



**GUIDELINES FOR THE
INSPECTION
OF
CATHOLIC SCHOOLS**

SECTION 48

**Second Edition - September 2006
Updated September 2007**

Contents

- 1.** Foreword by Bishop Declan
- 2.** Introduction from the National board of Religious Inspectors and Advisors. (NBRIA)
- 3.** Religious education in Catholic schools (A statement from the Bishop Conference of England and Wales, May 2005)
- 4.** The Inspection Process
- 5.** Before the Inspection
- 6.** On site Inspection
- 7.** The outcomes of Inspection
- 8.** Summary of the Inspection process (flow chart)
- 9.** Guidance on completing the self evaluation form 48
- 10.** Appendices
 - A.** A check list for governors
 - B.** Reflective questions for senior managers and heads/coordinators of RE
 - C.** Useful Publications

FOREWORD

This year Ofsted has revised and published a new inspection handbook for Section inspections that will come into effect this September. Alongside this, the Department of Religious Education has revised its Section 48 Inspection Framework. The new framework is founded on an evaluation of schools' own self-review documentation and pupils' experience of RE, the school's catechetical life and its broader mission. I hope you will find it a helpful development tool.

The last few years have seen considerable curriculum changes in RE through the implementation of "Here I am" in primary schools and the development of the teaching and learning strategy at secondary level. 6th form RE has also seen changes; funding becoming available for syllabi which are produced by individual schools and specifically targeted at their own students. Thank you for the generosity of spirit in which you approach such change. There is clear evidence that this has led to the development of a richer curriculum for pupils.

In an age where schools are increasingly judged by external examination results, there is a danger that students become valued for what they achieve rather than who they are. Our claim to a distinctive system of education is founded on our belief that "the promotion of the human person is the goal of the catholic school"¹ The challenge our schools face is to draw out of each individual the truth of her or his heart and to help each person encounter the risen Christ.

I believe our catholic schools can make valuable contributions not only to the catholic community but to society as a whole, if they are places where people experience communion and are thus able to grow in their uniqueness. If they are only places of good discipline, good academic results, enabling people to get jobs, then they may be successful in an understanding of life based on individualism and consumerism but they will have failed in their mission to proclaim the Gospel which enables people to live peacefully in communion with self others and earth. I hope the self review process will contribute to a clearer understanding of the mission of catholic schools and greater insight into how we maintain our distinctiveness.

I would like to thank Dr. John Lally from the Birmingham diocese for his help in the preparation of these documents and the work of the NBRIA team led by Fr. Joseph Quigley. I hope what follows helps you in your teaching ministry.

¹ The catholic school on the threshold of the new millennium

2: INTRODUCTION

All people by virtue of their dignity as human persons have the right to education, that is, the right to achieve their potential in life. Those who are baptised members of the Church have a right to a Christian Education. (cf. *Gravissimum Educationis*, 1,2).

Catholic schools are part of the mission of the Church. They are challenged by the gospel to affirm their pupils' basic goodness, to promote their dignity and to develop their gifts to the full. Schools are challenged to educate people to live responsibly for the fullness of life that God wills for each of us.

The arrangements for the Section 48 Inspections (Education Act 2005) enable the Church to assess systematically the work of Catholic schools. They also provide an opportunity to support, challenge, evaluate and promote this vital work in the mission of the Church.

The purpose of inspection is to assist the school in its continuing work of self-evaluation through the identification of particular strengths, of areas requiring further improvement, and of progress made since the last inspection.

The inspection should be understood in the context of self-evaluation and must include as well as the provision and standards achieved in curriculum Religious Education, the broad Catholic life of the school.

The Bishops' Conference of England and Wales Statement on Religious Education in Catholic Schools should inform the self-evaluation that every school/college must undertake. (May 2000).

3: RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

A STATEMENT FROM THE CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE OF ENGLAND AND WALES (MAY 2000)

Growing in Faith:

1. The Gospel of Jesus Christ invites all who follow its teaching to the fullness of life. Discipleship in the Gospel is life-long, a journey of faith coming to complete fulfilment only in the presence of God in heaven. The entire life of the disciple is marked by learning and growth. Life-long growth in faith is to be a characteristic of Catholic life. An understanding of the educative task of the Church must start from this perspective and increasingly opportunities for life-long learning need to be developed for every member of the Church.

2. The first educators in the faith are parents. It is they, above all others, who establish in their children the first sensitivity and responsiveness to the presence of God, to the practice of prayer and to the patterns of life in the community of faith, the parish. By their example in the home and in their participation in the Mass and other sacraments, the foundation of life-long faith and discipleship in their children are laid down.

The Catholic School:

3. This partnership between home and parish is enhanced by the role of the Catholic school in which the educational mission of the Church finds a particular and important expression (Cf General Directory for Catechesis n 259). This educational mission entails the ongoing development of the entire potential of every person. It seeks to promote the well-being and freedom of every person, made in the image and likeness of God and finding fulfilment in God alone. This is the vision, which shapes the daily life of a Catholic school as a community in which faith is expressed and shared through every aspect of its activity. Through the pattern of daily prayer, through the celebration of the sacraments of the Church, through works of charity, through a striving for justice in all it does, a Catholic school seeks to be a catechetical community in which the content and the life of faith is shared (Cf GDC nos. 218 & 259). We recognise that in a Catholic school the witness of its life is, for some, a first announcing of the Gospel, or even preparation for that announcement. In these ways, the meaning of life, as understood in the Catholic faith, is explored and experienced by all those taking part in the life of the school, whether they are baptised Catholics or not, practising their faith in their own parish or not. This vision of the Catholic school lies at the heart of the firm expectation that Catholic parents send their children to Catholic schools, if at all possible. The partnership between home, parish and school is the best setting for the formation of maturing Catholic young people.

