

Catholic Diocese of Northampton
Interim Monitoring Visit Report
29 January 2020
The Good Shepherd Catholic Primary School, Northampton
[URN 142742]

Since the last Section 48 inspection there have been significant changes to leadership. The current headteacher has been in post since September 2019, when the new RE lead was also appointed. The head is enthusiastic and dedicated. She has established a strong leadership team who share her vision and dedication. The school environment is welcoming with attractive displays which clearly reflect current pupils' work. The mission statement was reviewed and replaced: "Following Jesus, the Good Shepherd, in all we say and do". This is displayed throughout the school. The parish priest is a regular visitor and spoke highly of the leadership team and pupils; the links with the parish have been strengthened since the last inspection. The school RE SEF is up to date and gives a clear picture of priorities and different areas for development. The school should now focus on the impact of their actions and evaluate the effect of these on standards and progress. As the headteacher has not long been in post, I am sure that this will happen.

The Catholic life of the school ensures staff and pupils continually grow in their faith and understand the traditions of the Catholic Church. The chapel has benefitted from redecoration and is a significantly more welcoming place for prayer and reflection. A new chaplain for the trust has been appointed and has a full day at The Good Shepherd. An ethos committee has been established working with the chaplain. Pupils are given the opportunity to explore their faith and ask questions. There have been many opportunities for staff development including the Catholic Basics course, assessment of RE and moderation. These opportunities are having an impact on the quality of teaching and learning.

The pupils' behaviour is very good. During the learning walk and in assembly the pupils were on task and engaged in their learning. During prayer time they demonstrated reverence and sang with joy and enthusiasm. Prayer is a significant part of the life of the school. Pupils learn formal prayers and are given opportunities for formal prayer. This school serves all the children in their care and the children know they are loved and valued.

Pupils' books confirm improvements in presentation and progress although this is not yet consistent across the school. The children's books are regarded as special. Each classroom has an attractive prayer focus area. A monitoring system is in place with good evidence of monitoring being retained by the RE lead. This now needs to focus on evaluation to plan for further improvement. Pupils' books confirm that RE teaching and learning are given high status in the school; there is quality work and evidence of greater depth in the pupils' books. Assessments show pupils make the same progress in RE as in other core subjects.

Areas for further development

- Ensure the quality and quantity of and presentation of pupils' work is consistent across the school
- Provide time for the RE lead to support staff by demonstrating outstanding teaching in RE. She needs further opportunities to observe lessons in order to monitor standards

The diocesan reviewer wishes to thank members of staff and children for their warm welcome and hospitality throughout the visit.

Rosemarie Jones on behalf of the Diocese of Northampton