

**ENOMINATIONAL INSPECTION
REPORT (Section 48)**

on

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

School: St. Bridget's Catholic Primary School

Address: St. Bridget's Lane
Egremont
Cumbria
CA22 2BD

Telephone Number: 01946 820320

Email address: admin@st-bridgets-pri.cumbria.sch.uk

School URN: 112348

Headteacher: Mrs Pamela Douglas

Chair of Governors: Mr William H Moran

Section 48 Inspector: Mrs Susan Starkie

Date of Inspection: 5th July 2010

The inspection report is produced for the Rt. Reverend Michael Campbell O.S.A., the Bishop of Lancaster (c.f. Code Canon Law, 804, 806), and for the Governing Body of the school (Education Act 2005, Section 48). 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 Advisers and Inspectors.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St. Bridget's Catholic Primary School is a smaller than average school, with 177 pupils on roll, of whom 91 are baptised Catholic, 47 are from other Christian denominations, 1 pupil is from another faith background and 38 pupils have no religious affiliation. An above average proportion of pupils are eligible for free school meals. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds. A very small number speak English as an additional language and even fewer are in the early stages of learning English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of educational needs, is well above average.

The school mainly serves the parish of St. Mary, Egremont but also draws pupils from St. Mary's in Cleator, St. Joseph's in Frizington, St. Begh's in Whitehaven, St. Benedict's in Whitehaven and Our Lady and St. Michael's in Workington. This year twenty six Year 6 pupils are due to transfer to St. Benedict's Catholic High School in Whitehaven, 3 will transfer to West Lakes Academy and 1 pupil will transfer to Mayfield Special School.

The school has gained the local authority Inclusion Chartermark, Healthy Schools Award and Activemark Gold.

FACTUAL INFORMATION

Pupil Catchment:

| | |
|--|-------|
| Number of pupils on roll: | 177 |
| Planned Admission Number of Pupils: | 30 |
| Percentage of pupils baptised Catholics | 51.4% |
| Percentage of pupils from other Christian denominations: | 26.6% |
| Percentage of pupils from other faith backgrounds: | 00.6% |
| Percentage of pupils with no religious affiliation: | 21.5% |
| Percentage of pupils from ethnic groups: | 01.1% |
| Percentage of pupils with special needs: | 24.3% |

Staffing

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-------|
| Full-time teachers: | 4 |
| Part-time teachers: | 9 |
| Percentage of Catholic teachers: | 64.4% |
| Percentage of teachers with CCRS: | 30.8% |

Parish served by the school:

| | | |
|----|------------------------|-----|
| 1. | St. Mary, Egremont | 157 |
| 2. | St. Mary, Cleator | 7 |
| 3. | St. Joseph, Frizington | 5 |
| 4. | Others | 8 |

Overall Effectiveness

2

Capacity for sustained improvement

2

MAIN FINDINGS

St. Bridget's Catholic Primary School is a good, fully inclusive school where everyone is welcomed, valued and affirmed. The Catholic mission underpins all of school life and is the driving force behind the school's desire to improve standards. Excellent relationships are a key strength of the school. The school's capacity for sustained improvement is good in all areas and all priorities for improvement since the last inspection have been addressed.

Pupils enjoy coming to school. They generally engage well in lessons and have positive attitudes to learning. From below average starting points, most pupils make very good progress in Religious Education in the foundation stage and attain standards that are generally above national standards in both Key Stages 1 and 2. New assessment procedures and internal and external moderation help staff to focus on pupil progress and identify the next steps in learning so that pupils' progress and attainment are maximised. However, these effective systems have already shown some discrepancy in progress and attainment between the two Attainment Targets – Learning about Religion (AT1) and Learning from Religion (AT2).

The school's provision for Catholic education is good. A variety of teaching styles, which enable pupils to make good progress, meet the needs of most pupils. The level of pupil participation in prayer and in the liturgical life of the school is good; however the school recognises the need to involve pupils more so that they are increasingly able to plan and lead their own acts of collective worship. The pupils respond with respect and reverence in collective worship. The promotion of spiritual and moral development in the school is good.