Religious Education:

4. In the life of faith of the Catholic school, religious education plays a central and vital part. At the heart of Catholic education lies the Christian vision of the human person. This vision is expressed and explored in Religious Education. Therefore, religious education is never simply one subject among many, but the foundation of the

entire educational process. The beliefs and values studied in Catholic religious education inspire and draw together every aspect of the life of a Catholic school. We are committed to classroom RE, then, because all pupils have the right to receive an overall education which will enable them, in the light of the faith of the Church, to engage with the deepest questions of life and find reasons for the hope which is within them (1 Peter 3.15). religious education is, then, the core subject in a Catholic school.

5. In 1996, we published the *Religious Education Curriculum Directory for Catholic Schools*. This stated clearly the overall aims of classroom RE and its more precise objectives. They can be summarised as stating that religious education in a Catholic school is the comprehensive and systematic study of the mystery of God, of the life and teachings of Jesus Christ, the teachings of his Church, the central beliefs that Catholics hold, the basis for them and the relationship between faith and life; in a manner which encourages investigation and reflection by the pupils, develops the appropriate skills and attitudes and promotes free, informed and full response to God's call in religious education 'is religiously literate young people who have the knowledge, understanding and skills – appropriate to their age and capacity – to think spiritually, ethically and theologically, and who are aware of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life'. (p.10)

6. In January 2000, we were able to host a Symposium on 'Expectations of Classroom Religious Education in Catholic Schools' to which we invited many diocesan RE advisors, RE teacher and representatives of Catholic Colleges and Institutions. This enabled us to look together at some of the issues surrounding RE today and, in particular, the needs of our Catholic schools. We are grateful to all who took part in this Symposium, and to all who contributed to the consultation which preceded it.

Expectations of Classroom Religious Education:

7. The Symposium emphasised the importance of the definitions of aims and objectives of classroom RE given in the Curriculum Directory. It also asked for greater clarity about the precise role of classroom RE, in the context of our understanding of the catechetical task of the whole school. In this context, we are clear that the specific contribution to the life of the Catholic school of classroom RE is primarily educational for its primary purpose is to draw pupils into a systematic study of the teaching of the Church, the saving mystery of Christ which the Church proclaims. Excellence in religious education, then, will be characterised by a clarity of succinct religious learning objectives and of key content, by appropriate methodologies, rigour, richness of resources, achievement of identified outcomes and accurate methods of assessment. Classroom RE will be a challenging educational engagement between the pupil, the teacher and the authentic subject material.

8. RE teaching in a Catholic school will be enlightened by the faith of the school community and by the faith of the RE teacher. Its educational focus will be formed and enhanced by the vitality of faith. For some in the classroom, religious education may well be received as catechesis, deepening and enhancing their personal faith; for some it will be evangelisation, the first time they will have been presented, personally, with the truths of living faith. Nevertheless its primary purpose is the step-by-step study of the mystery of Christ, the teaching of the Church and its application in daily life. The criteria by which it is to be judged are educational.

9. When classroom RE displays these educational characteristics, then its specific contribution to the life of the Catholic school, which as a whole is a catechetical community, becomes apparent. Then the complementarity of the various roles which contribute to the life of the school is also clarified: the role of the leadership of the school as a catechetical community, the role of the chaplaincy of the school and the partnership in the religious life of the pupils between the school, the parishes and the families. All these have a part to play in the handing on of faith and its expression and exploration in daily life.

10. If this kind of classroom RE is to be achieved, then it is to be taught, developed and resourced with the same commitment as any other subject. We are aware that sometimes classroom RE suffers from low expectations and lack of challenge. Tasks given to pupils need to be clearly focused and sufficiently demanding. The objective of religious education is to include analysis and reflection, critical appreciation of sources and examples, and a real sense of progression through the different stages of education. As such it requires the unequivocal support of the management of every Catholic school. It also requires 10% of the length of the taught week for each Key Stage of education. This is what we reaffirm and expect.

The Role of the Teacher:

11. The success of classroom RE in our schools will also depend, as does every subject, on the quality and dedication of the teachers. We are aware of the need to do all we can, as a Church, to recruit, educate and support good teachers of religious education. We believe that the clarity of expectations, which can underpin RE, will serve to enhance the attractiveness of the subject to potential teachers. We also recognise the need for RE teachers to have particular opportunities to continue their own life-long formation in faith as well as for professional development. We need to make the best possible use of those diocesan resources given to the support of RE teachers. We acknowledge the limitation of these resources, especially in the number of RE Advisors in our Secondary schools, and we will look at ways in which their number and effectiveness can be enhanced. We are also grateful to all those who have been developing effective resources for Catholic RE, and wish to encourage a lively exchange of good practice, not least by use of Internet sites and other modern means. Good teachers also always require the support of parents and the wider Church community. Learning in the faith is not completed when school years are finished. A responsibility remains on every Catholic to continue their growth in faith throughout life.

12. The importance of the teacher of RE cannot be exaggerated. We are most grateful to all those teachers who, week in and week out, have contributed to the religious education of pupils in our schools. We recognise the difficulties that are faced in this task, especially in a society like ours, which does not encourage the natural religiosity of the individual, nor offer popular support for faithful adherence to the practice of faith. We salute the generosity of our teachers who have brought not only a love of their faith to their teaching but also a deep concern for the well-being of every pupil. We offer them every encouragement and support as they strive to develop their professional expertise in this vital subject. We also salute and thank the senior management teams and governors of our schools for their work in fostering our

schools as communities of faith. We encourage them to give every possible support and importance to the RE departments and coordinators. A Catholic school, which promotes the best possible teaching of religious education, is fulfilling its true purpose.

