

# DIOCESE OF LEEDS



## DIOCESAN BOARD FOR INSPECTIONS

### CANON LAW 806 FINAL INSPECTION REPORT INCORPORATING SECTION 48

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

ST EDWARD'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL  
Westwood Way, Boston Spa LS23 6DL

School URN	108012
Date of S48 inspection and OE grade	28 - 29 March 2019 OE Grade: 1 Outstanding
E-mail address	admin@st-edwards.leeds.sch.uk
Chair of Governors	Mr. John Mc Donnell
Headteacher	Miss Anne Gilpin
RE Subject Leader	Miss Anne Gilpin
Date and grade of last S48 Inspection	5 - 6 February 2014 OE Grade: 1 Outstanding
Section 48 Inspector/s	Mr. David. Gott

# INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection Grades: 1 is Outstanding, 2 is Good, 3 Requires improvement in order to be good, 4 is Inadequate

**OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS:** how effective is the school in providing Catholic Education.

1

*The above judgement on overall effectiveness is based on all the available evidence following the evaluation of:*

**CATHOLIC LIFE**

1

**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

1

**COLLECTIVE WORSHIP**

1

**Summary of key findings:**

## **This is an outstanding Catholic Primary School**

- St Edward's Catholic Primary School, Boston Spa, is a highly effective school providing and retaining an outstanding standard of Catholic education for all pupils.
- The Catholic Life of the school is outstanding. The headteacher, governors and staff are deeply committed to the church's mission in education. They lead by example and are highly successful in ensuring that the school's mission statement - '*Through God's Grace we Grow and Learn*' - is age appropriate, promoted throughout the school and a living reality throughout the school and beyond.
- Pupils readily avail themselves of all that the Catholic Life of the school has to offer. They increasingly recognise what it means to have a vocation as they willingly volunteer to lead and actively promote the school's Catholic Life and mission by offering their gifts and talents in the service of others.
- St Edward's is a very welcoming, inclusive school with a very strong family feeling of belonging. Pupils value the school's Catholic tradition with its many home, school and parish links. The needs of individual and groups of pupils are met to a very high level.
- Pupil behaviour is exemplary. Pupils are proud of their school and are very caring, for each other, for their school environment and especially for others in need at the local, national and international level.
- The chaplaincy provision provided by the parish priest is exemplary in promoting and strengthening home, school, parish links and in supporting and encouraging pupils to take leadership roles in the Catholic Life of the school and parish.
- Religious Education (RE) is outstanding. The school's creative, cross-curricular RE curriculum fully meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference in each key stage.
- The headteacher's calm, focused, collegiate leadership inspires and pervades the whole of the school's teaching and learning environment. She is passionate about implementing her vision for the school, leads by example and is supported by a very dedicated staff and highly committed, professionally skilled governing body.

- Excellent RE teaching ensures that almost all pupils learn extremely well, make rapid and sustained progress and consequently achieve above average attainment levels in RE by the end of Key Stage 2 (KS2).
- The governing body are diligent in their care and forward planning for the school. They have overseen significant improvements to the school's teaching and learning environment.
- Collective Worship is outstanding. It is central to the life of the school and at the heart of every school celebration. The headteacher / RE subject leader, RE governor / parish priest and senior teaching staff have expert knowledge and expertise in planning and delivering Collective Worship and lead by example. They are passionate about passing their knowledge on to pupils. Consequently, pupils are rapidly acquiring their own skills in planning, leading and evaluating their own class, key stage and whole school Collective Worship.
- The school's leadership, including governance ensures that monitoring and evaluation systems for the school's Catholic Life, RE and Collective Worship are very thorough and incorporate aspects of pupil and parent voice. Findings are acted upon through the School Development Plan and progress is regularly reviewed.
- Governors are very experienced in fulfilling their role as 'critical friend' in holding school leadership to account. They have ensured that the school's performance management system incorporates the development of the Catholic Life of the school.
- The school has established a number of productive partnership links with other schools and educational institutions. Good transition links are in place with St John Fisher High School Harrogate to which the majority of Year 6 pupils transfer for their secondary education. St Edward's also maintains close links with the North Leeds / North Yorkshire Area Catholic Primary School Partnership and other local schools. There is a productive link with The British Council, especially relating to the school's international curriculum.
- Recommendations for further school improvement raised in the previous Section 48 (S48) RE inspection report and diocesan canonical review have been appropriately addressed.
- All canonical and statutory duties are fulfilled.