Leadership and management of the school are outstanding and staff are well supported by effective governors. A very clear vision is shared by all and ensures a common sense of purpose. Parents are supportive of the school and the school is developing stronger links with the parish and with the wider community. Leaders have a clear sense of direction in Curriculum RE and are committed to raising standards. The governing body fulfils its responsibilities very well. Governors and school leaders have a very good understanding of what is required in leading the school and are well informed of strengths and areas for development.

The School's capacity for sustained improvement

The school's ability to self-evaluate, coupled with strong leadership and management, indicate that the school has a good capacity to improve. The school has secure plans for improvement arising from its own thorough self-evaluation; however the impact of this robust self-evaluation now needs to be reflected in the self-evaluation documentation.

What the school needs to do to improve further

In order to improve standards of attainment the school now needs to –

- Ensure that more appropriate tasks and activities are planned to enable higher ability Key Stage 1 pupils to achieve Level 3 and Key Stage 2 pupils achieve Level 5.
- Further analyse pupil tracking and assessment information to identify variations and trends within all groups of pupils.
- Ensure that all teachers plan challenging activities which consistently develop and extend pupils' learning in Attainment Target 2 (Learning from Religion).
- Extend pupils' involvement in liturgies by developing their skills of planning and preparing prayer and collective worship.
- Continue to develop curriculum and friendship links with other schools locally, nationally and internationally.

PUPILS

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

| |
|----------|
| 2 |
|----------|

Pupils enjoy RE and speak enthusiastically about their Religious Education lessons. Pupils are becoming increasingly religiously literate and their knowledge, skills and understanding are developing well according to their age and capability. They discuss their faith confidently and can talk about how religion, belief and spirituality impact on their lives. Pupils in school are caring towards one another, living out the message that Jesus gave them: 'To love one another as I have loved you'. Most children in assembly, during lessons, in the playground and moving around school have a caring manner and show respect for one other.

Learning and progress in RE are good overall. From below average starting points pupils progress well throughout the Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. By the end of Key Stage 1 most pupils attain Level 2 and by the end of Key Stage 2 a very large majority attain Level

4, with a few more able pupils achieving Level 5. The school is now addressing the need to increase the number of pupils achieving Level 3 in Key Stage 1 and Level 5 at the end of Key Stage 2. Although attainment is generally above average inspection evidence indicates that attainment is higher in knowledge and understanding of religion (AT1) than in (AT2) where pupils' demonstrate an ability to reflect on meaning. Staff are aware of this and plans are being put in place to address the issue.

The school's recently introduced pupil tracking system indicates that there is little variation in the amount of progress made between boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs and or disabilities make good progress because their needs are accurately identified and support is carefully planned and adapted to meet their needs. The school has plans in place to analyse pupil data in order to identify variations and trends within other pupil groups, such as those on free school meals, Catholic and non Catholic groups.

Pupils make a good contribution to the Catholic life of the school. They willingly take on responsibilities and are keen to participate in activities within and beyond the classroom, which they acknowledge will help them to live out Jesus' teaching and make them better people. Pupils show an interest in the religious life of others, for example all were very attentive during a whole school assembly about St. Thomas. They are comfortable when expressing their own beliefs and display care and respect for religious objects in school. They understand the importance of key celebrations in the liturgical year and in the parish community. Pupils generally know the difference between right and wrong and show a developing sense of justice, kindness and consideration to others. This is apparent in all the positive relationships that exist within the whole school community.

Pupils' responses to and participation in Collective Worship are good. They act reverently and respectfully and can reflect silently. They are at ease when praying in their school community and appreciate what is taking place. Pupils show respect for everyone in the school and understand that some pupils have different beliefs and attitudes to spirituality. They have a good understanding of the religious seasons and have a good knowledge of traditional prayers and other forms of prayer. Collective Worship contributes positively to the spiritual and moral development of the pupils. An observed act of Collective Worship showed that pupils acted with reverence, were able to reflect in silence as well as confidently join in community prayer. Pupils from Year 6 concluded the assembly by reading some of their own thoughtful prayers based upon the theme of 'Trust'. Although Collective Worship contributes positively to the spiritual and moral development of the pupils and pupils enjoy participating in acts of worship, they are not given enough opportunity to develop skills in planning, preparing and leading liturgies and in acts of worship.