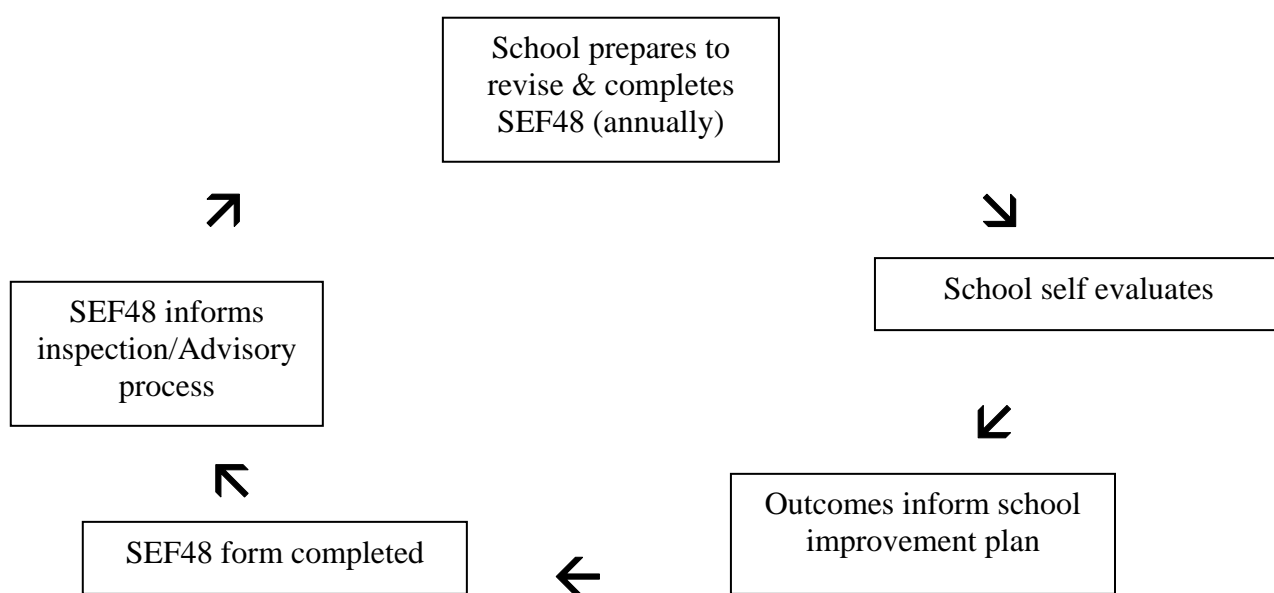
Conclusion:

13. Teaching is a noble calling and profession. It can be a source of great satisfaction and we ask all Catholics to pray for our teachers and for vocations to the teaching life. 'Teaching has an extraordinary moral depth and is one of our most excellent and creative activities. For the teacher does not write on inanimate material, but on the very spirits of human beings.' (The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium: 1998: n.19).

4: THE INSPECTION PROCESS

The Inspection is to be set within the context of the policy of the Bishop's of England and Wales. "The formation and education in the Catholic Religion provided in any school is subject to the authority of the church... the diocesan Bishop has the right to watch over and inspect the Catholic Schools situated in his territory, even those established or directed by members of Religious Institutes." (Canons 804,806 CCL)

The Catholic community recognises the importance of school self evaluation as a continuous process that is complemented from time to time by external validation. Self evaluation is crucial to the inspection process.



5: BEFORE THE INSPECTION

For inspectors to make the best use of their time in school and for inspection to be of most use to the school, they must gain an understanding of the school and the emphasises and issues for the inspection before they begin their work on site. This is usually gained through the SEF48. The inspectors will:

- Aim to establish good communications with the school and an effective working relationship with the school.
- Confirm the dates of inspection with the school, the focus for inspection and information required in advance.
- Keep demands on schools to a minimum.
- Liaise with the lead OFSTED inspector, (if the inspections are concurrent).
- Complete a pre-inspection briefing
-

Schools should

- Provide an up to date copy of the SEF48, the OFSTED SEF (if available) and the most recent PANDA.
- Make a space available to the inspector to work and interview.

6: ON SITE INSPECTION

Generally for primary the timings of an inspection will be approximately:

- ½ day for reviewing documentation (in advance of the inspection)
- ½ day for interviewing
- 1 day for observations
- ½ day for writing the report (after the inspection)

For Secondary the timings will be approximately:

- ½ day for reading documentation
- ½ day for interviewing
- 1½ days for observations
- ½ day writing the report (after the inspection)

Note

Timings are flexible depending on the size of the school. The number of groups taught, the provision (in secondary) for 6th form students, the opportunity to observe collective worship.

The time allocated to the inspector must be used mainly for gathering first hand evidence that leads to conclusions about the effectiveness of the school and its ability to self evaluate. The inspector must gather sufficient evidence so that their judgements are secure.

7: The Outcomes of Inspection

After the inspectors have reached their conclusions, these must be explained to the headteacher/senior managers and where possible **the chair of governors**. The findings of the inspection set alongside the school's self evaluation provide a basis for action planning for improvement.

Inspectors must:

- Complete the inspection within 10 working days
- Provide oral feedback in explaining the inspection findings
- Give headteacher/senior managers the opportunity to ask questions about why judgements have been made
- Send an inspection report which gives a clear account of findings to the Diocesan Offices **within 15 working days of the inspection being completed**. The Diocese will within 10 working days of receipt of the report send a copy of the report to the school where the school will check for any factual errors. The report will then be formally issued to the school.

