

# DIOCESE OF PLYMOUTH

Department for Formation



Keyham Barton Catholic Primary School  
Renown Street,  
Plymouth PL2 2DE

**URN 113488**

Chair of Governors: Andy Fowkes

Record of Diocesan Review  
23rd January, 2012

Head Teacher: Kevin Norris

## **INTRODUCTION**

Keyham Barton was last inspected by Ofsted in January 2012 and was judged to be a good school with some outstanding features. Ofsted were positive about many issues and notably in the provision the school makes for children who are deemed to be on the autistic spectrum, in particular the *'helpful personal support and the school's inclusive practice'* which enables these pupils to be included within mainstream classes and to make fruitful progress.

A new Section 48 Inspection process is currently being developed for use in diocesan schools. Pending finalisation of this process and as an interim measure, Bishop Budd has given his approval to a formal review to be conducted jointly by a diocesan officer and the school, to meet the requirements of Section 48 of the Education Act 2005. This document is a statement of the outcomes of that review, to be shared with governors, parents and other stakeholders as the school wishes. It identifies some of Keyham Barton's key strengths and also areas of focus that have been agreed to further strengthen the life and work of the school. The review covered a wide range of issues and, as a process, it sought to be creative and to support the school in its on-going development as a Catholic community.

The review was conducted by Sarah Adams (RE Adviser), working closely with the head teacher (Kevin Norris) and the RE Co-ordinator (Philip Hanrahan). The outcomes of the review were agreed on the basis of:-

- contextual documentation provided by the school
- observation of three lessons;
- discussion with the RE Co-ordinator;
- Participation in an Act of Collective Worship;
- Discussion with the Head Teacher
- Meeting with Chair of Governors and a Parent Governor
- Meeting with school council

## **STRENGTHS OF THE SCHOOL**

As a Catholic School Keyham Barton has many key strengths which highlight its distinctive identity as a Catholic school and which demonstrate the commitment it has to educational success and to the mission of the Church in the world. The list below intends to be illustrative, not comprehensive.

## **LEADERSHIP**

Since the last S48 the Executive Head Teacher at Keyham Barton has established a stable and innovative leadership team that is growing in its capacity to lead with integrity and confidence. As a result genuine efforts have been made to ensure that all adults are able to engage with the catholic mission of the school and to provide the best possible learning environment for the children in their care.

The leadership team includes the RE Leader who works effectively and with enthusiasm to support the staff in both their teaching and with Acts of Worship. His commitment to developing the curriculum, and giving guidance where appropriate, means that teachers are able to deliver exciting and challenging lessons. The school is in the process of developing its monitoring systems and the school recognises the need to have a robust system in place for assessing children's achievement so that planning for each lesson is effective and progressive.

## **Religious Life and Worship**

The RE leader is a keen musician and ably supports the school's efforts to offer the children rich and varied liturgies. Currently Mass takes place in school every week, either for the whole school or for individual classes. The Parish Priest is very supportive of the school and his weekly visits are appreciated. In addition he has commented favourably on how the children respond to him in Mass. There has, he says, been a notable improvement in the quality of their responses.

Prayer and worship are key to Keyham Barton having a strong sense of community that is rooted in Gospel values. Children speak openly and honestly about their experience of prayer in school, considering it to be something that they value and appreciate. They comment on how it helps them to know that God loves them and feel supported by the faith life of the school.

During the visit there was the opportunity to participate in a Year 2 Class Act of Worship. The teacher had prepared a creative and reflective time of prayer which focused on one of the miracles of Jesus. Children were enabled to participate in a number of ways including singing with actions, sharing their own prayers and breaking and sharing bread. The children's capacity for being still and reflective was very evident.

The themes chosen for the weekly Mass are directly linked to the teaching of God Matters. This ensures that children can celebrate what they have been learning about and express this in ritual and song.

Around the school there are many beautiful religious displays both in corridors and classrooms that reflect the spiritual dimension of the school's life. The focal point in classrooms are generally full of life and pertinent to the liturgical season and reflective of what the children are learning in RE.

## **Teaching and Learning**

Lessons observed during this visit were of a very high standard. Teachers at Keyham work hard to offer children exciting and innovative lessons. By a clever use of IT, one teacher helped children to understand the concept of going back in time. This captivated the children's imagination and drew them immediately into the lesson. The teacher's telling of the story of Samuel and Eli also captivated the children, encouraging them to listen and become involved. A variety of activities ensured that children were clearly able to achieve the learning outcome and to

obtain a deeper understanding of the story. The teacher had a clear sense of what she wanted to achieve and the necessary steps for this including the steps for consolidation and further development.

In another lesson the children were making links between the birth of Jesus and the plight of the homeless. The teacher asked appropriate and challenging questions to ensure that children could move beyond the superficial links to a more in-depth understanding of what it means to be a witness to those who are homeless.

One teacher had worked with his class to consider the life of St. Paul and whether or not he should be put to death. The children had researched in depth his life and through a dramatic courtroom debate different groups of children presented their arguments. The children were fully engaged in this lesson and confident in their presentations.

All lessons were well paced and engaging, offering most children the opportunity to increase their knowledge and understanding of the concepts that were being taught. The teachers have embraced the new curriculum with a healthy regard for the more demanding theological issues that they now face when teaching God Matters. It will be important to develop a regular pattern of reflecting on each topic as it arises to ensure that mistakes around theological concepts are avoided wherever possible.

### **Pastoral Life of the School**

Keyham Barton is a happy school where children feel supported and cared for. They feel that most of the time issues are dealt with consistently, fairly and appropriately. They appreciate the opportunities that adults give them when they need support or help with relationships or concerns.

The school has a strong commitment to children with additional or special needs as commented on by OFSTED. Inclusion in all its forms matters and all members of the school community contribute to the warm and friendly atmosphere that pervades the school. People are genuinely hospitable and welcoming. Integral to the daily life of the school is an attitude of respect and tolerance for all people regardless of race, ability or background.

The compassion and concern shown by adults and children at the school is extended to the wider community. Contributions to local and national charities, specifically CAFOD are regularly made. Links regarding the work of charities are consistently made with the curriculum and often the Liturgical year. Children are proud of the efforts that they make to raise awareness and money for their charities.

### **Areas for Development**

1. To build on the good practice that is developing to monitor the RE curriculum in school and to support the introduction of assessment in line with Diocesan expectations and time-lines.

2. To develop a consistent approach to marking across year groups which ensures that next steps to learning are included and focuses on the RE content work presented.
3. The prayer life of Keyham Barton has continued to develop. It would be helpful if some INSET time could be given to helping staff to develop up-to-date skills in liturgical preparation with children and for them.

## **Conclusion**

Keyham Barton is a school that is going from strength to strength and about which the governors feel very positive. They can be pleased with the progress that is being made.

The commitment on the part of the staff and governors to embrace children from all backgrounds and with all abilities makes this a fully inclusive school and one which responds to the mission of the Church in the world. There is a genuine sense of joy and good humour present throughout the school as people go about their business, making it a very happy place for children to be.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all who helped to make this such a positive visit and for the children who made me feel very welcome.

Sarah Adams  
1<sup>st</sup> February, 2012