### **What the school needs to do to improve further.**

Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching in RE by:

- Sharing the school's existing outstanding teaching in RE more widely across the school.
- Working collaboratively with existing identified best practice from within the Catholic Schools Partnership.

Increase the proportion of outstanding pupil leadership of Collective Worship by:

- Sharing the school's existing outstanding practice of pupil leadership of Collective Worship more widely across the school.
- Working collaboratively with existing identified best practice of pupil leadership of Collective Worship from within the Catholic Schools Partnership.

### **Information about this inspection**

The Inspection of St Edward's Catholic Primary School, Boston Spa, Wetherby, was carried out under the requirements of the Education Act 2005, and in accordance with the

Leeds Diocesan Framework and Schedule for Section 48 Inspections approved by the Bishop of Leeds. The inspection reviews and evaluates how effective the school is in providing Catholic education. This process begins with the school's own self-evaluation and the inspection schedule follows the criteria set by the National Board of Religious Inspectors and Advisers (NBRIA 2017).

The inspector reviewed in detail the following aspects:

- The extent to which any key issues identified for action in the previous S48 RE inspection have been addressed.
- The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school.
- The quality of the school's Catholic Life provision.
- How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in RE.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in RE.
- How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship.
- The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school.
- How well leaders and governors promote, monitor, and evaluate the provision for Catholic Life, RE and Collective Worship of the school which appropriately effect improved outcomes for pupils as a consequence.

The inspection was carried out by one inspector over one and a half days:

- The inspector jointly undertook a Catholic education focused learning walk of all the teaching areas of the school with the headteacher/RE subject leader.
- RE teaching and learning was observed in 5 classes, covering all key stages.
- The inspector observed 6 Collective Worships, covering all key stages, including both pupil led and teacher led.
- Detailed discussion meetings were held with the headteacher/RE subject leader; parish priest / RE governor; chair of governors; teaching and support staff; pupils and parents.
- A very wide range of school Catholic Life, RE and Collective Worship planning, monitoring and evaluation documentation was scrutinised, including the school's Diocesan Self Evaluation Form (DSEF); School Improvement Plan (SIP); governor approved policy documentation and RE monitoring visits.
- The school's pupil RE progress and attainment tracking system, was analysed. The school's RE budget including staff/governor training, was also scrutinised.
- RE displays and signage around the school were noted. The school's RE communications with parents through newsletters, parent and pupil questionnaire surveys and the school website were sampled.
- A detailed work scrutiny of pupils' RE books covering all key stages, was undertaken jointly with the headteacher/RE subject leader.

### **Information about this school**

- St Edward's Catholic Primary School Boston Spa, Wetherby, is a smaller than average sized, oversubscribed, Voluntary Aided Catholic primary school of the Catholic Diocese of Leeds. The school serves the parish of St Edward King and Confessor, Clifford. Pupils are drawn from Clifford, Boston Spa and the surrounding area.
- The school educates pupils from 4 to 11 years of age and has a published annual admission number of 20 pupils. Pupils are taught in 6 mixed ability classes. Currently 2 classes are taught in mixed age groupings.
- Currently there are 157 pupils on roll, of whom 96 % are baptised Catholics.

- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium is below national average. The proportion of pupils for whom English is a second language is below national average. The proportion of pupils identified as having special education needs is in line with national average.
- The school is staffed by 5 full time and 3 part time teachers. The full time equivalent (f.t.e.) total number of Catholic teachers is 4.5, of whom 5 hold the Catholic Certificate of Religious Studies (CCRS) or equivalent. Seven teachers teach RE. St. Edward's also employs 4.8 (f.t.e.) classroom support staff.
- The school works in active partnership with a wide range of educational institutions, including the Leeds Catholic Schools Partnership and St. John Fisher Catholic High School Harrogate, to which the majority of St. Edward's pupils transfer for their secondary education.
- The current headteacher was appointed 16 years ago and is also the school's RE subject leader. A number of significant changes have taken place at the school since the last Section 48 Inspection (2014). All current teaching staff have been appointed since the last S48 inspection. A new parish priest was appointed in Easter 2017. The school's Mission Statement was reviewed and retained in 2018. Governors have achieved considerable improvements to the school building which have enhanced the teaching and learning environment and safety and security for pupils and staff at the school.
- The school has developed and maintains an outdoor prayer garden within a central area of the school which pupils help to maintain.
- The school provides a range of after school activities for pupils.
- The school has achieved a number of nationally accredited awards and has recently had its International School Award reaccredited to 2021. Currently the school is working towards the achievement of a school Eco award.
- The school is actively supported by The Friends of St Edward's parents' association.