Governors must:

- Send a copy of the inspection report to all parents/carers of all learners at the school
- Make a copy of the report available upon request to any member of the public (A charge not exceeding the cost of reproduction can be made)
- (Good practice might suggest all relevant parishes were sent copies of the report)
- Ensure that the findings set out in the inspection are incorporated into a specific section of the school improvement plan and a copy of this should be submitted to the relevant Diocesan adviser

8: OVERVIEW OF PROCEDURES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Green: School's Responsibility Blue: Diocese Responsibility

Purple: Inspector's Responsibility

| |
|--|
| The school undertakes a continual process of self review |
| ↓ |
| The school receives notification of Inspection from OFSTED and informs the Diocesan Schools Department immediately. |
| ↓ |
| The Department will then appoint an Inspector and notify the school who the inspector will be. (If the school believes there will be a conflict of interest between the Inspector and the school they may request a meeting to discuss the appointed Inspector). |
| ↓ |
| The Inspector contacts the school to arrange a date for the Inspection (within one term of the Ofsted inspection) |
| ↓ |
| A contract is issued |
| ↓ |
| The school sends the relevant documentation to the Inspector |
| ↓ |
| The Inspector having read through the documentation agrees the areas to focus on with the school for Inspection. (The Inspector reserves the right to change this focus during the Inspection if more information becomes available). |
| ↓ |
| The Inspection takes place. |
| ↓ |
| <p>During the course of the Inspection the Inspector may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Observe lessons and/or acts of worship ➤ Review student work ➤ Interview appropriate people ➤ Interview students ➤ Request more evidence |
| ↓ |
| The Inspector prepares the report and submits it to the department within fifteen working days. |
| ↓ |
| Report sent to school within ten working days of receipt from Inspector |
| ↓ |
| School checks for factual errors and contacts department if any errors are found (within two working days) |
| ↓ |
| Report Formally Issued and Published |
| ↓ |
| Copy of relevant section of school improvement plan sent to the appropriate adviser |

9: SCHOOL SELF-EVALUATION: Guidance for Inspectors of Catholic Schools

Evaluating overall effectiveness

| | |
|------------------------------|--|
| Outstanding (1) | All, or almost all, aspects of the school's Catholic life and RE are very good and some are better. The school has a very good capacity to improve. Standards in RE are high in relation to pupils' capability. |
| Good (2) | The leadership of the school by all of those with some leadership responsibility builds a strong sense of mission within the school community. Management of religious education and the liturgical and prayer life of the school is effective. The school has an accurate view of its own strengths and development needs and has good capacity to improve. Standards in RE are good in relation to pupils' capability. |
| Satisfactory (3) | The Catholic life, leadership and management, and provision for religious education are all secure. Standards in RE are average in relation to pupils' capability. Self-evaluation and planning show an awareness of strengths and development needs, but is not strong on the causes or ways to improve. |
| Unsatisfactory (4) | A school is likely to be unsatisfactory if standards in RE in relation to pupils' capability are low and the school is unaware of that fact ; or if there is a failure to understand and commit to the special character of a Catholic school. |

Evaluating the school's capacity to improve

| | |
|---------------------------|--|
| Outstanding (1) | The self evaluation of RE and the Catholic life is accurate and realistic, and provides a clear agenda for future improvement. It is based on a full and candid evaluation of a wide range of appropriate evidence. The leadership has aspirational views of what is possible and inspires all staff and pupils to achieve challenging targets. The improvement plan takes an imaginative approach to raising standards, improving the quality of provision for all pupils and eradicating the school's weaknesses. It targets all available resources effectively to achieve its goals. As a result of the leader's actions, very good improvements have been made, or high levels of success maintained. |
| Good (2) | The self evaluation is thorough and successfully identifies the school's strengths and weaknesses. It draws on sufficient evidence to support its findings and reflects how the school actually is. The senior leadership has a clear sense of direction for its Catholic life and understands how to bring about improvement. There are effective plans to deal with the school's weaknesses and resources are allocated well to facilitate this. Almost all learners achieve well and, despite minor inconsistencies in performance there is an evident trend of good and improving achievement over time. |

| | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| | |
| Satisfactory (3) | The self evaluation identifies most of the school's strengths and weaknesses, but some minor issues may be overlooked. Parts of it may be based on superficial interpretation of, or incomplete gathering of, evidence. The senior leadership has an adequate understanding of the direction in which to move forward and how to do so. Plans for improvement have sufficient focus and detail to bring about adequate improvement, and resources are used sensibly to support this. As a result of the leaders' actions, the school has securely and steadily improved its performance. |
| Unsatisfactory (4) | Self evaluation does not identify a school's strengths and weaknesses accurately. There is a lack of rigour in the gathering and interpretation of evidence. Senior leadership does not have an adequate strategy for eradicating weaknesses or raising achievement. Plans for improvement are not well focused on what most needs to be done, and resources are not efficiently directed to where they are needed. Actions by the leadership have not secured adequate improvement. The school may appear to be floundering, without a sufficient grasp of how to get better. |

