assemblies.
- Pupils are regularly involved with activities which promote the Catholic Life of the school both within school and amongst the community. They are rewarded with 'Faith in Action' awards for using the school's adopted Catholic values of justice, tolerance, integrity, dignity, service, humility and truth. One pupil from Year 6 shared, 'We follow the Catholic values as best as we can'. Another Year 4 pupil said that, 'You can get noted for walking a neighbour's dog out of school'.
- Pupils value the school's chaplaincy provision and take part in opportunities provided by the school to participate in visits and retreats. The school has benefitted through sponsorship from the charity of San Damiano based in Assisi, Italy. This charity has links to a Catholic family based at Broughton Hall, near Skipton, who were initially responsible for building St. Stephen's Catholic Church. For the last 3 years, the charity has sponsored the school in taking a class of pupils to Assisi. A Year 5 pupil on his return from Assisi shared that he had 'Greater respect for the saints and what they did', while another said, 'I appreciate more why we should go to church. St. Francis's faith was real'.
- The parish priest is a regular visitor to school and promotes his priestly vocation within the classes. He was able to lead class discussions in Year 6 on the Sacrament of Holy Orders as part of 'The Way, the Truth and The Life' (WTL) topic on Sacraments. Similarly, pupils and staff look forward to their visits to St. Stephen's Catholic Church.
- During the inspection, final preparations were being put in place for an end of week harvest Mass celebration. Pupils had collected food from home, school had placed the food in boxes for presentation from the pupils at Mass and then for distribution to needy people at the conclusion of Mass.
- A timetable for class Masses, celebrated in school or in church, is followed. This enables all classes to attend more than one class Mass during an academic year. Parishioners and parents are welcome visitors to all these masses and to refreshments afterwards where they have the opportunity to mix or talk with their children.
- The care and commitment to the pastoral needs of the pupils is very evident and pupils respond well to the opportunities the school provides for their personal support and development. Most pupils are happy and confident. Parents are very secure in the knowledge that their children attend school happily each day and praise the school and teachers for how well they know the children. The school has a strong relationship with parents. Parents commented that they 'feel very welcome in school'. They also shared that 'It is a very inclusive school and the pastoral side is second to none'.
- The school is in the final stages of adopting the Leeds Diocesan Relationships and Sex Education policy (RSE). The governors are confident to have it as part of the school's curriculum early in the new year.

- There is a community notice board at the main entrance to the school. This advertises information about forthcoming events in the local area. The friends of St. Stephen (FOSS) advertise their activities and events here and at the back of church, on the school's newsletter website and parish bulletin.
- The school's website and weekly Wednesday Word clearly proclaims the school's Catholic identity and promotes good communication between school, home and parish community.
- The school's mission statement, reviewed in January 2018, developed further into a more meaningful and child friendly one. The school motto, '*Learning, living and loving one another in God's name*', is understood and lived out by the children, displayed proudly throughout the school and in each class base. The pupils are keenly aware that their school is special because they were able to articulate that 'God is at the centre of our school'.
- All teachers teach RE. Together with support staff, they are good role models promoting high standards of expected behaviour for the pupils during lessons. They actively make the school mission a living reality. A member of the support staff shared, 'We are good role models for the school. We care for the whole community all the time. There is a true sense of community here'.
- The executive head teacher and governors give the promotion of the Catholic Life of the school the highest possible priority. They are passionate about their responsibility and lead by example. This is particularly evidenced in the rigorous monitoring and self-evaluation carried out by the school's leaders, including the RE subject leader. The Catholic Life of the school is a standing agenda item at staff and governor meetings.
- The governing body regard themselves as a critical friend, at the same time supporting and challenging the school. The Catholic Life of the school is the number one priority on the School Improvement Plan.
- The school has developed productive links with the other nine schools that form the BWCAT. Support for the school has been provided for the newly appointed RE subject leader through the expertise of one of the BWCAT's specialist leaders of education (SLE's). The chaplaincy of Holy Family Catholic High School, Keighley has supported advised and guided the pupils with acts of Collective Worship. A further link has been working alongside another school in the BWCAT, in adopting the Leeds Diocesan (RSE) policy.
- At least one training day each year reviews and celebrates Catholic Life, RE, or Collective Worship in the school. As a result, staff understanding of the school's mission is good.
- Personal, social and health education (PSHE) is carefully planned and good throughout the school. Philosophy for Children (P4C) is a regular feature in the school.
- Nurture provision and bespoke timetables allow pupils' pastoral needs to be met. The Diocesan Catholic Care agency has been involved in the school for staff counselling when needed.
- Great importance is attached to the visual impact of religious displays and the relevant use of signs, symbols and religious artefacts upon entering the school. Visitors are aware that this is a Catholic school. A very attractive display in the entrance area welcomes all visitors to the school. The shared Word of God along with the display statement 'Growing together in God's love' covered the wall. Forming the outline of a tree, every child had drawn their hand, or coloured one in and these formed the trunk and leaves of the tree. The school's adopted Catholic values artwork canvasses, designed and completed by the pupils, decorate the entrance area staircase for all to see. This visual representation shows that at its core St Stephen's is a school that considers others and that places Catholic values as a high priority to live by.