## Full report - inspection judgements

### CATHOLIC LIFE

#### The Catholic Life of the school is outstanding

The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school.	<b>1</b>
The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school	<b>1</b>
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision of the Catholic Life of the school.	<b>1</b>

- Pupils visibly enjoy and actively participate in the Catholic Life and mission of the school. They readily voice a confident understanding of the school's mission statement, '*Through God's Grace we Grow and Learn*', and they play a very active part in helping to bring it to a day to day living reality at St Edward's.
- In conversation with pupils, an older pupil commented: 'The school mission reminds me that we are all children of God's worldwide family and that God shares his everlasting

love and everything with all of us. As we move up the school we try to learn how to pass God's love on to all here'. A younger pupil commented: 'I try to give Jesus a smile from my heart as a thank you when I say my prayers'.

- The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school is reflected in the exemplary behaviour of almost all pupils over all key stages. Pupils show great respect for each other and treat each other as children of God.
- Pupils display the capacity to concentrate, listen well, give thanks and reflect on spiritual and moral issues. They are proud of their school, themselves, their peers and the adults responsible for their care: 'Teachers here treat us really well. They help us when we need it'; 'children are respectful to one another and to the teachers'; 'The teachers are respectful to us'; 'There are lots of kind people here at St Edward's' are typical of pupils' comments made to the inspector.
- Pupils at St Edward's are particularly caring and supportive of each other. For example Year 6 pupils enjoy operating the school's buddies support system for younger pupils, especially those pupils new to the school. Similarly older pupils who have received the sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Communion act as buddies to support younger pupils in their sacramental preparations. Appreciation for this help was evidenced by the inspector in a Friday Achievement Assembly where pupils, staff and parents gather to recognize and celebrate the God given gifts and talents of pupils and share in one another's successes over the week. One older pupil commented: 'I like helping the younger children get ready for their First Confessions -we use our "How to Pray" leaflets.'
- Pupil Voice is a well developed feature of St Edward's. In conversations, pupils are generally very confident in expressing their own views on the Catholic Life of the school. For example, pupils commented: 'Teachers make RE fun. I like the drama best because we can act it out', 'I like it when we do about Happy Habit Virtues. We talk and learn about how in God's love for us we can become more and more like God wants us to be.', and as one Mini Vinnie commented: 'I like it when we get taken to visit some of the older people of the parish. We get to thank them for being our Prayer Sponsors'. Another commented: 'We get to meet the Bishop in Leeds Cathedral'.
- Pupils are able to refer to the teachings of Jesus and other key Christian figures - particularly those associated with the school. For example, pupils are extremely knowledgeable about their school's patron saint, explaining that: 'St Edward was a holy man and King of England. He died in 1066 and is buried in Westminster Abbey in London. We always celebrate his Feast Day on 13<sup>th</sup> October with a special Mass in school'.
- The school's merit system is arranged into 4 house groups - each named after a Yorkshire saint. Pupils are similarly knowledgeable about their house patron saint. For example one pupil commented: 'I'm in Saint Margaret Clitherow House. She lived in York and died for her faith when it was a dangerous time to be a Catholic in England.'
- Through the school's work on Catholic character education, and in particular 'growing and learning in God's Grace', older pupils are able to reach out and voice their recognition and alertness towards the needs of others at the local, national and international levels using 'virtue literacy' including 'Charity', 'Justice', 'Compassion', 'Cooperation', and 'Teamwork'.
- Pupils increasingly recognise the demands that living out a religious commitment, places upon them in their day to day lives at home, at school and in the wider world. They experience what it means to have a vocation. Together with the School Council, pupils organise numerous charitable fund raising activities. For example, pupils in Year 6 individually set up and ran their own businesses, based upon 'The Apprentice' television programme, as part of their 'Year 6 Apprentice Challenge 2018 – 2019' from October half term to the beginning of January. Through such activities as making and

selling Christmas cards and decorations, cookies, perfumed products, and cushions, pupils raised £2620.84 for a variety of charities including the nearby Martin House Children's Hospice. A follow up RE book scrutiny by the inspector evidenced one pupil's written reflections on the activity: 'Jesus said: "Give to the poor". By giving the money to charity I am trying to follow his example. In today's society success is often measured in terms of how much money or possessions you have rather than how much you do to help others. I felt happy giving the money I raised to charity.' Similarly, such pupil comments were made to the inspector about other charitable events in the Catholic Life of the school: 'I enjoy taking part in our 'Miles of Smiles March Marathon.' 'If we run round our playing field 4 times we have done one mile. All together I think the school has made £1072 so for the Cancer Research Charity'.

