



Archdiocese of Birmingham

INSPECTION REPORT

HOLY TRINITY CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL CHIPPING NORTON

Inspection dates 2nd - 3rd July 2012
Reporting Inspector Brenda Beale

Inspection carried out under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005

Type of School	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4 -11 years
Number on roll	181
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governors	Mr Paul Branch
School address	24 London Road Chipping Norton Oxon OX7 5AX
Telephone number	01608 643487
E-mail address	office.3420@holy-trinity.oxon.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	June 2008
DFE School number	931 3420
Unique Reference Number	123184

Headteacher (Acting) Mrs Sally Hughes

DIOCESAN EDUCATION SERVICE



Evidence

The inspection was carried out by 1 Diocesan Inspector. The focus of the inspection was on the effectiveness and use of the school's self evaluation of religious education (RE) and Catholic life. To validate the effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation of teaching and learning, the inspector observed 3 full RE lessons, 1 with the headteacher. In addition the inspector completed a work scrutiny and held a discussion with pupils to evaluate the impact of teaching on their learning over time. She held meetings with the chair of governors, staff, and parish priest. She observed a prayer service and undertook a learning walk to look at aspects of learning and teaching in RE, the presentation of the Catholic life of the school, and pupils' behaviour. She looked at a range of evidence related to the school's self evaluation such as RAISEonline, the development plan, teachers' planning, and learning walks. Alongside the validation of school self evaluation, the inspector gathered evidence about the quality of RE lessons, evidence which will be shared with other diocesan schools.

Information about the school

Holy Trinity is a one form entry Catholic primary school serving the parish of Holy Trinity in Chipping Norton. The school is in a rural area and children come from the surrounding villages. The number of Catholic pupils is currently 27%. The proportion of ethnic minority pupils is very low. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is also low. The proportion of pupils on the special educational needs registers is below the national average. One pupil has a statement. In most areas the pupils' attainment on entry is in line with national standards.

Main Finding

In its self evaluation the school judges itself to be a good school. In its Catholic life, collective worship, and valuation of RE its judgements are fully justified. This is also true of the school's judgement that the spiritual and moral development of the pupils is good. Following a period of unsettled leadership the current acting headteacher and leadership team have established effective monitoring and evaluation processes which are closely linked to improvement planning. These processes have led to rapid development. Review of and planning for RE and the Catholic life of the school is highly objective because the headteacher and most of the staff are not Catholic but are determined to uphold and develop the Catholic ethos of the school. They are aided in their task by the governing body, the parish priest and a catechist, a retired Catholic headteacher, who are strongly committed to the school and take a very active role in the monitoring and evaluation of the Catholic life of the school.

School self evaluation

The strength of school evaluation rests in the headteacher's astuteness, ability to make clear judgements and willingness to seek and follow advice. Monitoring is tight and thorough. Governors have set up a Catholic faith committee to ensure the Catholic life of the school continues to flourish and to monitor the provision of RE and collective worship. It meets regularly and is very effective. Evidence for evaluation is gathered through learning walks, pupil questionnaires. Book trawls, assessment procedures and lesson observations, focussed on pupil learning and regular visits to the classrooms, by the headteacher all feed into the monitoring and evaluation process. Robust feedback is given to teachers, who, aware that there maybe gaps in their own knowledge, are very open to constructive criticism and guidance.

The school judges that pupil attainment is good. Overall this judgement is sound but there are evident gaps in the older pupils' learning due to some past ineffective RE curriculum planning and teaching which has now been rectified. The older children produce good work in their books, but their recall of what they have studied in the past is less good. Most pupils have a great ability to reflect upon meaning of what they are taught in RE and the impact it has on their own lives. The school rightly judges that progress is good. The school judges that pupils' spiritual and moral development is now good and several strategies have been put in place leading to a substantial improvement in the pupils' behaviour and attitudes to prayer and worship.

The curriculum is monitored and evaluated very well and a range of improvements have been identified and implemented. Aspects of assessment are in place and are used effectively as a monitoring tool. Assessment does need to be further developed and teachers need to become familiar with the levels of both attainment targets to further assist in the evaluation of the curriculum and pupils' learning. The headteacher, who is also RE leader, teaches RE in Year 2, giving a strong lead to and helping to develop the confidence of the other non-Catholic members of staff. Collective worship and liturgy are very closely monitored and evaluated to ensure quality and Catholicity. The headteacher regularly reviews assemblies and these evaluations are shared, along with other evaluations, with the faith committee, members of which frequently attend assemblies, liturgies and Masses in order to evaluate more fully. The excellent weekly newsletter is used very effectively as a monitoring tool for the Catholic life of the school.

Overall effectiveness of the school

Outcomes for pupils in RE, across the school, are good. Current pupils in Year 6 are gaining ground and the quality of teaching they are now receiving is helping them to close the gaps in their knowledge. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is very high, while across most of Key stage 2 it is at least broadly average. A strength of the school is the way pupils have developed the ability to reflect on meaning. Pupils are engaged in lessons, behave well and respond appropriately. Pupils demonstrate a good understanding about what they have learned. Most pupils are able to think spiritually, ethically and theologically. Progress across all classes is good. Pupils with learning difficulties/disabilities are supported well and make good progress. Sacramental education and preparation is effectively supported by the parish priest and a parish catechist who is very experienced and knowledgeable.

Pupils' attitudes, values, relationships and commitment to the school community indicate that their spiritual, moral and vocational development is good. Pupils have a good understanding of right and wrong and consequences of their behaviour. They understand the need to forgive and be forgiven. Work on vocation in its broadest sense does need to be more overtly promoted by the school though pupils do understand that they are unique and special and have a special part to play in their community. They are respectful and caring towards all members of the community and know this is what Jesus demands of them. Collective worship is very good and particularly enhanced by the quality of music and singing. The children sing with great sweetness and regard hymns as a beautiful form of prayer. They pray very well and evidence of their own prayers can be found in their books and on wall displays. The school needs to develop the range of formal prayers used by the children as they move through the school.

The teaching of RE across the school is at least good with elements of outstanding practice. Teachers show good subject knowledge and where help is needed to deliver the curriculum the teachers involve foundation governors, the parish catechist and the parish priest. Planning is adjusted to meet the needs of all pupils. Assessment for learning is

developing rather than fully in place but marking is good, linked to RE targets and provides guidance for improvement. The curriculum meets the needs of all the pupils and is greatly enhanced by the exceptional knowledge of scripture provided by some of the non-Catholic teachers. The pupils all learn about and from other religions and understand the importance of respecting the lives, culture and beliefs of others. Family life and sex education is delivered using the approved diocesan programme.

The provision of collective worship is good. The headteacher and her staff seek guidance and advice from the parish priest and parish catechist, a former headteacher of a Catholic school, to ensure quality and Catholicity. The Catholic liturgical calendar is closely observed and appropriate good quality celebrations are provided. The children are taught a wide range of hymns and very good use is made of scripture in collective worship.

Holy Trinity is a good Catholic school in which all pupils thrive, develop good spiritual and moral values and where Christ is made known to all in the community. Pupils are happy and secure and they and their families appreciate the rich Catholic ethos of the school.

Recommendations

- Further develop assessment within the school so that teachers become familiar with the levels of both attainment targets to assist in the evaluation of the curriculum and pupils' learning.
- Improve the progression of formal prayer in the school so that older pupils are familiar with a wider range of the prayers of the Catholic Church.
- Develop and promote more overtly the understanding of vocation in its widest sense.
- Involve pupils more fully in the preparation of assemblies, liturgy and Masses.