LEADERS AND MANAGERS

How effective leaders and managers are in developing the Catholic life of the School

1

Leaders and managers are very good at promoting Catholic values and principles. The acting headteacher has an excellent vision for the Catholic life of the school and a firm commitment to its Catholic mission. Along with senior staff and governors, the acting headteacher has high expectations and a strong desire to promote Catholic values, which are clearly articulated throughout the school.

A range of informal and formal monitoring systems ensures continuous improvement in the Catholic life of the school. Leaders and managers conduct a range of monitoring activities relating to provision and outcomes for pupils, which enables them to make an accurate diagnosis of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. This ensures continuous improvement in all aspects of the Catholic life of the school. The impressive work of the Parish Priest and the governors who 'work' in school on a regular basis ensure an awareness, understanding and commitment to the strong Catholic ethos. Subsequently pupils and staff have a high level of understanding of the school's mission and are actively involved in shaping and supporting it.

The recently introduced monitoring and evaluation system for the provision for religious education is beginning to have an impact on pupil progress and attainment. The hard working, newly appointed subject leader for Religious Education, who is ably supported by the acting headteacher, has effectively ensured that monitoring, assessment and tracking systems are in place and are impacting positively on pupils' learning, progress and standards. The tracking system accurately informs staff of areas of strength and areas for development and contributes to the good capacity for improvement. The acting headteacher and the subject leader have high expectations and work closely together to keep staff well informed and provide support. Detailed and well-targeted plans have been in place since January and strategies to effect improvement are being implemented successfully to improve the outcomes for pupils.

Governors are highly committed and motivated and provide effective challenge and support regarding the Catholic life of the school. This is a real strength of the school. They are very proactive, highly involved in the Catholic life of the school and make a significant contribution to the school's work. Governors discharge their statutory and canonical duties effectively and are very supportive of leaders and of staff. They are fully involved in evaluating the school and have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development in order to raise standards further. Governors are actively involved in the school community and have developed very positive relationships with staff and pupils. Governors and

staff have clear systems for seeking the views of parents and pupils and they use these views to develop and enhance provision in school.

The school makes a good contribution to the promotion of community cohesion. There is a common sense of belonging amongst staff and pupils. St. Bridget's is a very inclusive school where all pupils and staff respect difference, value diversity and ensure equal opportunities for all. Leaders and managers develop effective partnerships with other providers and organisations. The school is involved in a range of partnerships, for example schools' sports co-ordinator events, the Life Bus, Fair Trade competitions and work with the emergency services, which impact significantly on pupils' achievement and well-being and to the Catholic life of the school. Pupils are given opportunities to participate in parish and neighbourhood activities, for example in St. Mary's Parish Church's Fun day and the 50th Celebration of the building of St. Mary's Church. Well-established links with the other Catholic feeder schools, other local primary schools, the diocese and the parish provide a wide range of opportunities for pupils to take an active role in their neighbourhood and in community events. The school has developed positive local links and recognises the need to extend these links and opportunities in order to enable pupils to engage with those from different backgrounds locally, nationally and globally.

The Religious Education curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to learn about other faiths. It promotes attitudes of respect and tolerance for all faiths and those with none. Acts of Collective Worship are inclusive and each person's spiritual identity is respected. Many opportunities exist for groups and individuals within school to engage and collaborate with each other. Pupils, staff, governors and parents feel a sense of belonging within the school community.