- The Mini Vinnies make Easter baskets and ran a tombola stall in aid of The Disasters Emergency Fund and Water Aid. They also support the local food bank and help for homeless people.
- Leaders and governors at St Edward's view improving the Catholic Life of the school as their prime objective. They promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school to an outstanding degree. They are deeply committed to the Church's mission in education and see it as their core leadership responsibility. They are energized by the task and inspire a sense of vocation, which is notably present at all levels in St Edward's School.
- Leaders and governors at St. Edward's are pro-active in seizing every opportunity to enrich the Catholic Life of the school for the pupils it serves. For example, the school is now in its fourth year of embedding the Society of St Vincent de Paul's Mini Vinnies programme for 7 to 11 year old pupils, with its own Vincentian mission of 'turning concern into action'. Pupils enjoy attending their induction ceremony in the Cathedral and work hard in school supporting a wide range of charities and good causes, particularly those supporting the local foodbank and homeless people.
- School leadership has further enhanced the Catholic Life of the school for Year 5 and Year 6 pupils by registering the school for the Diocese of Leeds Faith in Action national award scheme (Discovery level). Some outstanding pupil portfolios of Faith in Action Catholic Life were evidenced during this inspection. Pupils voiced their enjoyment at receiving their Award Certificates from the Bishop at a ceremony in Leeds Cathedral. This initiative has not only been found to enhance the Catholic Life of the school, but also to actively promote closer home, school, parish religious links.
- A further leadership initiative in promoting the Catholic Life of the school has been the recruitment of pupil digital leaders who help to produce support materials which communicate the Catholic Life of the school more widely. For example, pupils produce 'The Confessor' a digital and hard copy newsletter for parents and pupils. Similarly, they support other groups of pupils with technical expertise to support them in living out the school's Catholic Life, for example by publishing information and helping other pupils with information technology to support their various school / class presentations.
- The digital leaders also recently supported the Mini Vinnies and the school's Catholic character education programme by producing a 'Happy Habits of Faith in Action, St Edward's Virtue Passport' for every child in the school. They researched many different signs and symbols to best represent the eight virtues selected to be in the passport. For example, they selected a fish symbol for the virtue of faith; a heart shape with a cross inside it for the virtue of love (charity); and an owl sign for wisdom. Pupils record in private significant opportunities they have experienced to put a particular virtue into practice and then reflect on how they feel about it.
- Pupils, staff and parents say that they feel St Edward's is a very welcoming and inclusive school with a strong family feeling of belonging. Some parents and staff commented that they attended the school as pupils themselves. Pupils and their

parents also commented that they particularly welcomed being invited by the school to share their own family's cultural heritage and traditions and those of their peers during the school's 'International Week'.

- Very effective home, school, parish links have been established at St. Edwards. Pupils and parents say that they value and enjoy the school's strong Catholic tradition and its links with the parish and the wider Diocese of Leeds. Some parishioners act as prayer sponsors for pupils preparing for the sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Communion.
- Year 5 pupils say that they are looking forward to attending 'The Big Sing Liturgy Thing' at St Theresa's with pupils from other Catholic schools.
- On Education Sunday pupils attend the parish Sunday Mass wearing their school uniforms. Pupils and staff take an active part in the readings, bidding prayers and in singing hymns. A number of pupils are also altar servers in the parish and school.
- Year 6 pupils recently attended a class Lenten mission which they held in the parish church. As part of their liturgy pupils walked and prayed The Stations of The Cross together.
- Earlier this year the whole school walked to the parish church to celebrate Mass with a pupil who had been received into the Catholic Church.
- The governor with responsibility for RE (parish priest) is very experienced and extremely conscientious in fulfilling his duty by making regular visits to the school. He regularly meets with the headteacher to review the Catholic Life of the school. Despite his many other pastoral commitments he makes time to visit classes and leads school and parish seasonal celebration liturgies at church and school. Parents and pupils strongly voice their appreciation for his support of the Catholic Life of the school and for building strong home, school, parish links. 'Our priest is really good fun. He's very kind. I look forward to his visits'. 'Father did a Reconciliation Liturgy in school last week, then those that wanted could go to Confession afterwards. I'm glad I went', are typical pupil comments.
- The school's outstanding quality of provision for the Catholic Life of St Edward's is made visible by the high quality of artefacts and resources evidenced throughout the school. Seasonal artefacts associated with the Church's liturgical year, imagery containing pupils own work/prayers and high quality artefacts associated with the celebration of the spiritual dimension of school life are joyfully celebrated throughout the whole school. The signs, symbols and vibrant liturgical displays strongly communicate the school's clear Catholic identity, including that of the school's patron saint whose statue proudly stands outside, above the main school entrance, looking down on all who enter and leave the school building. Visitors to the school experience the uniqueness and sacredness of the whole school teaching and learning environment.
- The school's mission statement is prominently displayed in the school reception area, the main school hall and throughout the wider school teaching and learning areas. It also appears in the school's information brochure, newsletters, internal and external school notice boards, policy documentation and the school website.
- The quality of the provision for the Catholic Life of the school is also further evidenced in the 'Glimpses of God' section, on the school website, which captures and archives significant Catholic Life events throughout the liturgical year at St Edward's.
- The school's strong provision for Catholic Life is also reflected in its pastoral care for its pupils, families and staff. There is explicit commitment to provide additional resources to support the most vulnerable and needy.
- Key policies and structures are in place to provide the utmost care, personal safety and security of pupils. The school's pastoral care programme of Personal Social and Health Education (PSHE) is well thought out and dovetails with the school's RE curriculum,