The Catholic Life of the School

Evaluating the quality of leadership and management

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| Outstanding (1) | Leaders at all levels have a clear sense of and provide direction for the Catholic life of the school. They understand and promote the educational mission of the Church. They instil a vibrant sense of purpose, with an unerring focus on promoting high standards and the fullest personal development of the learners. The school is very effectively managed in a way that ensures the very best use of resources, thorough and incisive quality assurance of its work, and prompt and decisive action to remedy any problems. The inclusion of all learners is a central goal based on its belief that all are created in the image of God, and this is very effectively promoted and discrimination is tackled with vigour. Highly efficient use is made of resources, including any extended services, to achieve very good value for money. Morale is very high within the school community. Very good links exist with parents, the Diocese, parish(es) and external agencies to reinforce the high standard of care, guidance and support the school provides to ensure its learners' safety and general well-being. The result is that learners flourish. |
| Good (2) | The leadership of the school is strongly focused on the school's Catholic mission, on raising standards and promoting the personal development of learners, and has created a common sense of |

| | |
|---|--|
| | <p>purpose among staff. All staff clearly understand and support the vision and ethos of a faith school and recognise that spiritual and moral development is a whole school responsibility. Weaknesses are accurately identified and tackled energetically. The school runs very smoothly and, through its comprehensive quality assurance procedures, has a well-grounded understanding of the quality of its Catholic life and its performance. The inclusion of all learners is central to its vision through its belief that all created in the image God. It is effective in pursuing this and dismantling barriers to engagement. Resources are well used. Good links exist with parents, parish(es) and outside agencies to support the work of the school. The impact is seen in the good progress made by most learner on most fronts, and in their sense of security and well-being.</p> |
| <p>Satisfactory (3)</p> | <p>Overall, leadership is firm, competent and committed to the raising of standards and the personal development of learners, but is somewhat lacking in creative energy and drive. The school is orderly and management ensures that it runs smoothly and that routine procedures are followed, but time-honoured practices are not adequately challenged. Quality assurance follows agreed procedures but is not incisive enough to get to the root of all problems. Resources are carefully husbanded but not always well spent. Staff work hard but not all do so with conviction and enthusiasm. Links with parents, parish(es) and outside agencies are sufficient to support the school in ensuring the safety and well-being of learners. Overall, the learners' progress is satisfactory and the school steadily rather than rapidly improves.</p> |
| <p>Unsatisfactory (4)</p> | <p>Overall, leadership and management at the top have too little effect. They are insufficiently focused on the school's Catholic mission, on raising standards and promoting learners' personal development, and lack the authority and drive to make a difference. Several staff are disenchanted and lack confidence in their leaders. Even though the school may run smoothly on a day-to-day basis, quality assurance is ineffective and the management does not have a realistic view of its weaknesses. At its worst, the school is disorderly and unsafe. Resources are not well deployed, because the school does not have a well-ordered sense of its priorities. Links exist with parents, parish(es) and other agencies, but overall the school does not do enough to ensure the development and well-being of all the learners. The learners' progress is slow on many fronts and the school's capacity to act decisively to improve its provision is weak.</p> |

The Catholic Life of the School

Collective Worship

| | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| <p>Outstanding (1)</p> | <p>Prayer is central to the life of the school. Student’s liturgical formation is well planned and takes account of their age and faith development. Liturgy is designed to be inclusive, and acts of worship are vibrant and reflective making use of a range of techniques. There is a creative, questioning and imaginative approach to our faith story. Students regularly take ownership of acts of worship and they have a developed understanding of the life of the church and how facts impact on our daily life and behaviour. Prayer underpins the values which permeate the school. Staff and students pray together as equals parents are encouraged to participate on a regular basis, and the wider church community is involved in supporting the prayer life of the school. Collective Worship makes an excellent contribution to the spiritual and moral development of pupils. All statutory requirements are met.</p> |
| <p>Good (2)</p> | <p>Prayer is central to the life of the school. There are a range of formal and informal opportunities for worship. Liturgies are well planned and encourage student to reflect on their understanding of the Christian story. Students act with reverence and participate fully. Appropriate themes are chosen that reflect both the life of the church and the hopes, dreams, fears and needs of the community. Staff and students pray together. The wider church community contributes to the prayer life of the school. Collective Worship makes a good contribution to the spiritual and moral development of pupils. All statutory requirements are met.</p> |
| <p>Satisfactory (3)</p> | <p>Pupils and staff participate in collective worship which is seen as an important element of school life. Acts of worship follow a fairly routine structure. Classes take responsibility for the preparation and delivery of worship and students are encouraged to bring their own prayers and petitions to services. The content of collective worship is normally appropriate for their age and faith development. Parents and the wider church community are invited to attend. Collective Worship makes a satisfactory contribution to the spiritual and moral development of pupils. All statutory requirements are met.</p> |
| <p>Unsatisfactory (4)</p> | <p>Prayer is not central to the life of the school. Acts of worship rarely relate to the age or faith development of students. Teachers are not confident about their ability to lead service or assemblies. Staff show little interest in this area, perceiving it as the work of the RE co-coordinator/department. Pupils themselves can be disruptive and unwilling to allow others to participate. Their attitude may represent a lack of understanding of the purpose of worship. Prayer</p> |

| | |
|--|--|
| | and worship make little impact on the lives of pupils and no contribution to their spiritual and moral development. Statutory requirements may not be met. |
|--|--|

