

DIOCESE OF HALLAM

MONITORING OF THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

PRIMARY

(Three- year review following Section 48 Inspection)

School: St Theresa's Catholic Primary, Sheffield

Date of Visit:23.05.17

Inspection Date of Latest S48: November 2013

Current Development Priorities in relation to RE and the Catholic Life of the School

- Development of Class RE folders
- Development of a 'Child-friendly version of the Mission Statement
- Continue to link 'Clever Creatures' initiatives with scripture for use in assemblies/liturgies

Any outstanding issues from S48 Inspection?

- Strengthen systems in assessment further by increasing teachers' confidence in using levels of attainment in line with Diocesan guidance.
This has been addressed over recent years, but continues to be a focus.
- Provide increasing opportunities for pupils to take more responsibility in planning and leading prayer and liturgy.
A continuing focus. The school is focusing more on leadership of liturgies within school than the regular attendance at Mass.
- Review the current mission statement, involving the pupils, to make it more 'child friendly'.
An excellent exercise in involving the pupils has taken place, with ideas garnered from the children about what St Theresa's means to them (highlighted by a display near the front entrance.) Two versions were then drafted by Year 6 pupils, and the rest of the school voted for which one they liked best. The chosen version will shortly be presented to Governors.

Recommendations from the last Catholic Review (May 2015) and the school's response

To appoint a Chairman of Governors with effect September 2015.

A new Chair of governors was appointed and is in post (Jamie Smith).

To work in partnership with the Diocese to consider possible future conversion to a Catholic Voluntary Academy. *Due to changes in government policy, this is no longer a possibility under present regulations. However, St Theresa's is very involved in the Sheffield Catholic Schools Partnership (SCSP), as it is in its geographical locality of schools(SELP).*

To create opportunities for coaching and modelling in Religious Education so that the outstanding practice can be shared with all colleagues.

The school's monitoring plan has been revised in order to make it less time-consuming but more rigorous. This has enabled regular scrutiny of pupils' work and lesson observations to take place in RE, in rotation with other subjects. Outstanding practice can thus be shared with colleagues. The RE subject leader also updates colleagues after attendance at diocesan co-ordinators' days. Opportunities to share practice with other schools have been more limited, except for the Deputy Heads' group learning walks.

To develop a school exemplar of levelled Religious Education work which will support the assessment and levelling process. *This exemplar has been created. Moderation within school, using anonymous examples, has also taken place.*

Learning Walk with the Head of RE (Fran Gerrard)

A Learning Walk took place during the review, and the following points should be noted:

- *The school's Catholicity is very evident within the school. A statue of St Theresa adorns the entrance, and the school motto – 'To do the little things well' – is taken directly from the saint's 'Little Way'.*
- *This is also reflected in classrooms around the school, where there is a defined and well presented prayer focus area in each room. Both the infant and junior halls also carry special displays related to the Easter season.*
- *A strong focus on honouring Our Lady during the month of May was seen throughout the school. Each class of pupils had displays relating to Mary: Year 4 had designed and created their version of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, on a banner displayed in the corridor. This had been distributed to all classes, and each had made their own artistic representation of the mother of Jesus.*
- *To coincide with the start of Ramadan, there was a special week of learning focusing on Islam. A number of imaginative activities were observed during the learning walk. Examples seen were the building of Mosques in wooden bricks and recreating Islamic symbols in Early Years; pupils making their own version of a prayer mat; a Ramadan survival kit being built; and a writing exercise about visiting a mosque. This work had commenced with the 'call to prayer' in assembly at the beginning of the week.*
- *Each class has its own RE folder, recording displays and activities in learning in photographic form. Some of these have been developed extensively, but more consistency through the school would be of benefit.*
- *Communication with parents is highly prized so that parents can be engaged as possible in their pupils' learning and wellbeing. Much information for parents is on display in the entrance, including the parish newsletter; there is a weekly school newsletter and a termly RE newsletter. Pupil attendance is given a high priority, with exceptional attendance highlighted and class statistics displayed. Parents are encouraged to partake in a variety of course laid on for them in the parish hall – numeracy, literacy, family budgets, crafts and keep fit being a few examples, led by the inclusion team.*
- *The outside environment is spacious, with very good facilities for play and pupils take full advantage of what is on offer: The playpod scrapstore, the climbing equipment, the wildlife area and the garden, as well as the playground and field. There is a sacred space dedicated to Our Lady in the garden, and it is aimed to develop this area further to generate more frequent use.*
- *The school's innovative resource for teaching pupils important values for learning – 'Clever Creatures' – is prominent in school: Its growth mindset is being used to encourage attitudes such as 'think hard', 'enjoy learning', 'refuse to give up', and 'all learn together'. Individual pupils or whole classes are rewarded for demonstrating these attitudes and they are well liked by the pupils. The school has now linked the creatures to a variety of scripture readings, enabling them to become part of Religious Education learning. This link could further be enhanced within the Religious Education curriculum.*
- *The school has supported several charities recently, such as CAFOD, St Luke's Hospice, Mission Together, the Good Shepherd Appeal and local food banks.*

Discussion with Head of RE

The RE subject leader has been diligent in collecting evidence of how the school addresses RE and its Catholic life. A number of folders were examined including those relating to teachers' planning, the monitoring of RE, the school's Catholic Self Evaluation Document (SED) and examples of collective worship.

The role of the newly formed RE ambassadors was discussed: this group could well be developed to promote pupil leadership of classroom worship through modelling resources such as 'Let Us Pray'. They could also be linked with the parish, in praying for the sick for example.

Strengths of the school and areas for development were discussed in relation to Religious Education; as well as the impending new framework for Section 48 inspection and new national assessment guidelines; and the links that could exist between action plans and the SED.

Discussion with Head and Vice-Chair of Governors

The governors feel well informed about Religious Education and the Catholicity of the school. Governors are part of the monitoring process, and informal learning walks also take place. The Chair is very involved in parish life and this provides a useful link for the school. Governors would like to continue to find ways to develop links between the school and the parish.

Arrangements for ensuring that the school will have training with regard to the new Section 48 inspection framework were shared, as were ideas for development, included in the recommendations listed below.

Recommendations

In order to continue to develop its Catholic Life and Religious Education, it is recommended that the school:

- Continues to develop the role of the RE ambassadors in order to increase links with the parish and to model pupil-led classroom worship.
- Explores partnerships with other Catholic schools in order to share best practice and to develop assessment following the publication of new guidelines.
- That future Catholic action plans be closely linked to the structure of the new Section framework and accompanying Self Evaluation Document.
- Continues to develop standards of attainment in RE through increasing the use of 'Clever Creatures' within teaching in the subject, such as reviewing the use of stickers in marking that use RE specific vocabulary but also are linked to the attributes of the creatures.

Signed: 