further reflecting opportunities for pupils' moral and spiritual growth within the context of Catholic social teaching. Similarly, the school has reviewed, revised and approved a Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) programme in line with diocesan guidelines.

- Pupils actively contribute in a planned and systemic way to the school's evaluation of its Catholic Life and mission and take appropriate leads in planning improvements to it. For example, pupils complete questionnaire surveys; take part in pupil interviews; place suggestion boxes in various areas of the school; attend specific Catholic Life groups' planning meetings, such as those of the School Council, Mini Vinnies, Faith in Action and Digital Leader groups.
- The very experienced headteacher is tireless in her monitoring and evaluation of the Catholic Life. Inspection evidence confirms that all the teaching areas visited fully promote and support the Catholic Life of the school.
- Detailed monitoring records and appropriate policy and planning documentation are regularly reviewed, kept up to date and approved by the governing body. Subject leader cluster meetings are regularly attended and relevant information is fed back to governors and teaching staff in appropriate meetings.
- Mentoring support on monitoring the Catholic Life of the school is provided by the headteacher for newly qualified teachers. The chair of governors similarly supports governors new to the school.
- The RE subject leader is a member of the diocesan working party currently reviewing and drawing up revised teaching support materials for sacramental preparation in primary schools and parish level. These will be discussed by governors, staff and parents and appropriately implemented at St Edward's.
- Inspection evidence confirms that leaders and governors have a clear Catholic vision for the school and that issues raised for action in the previous S48 inspection have been satisfactorily addressed. Similarly, leaders and governors are fully involved in keeping the school's Diocesan Self Evaluation Form under review. Inspection evidence further confirms the accuracy of their judgements on the Catholic Life of the School.
- The School Development Plan (SDP) clearly prioritises increasing the development of Catholic Life across the school for all those with leadership responsibility. Appropriate success criteria are identified and a key timescale helps to monitor progress. Impact reviews seek out evidence of improved standards as a consequence of targeted actions taken. Areas for further development are identified and acted upon.
- The school has been very successful in recruiting a governing body that is highly ambitious for the Catholic Life of St Edwards. They very effectively fulfill their role as 'critical friend' in appropriately supporting and in holding school leadership to account to ensure that the development of the Catholic Life of the school always remains a priority for all with leadership responsibility.
- The school's performance management system also incorporates developmental aspects of the Catholic Life of the school for all teaching staff including their Continuous Professional Development (CPD).
- The governing body approve an RE budget which is in line with or above that of other core curriculum areas and which prioritises teaching and learning resources, including opportunities for the CPD of governors and staff, in the area of Catholic Life of the school. At least one staff and governor training day each year is devoted to the Catholic Life of the School.
- Scrutiny of the school library further evidences that it houses a good selection of age appropriate books on religious topics, including books on other World Faiths which pupils may borrow to read at home.
- St Edward's has very successfully piloted the diocesan Faith in Action initiative and is currently implementing creative approaches to developing the diocesan initiative: Catholic Character Education through growing in the Virtues.