Community Cohesion

| | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| <p>Outstanding (1)</p> | <p>The school has a coherent set of values based on the Gospel which are understood by all and lived out in practice. The school is a welcoming community where the inclusion of all is a central goal and a shared vision and is based on our understanding of the dignity of each individual created in the image of God. The school's monitoring and evaluation procedures help ensure that all pupils have equal access to the curriculum. Within the school, there is concern, respect and hospitality towards the other. The school seeks to include all staff and pupils in its corporate life and worship. Prayer and worship take account of the diversity of pupils' backgrounds. The RE curriculum promotes an understanding of the search for truth that exists within other faiths and denominations and this results in an attitude of respect for all faiths, enabling pupils to appreciate each others beliefs and values. Pupils' friendship bonds cross cultural/ faith/ social / economic boundaries. Pupils are quick to show concern for the well-being of each other, especially the weak and vulnerable. They demonstrate a lively awareness that they are members of one human family responsible for one another. The school actively responds to the needs of the local and wider community and Governors are keen to exercise their duty to serve the common good. The school takes seriously its commitment which it shares with the universal church to have an option for the poor and to be especially concerned for those who are marginalised. Parents from all backgrounds and especially parents who feel insecure in an academic background or who have English as an additional language are positively encouraged and invited to be involved in the life of school</p> |
| <p>Good (2)</p> | <p>There is a common sense of belonging. Leaders respect difference, value diversity and ensure equal opportunities for all. Pupils from different backgrounds are given opportunities to work together. Provision for spiritual development takes account of the religious diversity within the school community. Pupils' diverse backgrounds are recognised and valued in Religious Education. Academic Religious Education includes the study of other denominations of Christianity and other world religions. Pupils are equipped with skills which enable them to take a full and active part in their neighbourhood and develop relationships with people from different backgrounds. Relationships among pupils are positive. Governors take into account the needs of other schools and of the community in general. Co-operative links exist between the school, other schools, parish(es) and local community. Parents with different backgrounds are involved as fully as possible in the life of the school.</p> |
| <p>Satisfactory (3)</p> | <p>On the whole there is a common sense of belonging and a common vision. Leaders seek to raise pupils' awareness of cultural and religious diversity in society. They are given opportunities to participate in neighbourhood activities and respond to calls for help. The diverse backgrounds of pupils</p> |

| | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| | <p>are acknowledged though not enough is done to fully integrate pupils from minority backgrounds. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is soundly promoted, though the variety of pupils' backgrounds has little impact on provision. The Religious Education curriculum includes some study of other world faiths. Pupils have a sense of the wider world, other peoples' beliefs cultures and needs. They co-operate with each other. The governing body ensures it meets its responsibilities with respect to provision for pupils with additional learning needs. Both school and parish keep each other informed and from time to time plan and work together to respond to issues in the local community. Parents are kept informed about what is happening in school and their views are sought. Written communications do not always take into account parents' needs especially those for whom English is an additional language.</p> |
| <p>Unsatisfactory (4)</p> | <p>The school is failing to live up to the full meaning of its Catholic identity. Overall the school is isolated from its neighbourhood and the community it serves. Leaders and managers show little interest in anything beyond the school's boundaries. Accommodating differences between pupils is regarded by teachers as inappropriate or unnecessary. Prayer and worship in the school does not respect the diversity of the student body. Little attempt is made to adapt the Religious Education programme to meet pupils' needs and to enable pupils to understand their own and others' beliefs and values, and to respect the religious practices of others. Pupils see little connection between what is taught in school and their life experience and the community in which they live. Some feel excluded. Occasional remarks are made ridiculing difference between pupils. Governors are inward-looking and do not recognise or understand the school's connection to the neighbourhood community and the diocese it serves. Little effort is made to take into account parents' views.</p> |

Religious Education

Evaluating achievements and standards

| | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| <p>Outstanding (1)</p> | <p>The standards learners achieve are very high given their capability and starting points. For foundation level this would relate to base line evidence in RE. In secondary schools results compare favourably with those obtained in similar schools. Almost all learners, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities, make at least good progress and many make very good progress, as reflected in value added measures. Learners are gaining knowledge, skills and understanding in all key stages in RE, and there are no unsatisfactory areas. Very few learners under-perform.</p> |
| <p>Good (2)</p> | <p>Given their capabilities and starting points learners achieve high standards. (Results compare well with those from similar schools.)</p> |

| | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| | Most learners, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities, make at least good progress and some may make very good progress. Learners are gaining knowledge, skills and understanding at a good rate across all key stages. Few learners under-perform. |
| Satisfactory (3) | Almost all learners achieve standards that are high enough given their capability and starting points. Results are close to the average of similar schools. Most learners make acceptable progress and gain knowledge, understanding and skills at a satisfactory rate across all key stages. There is some underperformance, but this does not affect many learners and is not substantial. There is some variability in achievement between RE and English. |
| Unsatisfactory (4) | Standards that learners achieve are not high enough when set against their capabilities and starting points. Results compare unfavourably with similar schools. Many learners under-perform to some extent or particular groups of learners do so more significantly, and so make unsatisfactory progress. The pace of learning is insufficient for learners to make satisfactory gains in knowledge, skills and understanding. Learners underachieve in one or more key stages. |

Religious Education

Evaluating the quality of teaching and learning

| | |
|----------------------------|--|
| Outstanding (1) | Learners thrive as a result of the teaching and make very good progress. Teachers' high levels of expertise, and their careful planning based upon thorough diagnostic assessment, ensures that the work is very well pitched and suitably challenging for all learners. The methods and use of resources such as ICT are precisely judged to engage and extend learners, including those with additional learning needs. |
| Good (2) | Virtually all learners make good progress and show good attitudes to their work. The teachers' good subject knowledge lends confidence to their teaching styles. The level of challenge stretches students without inhibiting their learning. Lesson plans are based upon thorough and accurate assessment that is closely tailored to the different capabilities of all students. Learners are given the skills to understand how to improve their own work. A good range of carefully chosen resources, and the well-judged setting of extension and project work, does much to encourage the skills and confidence needed for independent learning. Those with additional learning requirements have work well-tailored to their needs based upon diagnosis of them. Good arrangements support parents/carers in helping learners to succeed. |