- The school is totally committed to following all Diocesan initiatives. The governing body has good partnership arrangements with the Catholic Diocese of Leeds, North Yorkshire Education and other schools within Skipton in order to network with and take advice and guidance from to ensure that staff and pupils' welfare, safety and security is planned.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

### Religious Education is good

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

- Most pupils, from their varied starting points are making good progress in each key stage, including SEND pupils. Pupils in Key Stage 2 are showing improvement in comparison to the previous cohort. According to the pupil tracking and assessment data evidenced, at least over three quarters of the present Year 6 cohort are projected to achieve expected progress from Key Stage 1, with over half the year group projected to achieve 3 levels of progress.
- Good open-ended questioning during RE lessons enables most pupils to use their knowledge, understanding and RE skills to reflect spiritually, to think ethically and theologically. A pupil shared that 'It is hard sometimes to write down what you are thinking, my teacher allows us to discuss in RE and talk to our friends about RE'.
- Driver words, displayed in each classroom, are used to full effect during written and verbal activities and exchanges. The use of these has enabled the pupils to become increasingly more religiously literate.
- For each RE lesson, the teacher uses information and tick list printed slips. These are stuck in the children's books or the child sticks them in their book to aid their self-assessment and support their work in class. Through their use most pupils are aware of how well they are doing. Each slip identifies the learning objective (LO). Following on from this there are a series of success steps for the pupils' guidance. This enables the older pupils to evaluate and assess their learning along with the class teacher. It provides instant recognition for all as to a child's learning and understanding of a particular topic.
- RE work is differentiated and supported by the teacher or a support assistant. 'I can statements' for a topic are posted on the inside cover of the pupils' books, these are annotated by the class teacher and can be referred to by the pupil and teacher. Pupils have a good understanding of how well they are doing, a further indication of success and progress.
- The schools' marking and feedback policy is rigorously applied. Next steps for improvement or increasing understanding of a certain aspect of pupils' work is written in green pen. The pupil completes the task in purple pen. Pupils are given time at the start of a lesson to complete their assigned task.

- As observed most pupils behaviour in RE is good with few distractions because most pupils are interested in their RE lessons. This continues through time given for reflection and to ponder upon questions.
- The quality of teaching in RE is good overall with nothing inadequate. All lessons observed used creative elements. A range of drama, story, animation and drawing engaged the pupils. Nursery and reception class were open to a menu of activities to follow linked to Harvest. Each member enjoyed the vegetable soup and bread rolls they had cooked. Year 4 gained an increased empathetic understanding of how Jonah felt on his travels through using freeze frame techniques. The Year 3 class were enthralled by the retelling of the Annunciation story using 'Godly Play' and in particular the reflection time given at the 'I wonder' moments brought into the story. Some members of Year 2 placed all their trust in their teacher when asked to close their eyes and fall backwards into his arms- the analogy used being that Daniel placed all his trust in God when he was thrown into the lion's den.
- Observed good teaching had a lively pace with recap and challenge. Pupils were able to feedback on their completed activities. This was not the case in the less successful elements of RE lessons observed.
- The use of appropriate continuing professional development (CPD) has enabled the staff's RE subject knowledge and understanding, of how pupils learn, to deepen. However, this good practice is not consistent across the school.
- The governors and executive head teacher have ensured that the head of school/ RE subject leader has overseen that the school's RE curriculum meets the requirements of the Bishops' conference in all aspects and in all key stages with 10% of the timetable allocated to RE. The RE subject leader has also been proactive in supporting an RQT with aspects of RE.
- The school follows the diocesan approved WTL and teaches other faiths. A parent shared that 'St. Stephens is the most culturally diverse school in Skipton'.
- Working walls are up to date and relevant and this is consistent throughout the school underpinned by the 'I Can Statements'. In Key Stage 1, Nursery and Reception class the introduction of a Big Book shows collected comments from pupils as a means of recording their thoughts and understanding. A Year 1 child, in response to the question, 'Why do you think God made us', replied 'Because He was lonely'.
- Due to budget restraints, the RE budget is very tight and the executive head teacher has prioritised the purchase of Collective Worship resources and the Catholic Life and its mission throughout the School.
- The school, through the BWCAT, uses the expertise of a specialist leader in education (SLE) on a part time basis. He has been instrumental in supporting the newly appointed RE subject leader with his role.
- The school holds two parents' evenings during the year to enable parents and carers to speak, with their child's teacher, about their child's progress. They receive an end of year report. Open days at the school are also a feature to allow prospective parents or members of the community to have a look around.
- Through monitoring and evaluation the governors' assessment of RE is accurate and well informed. The parish priest and chair of governors are regular visitors to the school. Governors are required to complete a focused visit form to record their visits, results of which are shared with the full governing body.
- A performance management system is in place that supports and challenges staff to play their part in the Catholic Life and mission of the school.
- Since the canonical review in 2017, recommendations have been addressed and improvements have been made to the Catholic Life of the school, RE and Collective Worship.

## COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

### Collective Worship is good

How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship	2
The quality of provision for Collective Worship	2
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship	2

- Acts of Collective Worship that were observed showed that pupils act with reverence. They are keen to take part in Collective Worship.
- Acts of worship are a key part of the daily life and prayer life of the school. The school follows diocesan guidelines on Collective Worship.
- A range of Collective Worship occurs over the course of the week, term and year. Pupils participate through prayers, readings, drama, song and questioning.
- Each act of worship ends with a mission. The whole school Collective Worship, led by the head of school on the theme of 'community', gave each class a sheet on which they could record the name of anyone who had done a good deed in the community.
- Pupils regularly attend Mass over the course of a term as a class or as part of the whole school. Most pupils are responsible for helping to plan Masses and writing bidding prayers.
- Pupils gather calmly and want to take part regardless of their faith background.
- As pupils move up through the school they show increased levels of liturgical literacy and understanding. With appropriate and challenging open-ended questioning, they are able to explore the chosen themes in greater depth. A Year 1 teacher and pupil shared act of worship evidenced that the pupils were confident and very capable of asking their own questions of the class.
- Most pupils take part in reciting prayers with great confidence and enjoy singing their favourite hymns marrying them to physical movements.
- The newly appointed Liturgy Leaders plan and lead acts of worship in class and whole school acts of Collective Worship. The leaders of the school have also modelled Collective worship and provided further guidance for them. They use different elements to engage the pupils. During the Year 6 act of worship, pupils were given a green paper leaf on which they were asked to write something about the community at St. Stephen's. On completion, the leaves were collected to form part of the focal area for the worship. Pupils are now planning and leading acts of Collective Worship more independently with a minimum of adult input. However, this good practice is not yet consistent across the school.
- Those pupils who plan and lead worship use a Collective Worship planner. The pupils lead the worshippers through the plan having chosen an appropriate theme linked to a school Mass or whole school Collective Worship. Relevant questions posed challenge the pupils. There is time for personal reflection. They leave worship with a gift, or an activity to complete or a personal action to accomplish or a spiritual challenge to think over. Pupils do respond to the mission aspect of Collective Worship. Pupils were able to share with me what their intentions were going to be in response to a mission.

- The recently formed school Liturgy Leaders are very happy about their role in school and the responsibility they share together to lead Collective Worship for pupils. They take their role very seriously and spend their free time discussing contents and planning. They ensure that the religious artefacts chosen for the focal point of worship are appropriate.
- The development of Collective Worship is a high priority in the school improvement plan.
- The Wednesday Word is distributed weekly to families to share and reflect upon. Through its distribution, the school is able to communicate the weekly gospel to all families. The purpose of suitable religious artefacts to resource the focal point for worship in each classroom supports enhances Collective Worship within the class.
- All classrooms have their own style of worship area using religious artefacts and cloths to reflect the liturgical season of the year. These worship areas are attractive and welcome pupils to explore the artefacts. Personal and community pupil prayers are a common feature and display the depth of thought given to prayer by most of the pupils.
- A voluntary 'Praying the Rosary' activity observed during a playtime witnessed over 50 pupils from across the school, coming together, to learn more about praying the Rosary and were able to recite a decade of the Joyful Mysteries. This was in response to Pope Francis' request for communities to recite a decade of the Rosary together throughout the world.
- The executive head teacher and RE subject leader have been involved in modelling Collective Worship to staff. Staff confidence in leading Collective Worship in class has increased. However, this good practice is not yet consistent across the school.
- The executive head teacher, along with the RE subject leader and governors have identified areas for improvement in Collective Worship through monitoring, evaluation and posing challenging questions.
- St. Stephen's is a rapidly improving school with Christ at its centre. Every member of its community are cared for, encouraged and supported. There is a true sense of wanting the best for everyone.