

Wakefield M.D.C.



Diocese of Leeds

St Austin's Catholic Primary School

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School evaluation Re: "The Wednesday Word".

The Wednesday Word resource promotes the Catholic faith through material that is faithful to the Gospel. It encourages families to adopt a Catholic ethos in the home, which in turn supports the ethos of the school. This new resource is not an additional component to the RE curriculum that needs to be taught in school, but it does provide the opportunity to enrich and support the religious education that is already happening in schools.

During the pilot scheme we found that *The Wednesday Word* helped to draw our community closer together through prayer. I am sure it has encouraged and helped many families to pray with each other and for each other, whilst promoting partnership between home, school and parishes. We had some fantastic feedback from many parents, some of which is included in this pack.

Perhaps it could be argued that some parents assume that it is the school's responsibility to transmit the faith to their children, and that they fail to recognise that **they** are the most significant people in transmitting that faith. The Wednesday Word is a powerful new tool that supports parents and other significant family members to transmit the faith. The resource offered provides evidence of the school's commitment to support parents, as primary educators in matters of faith, and its use can be noted in the school SEF to inform both Diocesan and OFSTED inspections.

Schools, parents and parishes must work together to form effective partnerships. Disseminating *The Wednesday Word* through school lays a firm foundation on which that partnership can grow. It is a powerful way to evangelise parents in line with the mission of a church school. Many adults are likely to adopt this prayer custom because it comes through school, and many children are likely to encourage adults to do *The Wednesday Word* because their friends are doing it.

The Wednesday Word provided a reason for some families to come together, and for others an excuse to come back and re-establish family time. In some families the process was led by the children, whose infectious enthusiasm made sure that the parents joined in. In others grandparents found the resource useful as they had wanted to pray with their grandchildren but weren't sure where to start. One girl told me that in her house no one was interested so she took it to bed at bedtime and read it to herself there! In other families I am sure that it was never read at all but the opportunity was there.

We have over 370 pupils in St Austin's Catholic Primary School and we will certainly be continuing our support for this initiative. At only 4.5p per copy it's an inexpensive, easy-to-use resource that has the potential to reach out and meet the spiritual, social and emotional needs of the 80% of catholic families who are not regular church attenders. It's a wonderful way to spread the Gospel in the 21st century and support the lives of many families who are connected to Catholic schools.

Mr D Willis
Headteacher