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>Satisfactory (3)</p> | <p>Most learners make the progress that should be expected of them and they enjoy their work and are motivated to do well. Teachers have a secure knowledge of the RE curriculum and programmes of study. The level of challenge is sufficient for all groups of learners and the teaching methods encourage and engage them. ICT supports independent study which adequately complements classroom learning. Assessment is adequate for teachers to monitor learners' progress and plan their lessons, and learners know what to do to improve. Arrangements are in place to enable support staff and parents/carers to support learners effectively.</p> |
| <p>Unsatisfactory (4)</p> | <p>Learners generally, or significant groups of them, do not make adequate progress because the teaching is unsatisfactory. Learners do not enjoy their work. Behaviour is often inappropriate. Teachers' knowledge of RE curriculum and the course requirements is inadequate and the level of challenge is often wrongly pitched. The methods used do not sufficiently engage and encourage the learners. Not enough independent learning takes place. Assessment is not frequent or accurate enough to monitor learners' progress, so teachers do not have a clear enough understanding of learners' needs. Learners do not know well enough how to improve. Teaching assistants and parents/carers are inadequately helped to support learners.</p> |

Religious Education

Evaluating the Curriculum

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>Outstanding (1)</p> | <p>The curriculum in RE fulfils the requirements of the <i>Curriculum Directory for Catholic Schools</i> in providing a systematic study of God, the life and teaching of Jesus and the Church, the central beliefs that Catholics hold and the relationship between faith and life. Pupils are encouraged to investigate and reflect, develop appropriate skills and attitudes respond to God's call in everyday life. Its outcome is highly effective teaching which develops knowledge, understanding and skills – appropriate to pupils' age and capacity. It enables them to think spiritually, ethically and theologically, and to become aware of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life. Full advantage is taken of opportunities to develop pupils' skills in reading, writing, speaking and listening, and to develop skills in using ICT, in RE. All pupils have access to the RE curriculum which is adapted to their needs and to the needs of the school. Progression within and between years and key stages is clearly thought out and set out for all staff. The curriculum makes a very significant contribution to the spiritual and moral development of the pupils and they are taught to respect other faiths and cultures.</p> |
|--|---|

| | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| <p>Good (2)</p> | <p>The curriculum in RE fulfils the requirements of the <i>Curriculum Directory for Catholic Schools</i>. It is organised around the life and teaching of Jesus and the Church, and the beliefs, celebrations and way of life of Catholics who follow that teaching. All pupils irrespective of ability are able to make progress in their knowledge, skills and understanding; ; are able to learn to think spiritually, ethically and theologically, and to become aware of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life. The planned curriculum enables pupils to make progress though without being thoroughly consistent in the year to year progression. Literacy and ICT skills are developed through RE. The curriculum in RE makes a good contribution to the spiritual and moral development of the pupils and they are taught to respect other faiths and cultures.</p> |
| <p>Satisfactory (3)</p> | <p>The curriculum in RE fulfils the requirements of the <i>Curriculum Directory for Catholic Schools</i>. It is organised around the life and teaching of Jesus and the Church, and the beliefs, celebrations and way of life of Catholics who follow that teaching. Most pupils are able to make progress in their knowledge, skills and understanding and to become aware of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life. Literacy and ICT skills are developed through RE, though not in a planned fashion. The curriculum in RE makes a contribution to the spiritual and moral development of the pupils and they are taught to respect other faiths and cultures. Some aspects of curriculum provision may be good.</p> |
| <p>Unsatisfactory (4)</p> | <p>The curriculum in RE does not fulfil the requirements of the <i>Curriculum Directory for Catholic Schools</i>. Planning does not address the key beliefs and teaching of Jesus and the Church in any coherent fashion. It follows a published curriculum but does so in a way that uses personal preference as the basis for selection rather than coherent curriculum objectives. There is little sign of planning for progression within and between years and, as a result, there is some repetition of work from one year to the next particularly in relation to the liturgical calendar. The curriculum is inadequately matched to the learning needs of the pupils. Provision for literacy and ICT skills in RE is weak.</p> |

Leadership and management of RE

| | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| <p>Outstanding (1)</p> | <p>Managers are committed to developing the vision, missions and objectives of the school. They enable others to develop their own strengths and monitor effectively the work of the department. They lead by example and ensure that training and support for colleagues is available. Managers have thorough subject knowledge and are aware of all current thinking & debates. Comprehensive and analytical assessment procedures are organised to give clear insight into pupil progress and raise the standard of attainment. Priorities for the subject are clearly identified and resourced. In secondary schools all department staff understand the targets and work towards them. In primary schools all staff are helped by the RE Co-ordinator to understand the targets and work towards them.</p> |
|-----------------------------------|---|

| | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| | |
| Good (2) | The subject is organised efficiently and informed by good practice. The subject leader is aware of new initiatives in the teaching of RE and able to evaluate their impact. All staff are clear about the purpose of RE and able to articulate this. Department staff felt supported and guided; they have access to relevant training. There is appropriate delegation of responsibilities, policies are consistently applied and procedures regularly renewed. There is a focus on raising standards and developing the ethos of the school. The department self review is accurate and realistic; it provides a clear agenda for the future and is based on a range of appropriate evidence. |
| Satisfactory (3) | Staff work together as a team and documentation is adequate. Assessment procedures are in place though they may not be fully utilised. Some monitoring procedures are in place but this may not be wide ranging enough to support an accurate self review. Relevant training is provided for staff. Subject knowledge is adequate to teach to the appropriate level. |
| Unsatisfactory (4) | There is no clear direction for RE. Staff are uncertain about the role of RE in a faith school. Policies are not consistently applied. Staff development is not planned effectively. Monitoring and assessment procedures are poorly developed and raising standards is not considered an issue. RE makes little contribution to the life of the school. |

10:

APPENDIX A – A Check list for Governors

| Do Governors | Fully in place | Partly in place | Not yet |
|---|-----------------------|------------------------|----------------|
| Implement the Bishop's conference recommendations for Religious Education | | | |
| Implement legal and diocesan requirements for collective worship | | | |
| | | | |

| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| Implement diocesan guidelines on relationship education | | | |
| Implement diocesan and Bishop's conference requirements for reserved posts | | | |
| | | | |
| <u>(Schools with Sixth form)</u> Implement Bishop's conference requirements for post 16 RE education | | | |

10:

APPENDIX B – Reflective questions for senior managers and Heads of RE/ RE co-ordinators. These questions are in no way intended to be an exhaustive list but merely to give some indication of the questions schools should be asking themselves in order to complete the Section 48 Self-Evaluation Form.

