



# Inspection Newsletter No. 2

March 2013

## Inspections in the Summer Term 2013

Most of the s48 inspections in the summer term will be of schools that have not been inspected since 2008 or, in some cases, since 2006-7. These are mainly schools which were judged by Ofsted to be outstanding schools or which received interim assessments and deferred inspections. One or two other schools will be inspected either because the five year interval has been reached or because they were judged at the last inspection to be satisfactory.

### Self-evaluation and inspection judgements

In the December newsletter, it was reported that from the summer term any school which does not have formal systems or processes in place for monitoring and evaluating Catholic life including collective worship cannot be judged to have better than satisfactory self-evaluation. This will be the case even if the judgements the school makes about itself are accurate. **This means that inspectors will not be able to affirm a judgement made by a school that it is an outstanding Catholic school.**

It is not expected that schools will have accumulated abundant data from tick lists about Catholic life and collective worship. Rather, the expectation is that schools will have evidence of having engaged in reflective evaluation of their Catholic life drawing upon a variety of sources. These may include audits, records of staff consideration of aspects of Catholic life and pupils' spiritual, moral and vocational development (perhaps using resources on the diocesan website – [www.bdes.org.uk](http://www.bdes.org.uk)), surveys of pupil responses and parental views, observations, formal discussion with parish priests about quality, etc. Collective worship should be monitored not merely in respect of its frequency, but also its quality. Governors should be involved in the process of evaluation and evaluation should be linked with improvement planning.

Schools do not have to use the diocesan self-evaluation form to present their summative evaluation prior to inspection. However, it is wise to ensure that the self-evaluation document addresses the issue that the inspection will be about – the processes of self-evaluation, the findings, and the planning and implementation which follows from evaluation.

## Inspection of outstanding schools

As reported in the December newsletter, it has been agreed with the DFE that part funding will be made available to dioceses to continue to inspect schools judged by s5 to be outstanding. Part of the agreement is that they will receive a shorter, more focused inspection. In the Archdiocese of Birmingham, this shorter inspection will be closely related to the form of inspection for all other schools. It will be based upon school self-evaluation and will record detailed evidence of two observations made in the school of areas which are considered to provide examples of outstanding practice. Only one outstanding RE teacher will be observed plus whatever other lesson or part lesson(s) in other subjects that the school might indicate for evidence of the aspect of Catholic life the headteacher proposes.

**What will the inspector do?**

1. Review school documentation including the last report, a self-evaluation document, RAISEonline, school improvement plan, and, in secondary schools, evidence of attainment in public examinations
2. Discuss self-evaluation with the headteacher and RE subject leader; during discussion ask the headteacher/subject leader to identify one area that requires development and what action is being taken to improve it
3. Ask the headteacher to identify one area of RE that is outstanding and one aspect of Catholic life which will reveal evidence of outstanding practice that may be shared with other schools
4. Observe these two aspects accompanied by the headteacher or other member of senior leadership.
5. Record detailed evidence from the observations to contribute to the survey of Catholic life and RE across the diocese (see the December newsletter)
6. Sample pupils' work from the end of each key stage
7. Speak to staff and examine any staff development records and induction programmes to ensure staff are supported in sustaining and developing all aspects of the Catholic life of the school

**Discussion of self-evaluation:**

1. Ask HT to identify the processes of self-evaluation which are in place for monitoring and evaluating:
  - a. Catholic life
  - b. Collective worship
  - c. Provision for spiritual, moral and vocational development across the curriculum
  - d. Religious education: also ask to see evidence of lesson observations (no teacher names required)
2. Ask how effective these processes are and how they might be improved
3. Ask how monitoring and evaluation feed into:
  - a. Improvement planning – i.e. the relationship between evaluation and planning
  - b. Action to improve standards and quality – including feedback to staff
4. Ask how the school took action to respond to recommendations at the last inspection (this might prove difficult where the last inspection was 5 or more years previously and if the headteacher has changed)
5. Ask subject leader:
  - a. in primary schools to talk about standards being achieved in Y2 and Y6, the quality of teaching (where it is outstanding and where it needs development), the quality of pupils' learning and the progress pupils make
  - b. in secondary schools to talk about standards at the end of Key Stage 3, at GCSE, and, where appropriate, at A Level; the quality of teaching (where it is outstanding and where it needs development); the quality of pupils' learning and the progress pupils make
6. Look at examples of lesson observations for RE and observations of collective worship.

Discussions should be focused strictly on the matters identified above and any action taken

**Length of inspection**

The inspection will be expected to take no more than one day in normal circumstances. It would only go into a second day in, for example, the case of a school failing to provide a summary self-evaluation and other documentation in sufficient time for the inspector to analyse it prior to the school visit (i.e. two weeks before the inspection) or if there was some unforeseen and unavoidable disruption to the inspection.

**Academies and other schools where there has been a change of status**

Where the status of a school has changed since the last inspection, it will normally be given a full inspection as it is legally a new school. This has already been the case with two schools which had been judged to be outstanding which have since then opened new sixth forms. Primary schools which have merged infant and junior schools into a single primary will be treated the same way as will school which become academies. Where there has been a change of status, the next inspection will normally follow that for s5.

**Writing reports**

The visit must be completed with a short report which will take the form of a letter to the headteacher similar to the monitoring reports from a s8 inspection (though those are written for schools requiring improvement). The letter will be published in the same way as are full reports from other schools.

**What happens if the visit throws up causes for concern about Catholic life or RE?**

The inspector should communicate causes for concern to the DES. The outcome of the visit will be discussed with the headteacher and with the appropriate subject adviser at the DES. If the concerns are significant they may be followed by a full canon law inspection (or s48 if approval is given by the DFE). Otherwise support and guidance will be provided by the DES to assist the school in the improvement of the areas of concern.