- The school leadership has established good promotional communication systems with parents and carers about the Catholic Life of the school. These include regular newsletters, the school website, the Wednesday Word, parent-teacher review meetings, annual written reports, and above all, the regular Masses and seasonal liturgical celebrations and Friday merit assemblies for pupils held in school – to which parents and parishioners are always invited. For parents unable to attend such events the school’s ‘Glimpses of God’ section on the school’s website provides them with opportunities to view their child efforts.
- In line with one of the school’s aims, ‘To foster within the child an understanding of the need to care for and conserve the environment’, school leadership, including governance, are planning towards helping the school achieve a national School Eco Award. Already each class has an assigned pupil energy manager, whose name is prominently displayed next to the classroom light switches to ensure that lights are switched off when not needed.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

### Religious Education is Outstanding.

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education	<b>1</b>
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education	<b>1</b>
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education	<b>1</b>

- Pupil attainment, progress and enjoyment in learning in Religious Education at St Edward’s is outstanding. Pupils enter the school’s Reception class from a range of different settings. As a result of the excellent RE teaching they receive in Early Years provision pupils immediately begin to develop their religious literacy and become increasingly familiar with the person of Jesus and his teachings. By the end of Key Stage 1 (KS1) almost all pupils achieve their age related expectations in RE with a significant number exceeding above. This accelerated progress in RE is maintained as pupils move up through the school, such that by the end of Key Stage 2 (KS2), almost all pupils achieve above their age related expected attainment levels in RE, with significant numbers making 3 levels of progress between key stages.
- Scrutiny of teachers’ RE differentiated lesson planning, the school’s RE half termly levels of RE progress and attainment tracking data, together with a detailed RE book scrutiny, clearly evidence that almost all groups of pupils, including those with specific learning needs, are making comparable progress to that of other pupils.
- St Edward’s is a school where the teachers know their pupils very well. Consequently they plan, appropriately challenge and focus high quality learning activities on systematic and accurate assessment of pupils’ prior skills, knowledge and understanding in RE. Consequently pupils learn extremely well. As a result, a majority of RE teaching is outstanding and RE teaching is never less than consistently good.
- Teachers at St Edwards are confident, have strong RE subject knowledge, high expectations of their pupils and above all have a visible enthusiasm for RE which they

strongly communicate to their pupils. For the size of the school a high number of teachers hold the Catholic Certificate of Religious Studies qualification.

- Teaching assistants are evidenced to be particularly skilled and effective in RE lessons, appropriately leading, challenging and supporting individual pupils and groups of pupils with specific learning needs. They are instrumental in helping to secure appropriate pupil progress and attainment in RE for those pupils in their care.
- The headteacher is an extremely dedicated RE subject leader and as such she ensures that pupil assessment in RE follows diocesan guidelines and is well embedded within the school's RE curriculum. She has an inspiring vision of outstanding teaching and learning in RE. She also has a very high level of RE teaching expertise and is focused on securing this vision of excellence as part of the school's mission to enable each pupil to achieve their full potential throughout the school. She is tireless in leading and supporting staff in the tracking, evaluating and moderating of their pupils' progress and attainment in RE. Where data suggests that an individual pupil or particular groups of pupils are underachieving, review systems are in place to make sure that the pupils' learning needs are being sufficiently met. Equally, if an individual or group of pupils is making accelerated progress, checks are made to ensure that the level of challenge is still appropriate.
- The school currently uses the diocesan approved RE scheme 'The Way, the Truth & the Life' as its main programme of study. This is supplemented by additional creative teaching resources devised by the school. For example, all RE topics must include aspects of art, drama, creative writing and music. The school has also devised a series of 'Mission of the Week' Statements based around the Virtues. At the time of the inspection, the school's Lenten Mission Statement for the week was: 'To show self control'. One pupil from each class receives a copy of the statement to take back to their class to work on the theme over the week. The school also supplements the RE curriculum with creative activities relating to the Church's liturgical year, sacramental preparations, aspects of the school's international curriculum and study of other World Faiths. A range of planned out of school visits to places of religious worship are also planned into the RE curriculum.
- A common feature of all RE lessons observed is pupils' visible enjoyment, particularly evidenced where teachers' confidence and strong subject knowledge allows them to move away from sole reliance on the RE scheme. Pupil behaviour in RE lessons is exemplary because pupils enjoy their RE lessons and are keen to do their best. Pupils concentrate exceptionally well. Where teachers actively promote opportunities for pupil discussions about the various key aspects of the particular lesson's learning objectives, pupils become much more actively engaged in the lesson and seek to contribute more readily to deeper discussions. As for example as was evidenced in older class discussions about Jesus' miracles and whether at the time people believed that he was the Son of God. Deep discussions about Jesus being truly human and truly divine were entered into by pupils exhibiting expert use of 'Youcat' (Youth Catechism of the Catholic Church) books to provide scriptural evidence to back up their viewpoints.
- From their earliest years pupils learn to talk to their 'talk partners'. As pupils progress up through the school, their discussions widen to broader groups and inspection evidence noted the progressive growth of pupils' religious literacy, frequently including correct use of 'driver words' associated with the RE topic.
- A particularly notable feature of the school is the calm, collegiate working atmosphere which pervades the whole school. Pupils learn to work co-operatively in small groups with their peers in line with one of the school's aims which underpin the school's mission statement: 'To foster in pupils of all abilities enquiring minds, an enthusiasm for learning, an ability to collaborate and a desire to achieve'.