Overall Effectiveness

- Were the recommendations of the last inspection incorporated into the School Improvement Plan?
- Are regular reports made to Governors on the progress of these issues?
- Are Governors involved in the process of Self Evaluation and do they recognise their responsibility for it?
- Is improving the Catholic life of the school central to your planning?
- Do the staff receive training on the Catholic life of the school and spiritual and moral development and does this lead to improvement in these areas?
- Are standards in RE as they should be?

Catholic Life of the School
Leadership and Management

- Does the mission statement reflect the purpose of Catholic Education?
- Has it been reviewed recently?
- Does it inform practices and policies?
- Has it been agreed upon by the school community and is it understood and owned by all?
- Does the ethos reflect the ideas of Catholic Education that is:
 - a) The school is a place of hope where all feel welcome
 - b) There is equality of opportunity
 - c) The school is inclusive and respectful of human dignity
 - d) There is good provision for special needs
 - e) The school actively seeks and listens to the views of all its members
- Is careful attention given to the quality of religious artefacts and to signs & symbols across the school?
- **Is there at least one inset day per academic year to support the catholic nature of the school?**
- **In secondary schools**, is there a chaplain or chaplaincy team whose work is fully supported by senior staff?
- Is there a chapel or room set aside for prayer (secondary only)?
- Is the work of the Head of RE/ RE co-ordinator well supported by the leadership of the school? This includes making other staff aware of the central importance of the role of RE within the school.
- **Are Governors and senior staff well informed about the role of Catholic education? Do they have a coherent vision, which is well informed by the latest developments in Catholic education and are they able to share this vision with others?**
- Is the Catholic life of the school systematically monitored and evaluated?
- Are priorities for improvement based on the monitoring and evaluation?
- Do performance management targets reflect the Catholic life of the school?
- Are spiritual and moral development seen as the responsibility of all staff and these issues are addressed across the curriculum and the life of the school?
- Is Catholic nature of the school is reflected in the school improvement plan?
- Is there a consistent and coherent policy and syllabus for relationship education which reflects diocesan policy guidelines?
- Does the school attempt to build good links with the local parish communities and the wider church?
- Do Priests feel welcome in the school (as do all visitors)?
- Are ways sought to strengthen links with parents and parishes? Are parents and carers systematically contacted and provided with useful information? Are parents offered an opportunity to share their views?
- Does the school have a positive relationship with the Diocese and is it involved in Diocesan in-service training?
- Does the school support and contribute to Catholic (and other) charities?

Catholic Life of the School

Prayer and collective worship

- Is prayer central to the life of the school?
- Is there a **shared act of worship every day for every pupil?** Are all staff are supported in the delivery of this act of worship?
- Do Students/ staff/ parents take ownership of acts of prayer and worship?

- Are Liturgical services (appropriate for the age, faith development and background of the students) celebrated on a regular basis?
- Are adequate resources and training provided for prayer and worship?
- Are opportunities for prayer and reflection provided across the curriculum?
- Does the school monitor, evaluate and review the quality of provision for prayer and worship and **its impact** on students and staff? Is the monitoring and evaluation used to inform planning?
- Do prayer and worship contribute to the spiritual and moral development of students?

Religious Education

Teaching and Learning

- How effective are teaching & learning in RE? Do teachers have a secure subject knowledge, are they aware of current developments and do they have high expectation of students?
- Do teachers plan effectively, have clear **religious learning objectives**, which are shared with students and use teaching methods which match the needs of students?
- Do students meet high standards in religious education? Can they (according to age and ability) understand and articulate the teaching, beliefs, values and way of life of the church and of other denominations and faith traditions?
- Are students encouraged to think ethically, spiritually, theologically?
- Do lesson plans indicate how spiritual and moral development may be fostered?
- Are pupils able to work both independently and collaboratively?
- Do RE staff recognise that teaching RE within a Catholic school is significantly different to teaching RE within a state school? What evidence is there of this?

Religious Education

Assessment

- Are a variety of assessment techniques used, (summative, formative etc) **to improve learning?**
- Is assessment used to plan effectively and raise standards?
- Do students know how to improve their own work, and are they able to evaluate their own work?
- Are students able to consolidate prior learning and apply it in new contexts?

Religious Education

Leadership and management of RE

- Is there a clear vision of the subject, which is shared and understood by the department and informs planning?
- Is the leadership of the curriculum knowledgeable and innovative?
- Does the department aim for high standards? Is monitoring and evaluation regularly carried out?
- Are financial and physical resources well managed?
- Does effective professional development take place for senior managers and Heads of RE/ RE co-ordinators?

Religious Education

Provision for RE

- Does RE meet the Bishops' conference requirements in terms of time allocation and resourcing?
- Is accommodation adequate for the needs of the subject?
- Are there sufficient well qualified RE teaching staff?
- Are lessons appropriately differentiated?
- How are teaching assistants effectively deployed to support learning? How are they included in the planning?
- Are the most vulnerable children sufficiently supported?
- Does the school include and respect the faith background of all students?