PROVISION

How effective the provision is for Catholic Education

| |
|----------|
| 2 |
|----------|

The quality of teaching is good and ensures that pupils are interested in their learning and are making good progress. Teachers are effective in ensuring that lessons build on prior learning and meeting the needs of most pupils. In a lesson observed, during the inspection, the teacher made good use of ICT to engage learners. Activities, such as role-play, drama, music and use of art, make learning exciting and engage and motivate pupils. During a Year 1 lesson, pupils were engaged and motivated and demonstrated positive attitudes in their eagerness to learn. 'Storm' music was used as a stimulus to engage pupils and help them to think about how the disciples would have felt during the Bible story 'Jesus and The Storm'. Pupils were then able to brainstorm the feelings and emotions of the disciples and relate them to examples from their own

lives. Pupil activities are well planned and differentiated to enable pupils of all abilities to make progress. Teachers have good subject knowledge and know the next steps for pupils to take. Support staff are well deployed in school and help individual pupils to remain focussed and engaged with their work. Pupils are provided with feedback both orally and through good quality marking which, together with setting challenging pupil targets, informs pupils of how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve further.

The school has recently introduced a detailed pupil tracking and assessment system, which is being used effectively to inform teaching and learning. It provides teachers with a clear picture of how well pupils are progressing and achieving. The school's tracking system provides a clear and up to date picture of current attainment and individual and cohort progress and has been used to identify whether there are any variations in gender attainment. The school now needs to develop this analysis to look at the progress and attainment within other identified groups such as Catholic and non Catholic and children eligible for free school meals. The school's current assessment analysis highlights a mismatch between pupils' progress and attainment in AT1 and AT2 and measures are being put place to address this issue.

The Religious Education curriculum is creatively adapted to meet the needs of most pupils. It is enriched through a variety of imaginative and well-planned strategies and relevant resources, which engage and motivate the pupils. Long and short term planning ensures full coverage of the RE curriculum and identifies pupils' prior learning. The RE curriculum provides good opportunities for, and impacts positively on, pupils' spiritual and moral development. The curriculum fully meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference.

The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school is good. It is well embedded within the school day and there is a good variety of prayer and liturgical opportunities are provided. Prayer is central to the life of the school. All classes have a quiet area for prayer and well-resourced and attractive altars where pupils reflect and pray. There are many examples in the school of pupil prayer offerings which are displayed effectively and are easily accessible to pupils, for example, in Year 2 pupils attach their heartfelt prayer leaves to an attractive prayer tree in the classroom and add a prayer flower to say thank you when their prayers are answered. During the academic year, pupils in all classes have the opportunity to be a class prayer leader. Key stage assemblies are a strength of the school and pupils are given the opportunity to share their work with other classes. Teachers' planning for acts of worship is good, enabling pupils to take an active part in both large and small groupings. Acts of worship are fully inclusive and reflective and pupils enjoy participating. However there are too few opportunities for pupils across all key stages to plan and lead their own acts of Collective Worship.

SUMMARY OF INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Key for inspection grades:

Grade 1 **Outstanding** Grade 2 **Good** Grade 3 **Satisfactory** Grade 4 **Unsatisfactory**

| | |
|--|----------|
| Overall effectiveness | 2 |
| The school's capacity for sustained improvement | 2 |
| PUPILS How good outcomes are for pupils, taking particular account of variations between different groups | 2 |
| • how well do pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education? | 2 |
| ❖ the quality of pupils' learning and their progress | 2 |
| ❖ the quality of learning for pupils with particular learning needs and/or disabilities and their progress | 2 |
| ❖ pupils' attainment in RE | 2 |
| • to what extent do pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life of the school? | 2 |
| • how well do pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship? | 2 |
| LEADERS AND MANAGERS How effective are leaders and managers in developing the Catholic life of the School? | 1 |
| • 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? | 2 |
| • how well leaders and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for RE and plan for improvement to outcomes for pupils? | 1 |
| • 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 met? | 1 |
| • how well leaders and managers develop partnerships with other providers, organisations and services in order to promote Catholic learning and well-being? | 2 |
| • how effectively leaders and managers promote Community Cohesion? | 2 |
| PROVISION How effective is the provision for Catholic Education? | 2 |
| • the quality of teaching and purposeful learning in Religious Education | 2 |
| • the effectiveness of assessment and academic guidance in Religious Education? | 2 |
| • the extent to which Religious Education curriculum meets pupils' needs? | 2 |
| • the quality of Collective Worship provided by the school? | 2 |