- The work which the school is currently implementing relating to the diocesan initiative ‘Catholic Character Education: Growing in the Virtues and Celebrating Human Flourishing in Catholic Schools’ is having a very positive impact.
- Discussion with pupils and general observations within RE lessons clearly evidence that exceptionally high levels of pupils’ religious literacy are being acquired by pupils at St. Edward’s as they study the virtues and move up through the school.
- Discussion with older pupils evidences that they are becoming increasingly able to recognise similarities and differences in patterns of human behaviour and in particular discern significant connections to their own personal and spiritual growth. For example, pupils commented: ‘It’s about learning to help others – like not always being selfish’. Another pupil added: ‘Yes it’s about passing Jesus’ love for us on to others’.
- Links to the school’s Positive Psychology week similarly help to further promote and reinforce a positive self image for pupils at St Edward’s such that they very willingly volunteer to help the many charitable causes supported through the school’s many virtuous activities.
- The quality and quantity of pupils’ RE work, as evidenced in scrutiny of their RE workbooks, is very high. Pupils take a pride in the presentation of their work. Pupils written work indicates imagination, originality, and the ability to reflect, evaluate and engage with religious issues.
- Work scrutiny of pupils’ RE books further evidences that teachers consistently adhere to the school’s agreed marking policy across all key stages. Teachers establish a dialogue for improvement with pupils through posing ‘next step’ questions in pupil work books, to which pupils, relative to their age, make a written response. As a result of their individual RE targets, pupils have a very clear understanding of their current RE attainment levels and what they need to do next to improve. This is further reinforced by encouraging pupils to self assess aspects of their own RE progress using the ‘I can’ statements.
- Leaders and governors actively promote and avail themselves of RE training and development opportunities, especially in the area of monitoring and evaluation of pupil progress and attainment in RE at the school.
- Leaders and governors ensure that the RE curriculum meets the requirements of the Bishops’ Conference in every respect with 10% or more of the school timetable allocated to RE in every class.
- The governing body approve an RE budget which funds new RE teaching and learning resources for pupils in all classes.

## **COLLECTIVE WORSHIP**

### **Collective Worship is Outstanding**

How well pupils respond to and participate in the school’s Collective Worship	<b>1</b>
The quality of provision for Collective Worship	<b>1</b>
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship	<b>1</b>

- Pupils at St Edward's exhibit a genuine interest in and an enthusiasm for actively participating in acts of Collective Worship. Pupils across all key stages demonstrate high levels of reverence and respect by their exemplary behaviour and willingness to engage with the selected themes. This is most poignantly evidenced in the pupils' sustained prayerful silences during Collective Worship.
- Similarly, pupils joyfully sing hymns which they frequently accompany with actions and signing the words.
- Praying together is central to the everyday life experience of all pupils and staff at St Edward's and takes many different forms including class, key stage and whole school worships. In addition class prayers are said at the beginning of the school day, lunchtimes and at the end of the school day.
- Pupils exhibit a good knowledge of traditional Catholic prayers and they recite them with conviction. Relative to their age and capacity pupils experience a wide range of age appropriate prayer styles.
- Through the school's connections and close proximity to St John's Residential School for the deaf, older pupils at St. Edwards learn to correctly use sign language to sign some of their school and class prayers and hymns; as evidenced when at the end of their morning lessons a class signed the prayer Grace Before Meals.
- At the beginning of the school year, a detailed liturgical calendar is worked out for the school by the headteacher in consultation with the parish priest. Details of the planned whole school and class masses, held in the church or school, and seasonal liturgical celebrations are published on the school website and parish and school newsletters. At St Edward's, all staff attend acts of Collective Worship. All teaching staff plan and lead Collective Worships on a rota basis throughout the year. The headteacher, the parish priest and senior teaching staff have expert knowledge of the Church's liturgical year and of how to plan and deliver high quality Collective Worship. They lead by example and are highly visible models of outstanding practice for the staff and pupils. They are passionate about teaching pupils how to plan, lead and evaluate their own Collective Worships.
- Pupils willingly take on the role of planning, preparing, leading and evaluating whole school and class Collective Worships. They are very familiar with diocesan planning sheets. Discussions with pupil leaders after Collective Worship clearly confirm that they self-evaluate 'How' and 'What' they would improve in leading future Collective Worships.
- The whole school meets every morning for Collective Worship. On the Monday morning, the school's 'Mission for the Week' statement, based around the Christ centred virtues, is introduced by a member of staff and pupil prayer leaders. At the time of the inspection the weekly mission for Lent was: 'To show self-control'. Representative pupils from each class collected a copy of the weekly mission for display in their own classroom RE focal area. Throughout the week each class reflects on the statement and on its implications at a personal level.
- At St Edward's all pupils from Year 2 upwards work in groups to plan, prepare and lead their own class Collective Worships. Pupils are keen for their turn to come around and, using diocesan approved pupil planning sheets, and frequently using their own break times, they take great care in preparing their worships. They demonstrate a strong knowledge of the Church's liturgical year in their choice of Collective Worship themes and by selecting appropriate liturgical artefacts for their prayer focal point. Pupils are also notably skilled in creating an appropriate atmosphere conducive to prayer. They also take the initiative in consulting the music teacher over their choice of music and hymns and consult digital leaders over the use of appropriate technology for their Collective Worship. Digital leaders have become increasingly skilled in the use of technology to help set the mood with appropriate music, and projected images.

- As pupils move up the school they willingly take on responsibilities for group leadership of key stage and whole school worship. All Year 5 and Year 6 pupils confidently lead weekly whole school Collective Worship as part of the Friday celebration assemblies. All pupils respond well to their peers' Collective Worship.
- In pupil led KS2 Collective Worship, pupil engagement is enriched by the good use of pupil leader questioning of their peers. Similarly, dramatization of passages from scripture, use a range of traditional Catholic prayers alongside their own written prayers, evidences the growing confidence of pupil leaders. They are similarly at ease when standing up to speak out loud in whole school, key stage and class gatherings. They visibly enjoy leading their Collective Worship.
- Parents, carers and visitors to the school, comment on the positive impact that living and working in a 'faithful praying community has on pupils -regardless of their own faith background. Parents comment on their children joyfully singing school hymns around the home and reciting school prayers most notably around the dining table before mealtimes. Parents also comment that their children gain a good understanding of right from wrong at St Edward's.
- The governing body give high priority to the planning, resourcing and evaluation of Collective Worship at St.Edward's. Monitoring and evaluation of Collective Worship is very comprehensive. Scrutiny of the headteacher's monitoring files and associated documentation confirms that the Diocese of Leeds guidelines on Collective Worship, including formats for teacher and pupil led planning, are in full use across all Key Stages. Similarly, the vibrant quality of the school's RE displays evidences that diocesan guidelines on Displays in Catholic Schools which support liturgical themes have also been put into practice across the school. Survey comment slips from parents, minutes of governor meetings and visits into school and evidence of staff / governor training courses attended further confirm the priority given to evaluating Collective Worship.
- Leaders and governors very effectively use newsletters, parish bulletins and the school website to promote and publicise opportunities for parents, carers and parishioners to attend school seasonal celebrations, including Masses and Collective Worship. As witnessed, parents take full advantage of such invitations and attend in pleasing numbers.
- At the time of the inspection the school was preparing to mark the sacred paschal triduum with whole school liturgies centring upon Veneration of the Cross, Washing of the Feet and the school's Passion Play.
- Foundation governors at St Edward's have maintained their faithful stewardship, ensuring that the canonical requirements of the school's foundation trust deed continue to be adhered to, in that the Religious Education and Religious Worship conducted at St. Edward's are carried out in accordance with the teachings and rites of the Roman Catholic Church.
- Leaders and governors actively seek to identify areas for future improvements in the Catholic Education the school provides. To that end a large suggestion box is prominently placed in the public area of the school's main reception area entrance way. A similar box for pupils' ideas is strategically positioned in the main teaching and learning areas of the school.
- St Edward's is a school where all are continually seeking: 'Through God's Grace to Grow and Learn'.