



ARCHDIOCESE OF LIVERPOOL

INSPECTION REPORT

ST. CATHERINE OF SIENA CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

LOWTON

Inspection Date Tuesday 15 March 2011

Inspectors Rev. D. Melly Mrs. A Radford

Unique Reference Number 106507

Inspection carried out under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005

Type of School Catholic Primary

Age range of pupils 4 - 11

Number on roll 204

Chair of Governors Rev Dcn D. Morris

Head teacher Mrs. K. Vernon

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Date of last inspection 15 April 2008

Introduction

This inspection was carried out under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005.

The report of the inspection is produced for the Archbishop of Liverpool (Code of Canon Law 804 and 806) and for the governors of the school.

The inspectors are members of the Christian Education Department and their associates approved by the Archbishop of Liverpool for this purpose.

Information about the school

St Catherine's school is an average sized Catholic Primary School situated in Lowton and mainly serving the parish of St Catherine. There are 204 children on roll of whom 193 are baptised Catholic. Eleven come from other Christian denominations, and there are no pupils from other faith or religious traditions. There are 10 teachers of whom 8 teach Religious Education, 8 are Catholic. Three teachers have a suitable qualification in Religious Education and a further 2 are in the process of obtaining the Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies. Since the last inspection a new Headteacher has been appointed, a co-ordination team for Religious Education has been set up and considerable building improvements have been completed.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

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Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school.

Inspection Judgements

Overall effectiveness:

how effective the school is in providing Catholic Education

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main Findings:-

The school is outstanding overall in providing Catholic Education. There is a clear vision for Catholic Education which is embraced by the whole school community. Since the last inspection the school has securely maintained and built on previously good and outstanding performance. Self evaluation is rigorous and accurate. Outcomes for pupils are outstanding. There is no significant difference in performance between groups of pupils. Outcomes for pupils with additional or special needs are very good. There is obvious inclusivity in the school. The school is successful in addressing the areas it has identified for improvement. The leadership team is deeply motivated and consistently communicates its high expectations to staff in order to secure improvement. Staff are affirmed and very well supported. Teachers are provided with In-service to support their ongoing development. Realistic and challenging plans stem from the accurate analysis obtained through monitoring and are being used effectively to improve outcomes. Any underperformance is challenged.

The school has outstanding capacity for sustained improvement.

What the school needs to do to improve further

- To further improve provision of Religious Education by:
 - firmly embedding the assessment, moderation and tracking already in place;
 - to consider further assessment for learning techniques.
- To further improve provision for the teaching of other faiths and religions by;
 - carrying out the planned visits to other places of worship and museums;
 - by inviting guest speakers into school to talk to the children.
- To continue to encourage Continued Professional Development especially by:
 - encouraging staff to obtain the CCRS.

How good outcomes are for individuals and groups of pupils

Pupils' achievement in Religious Education is outstanding. On entry to school many children have a developing knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith. Pupils' attainment in Religious Education is outstanding. Pupils make outstanding progress in relation to their starting points and capabilities. Analysis of assessments undertaken provides evidence of pupils' generally attaining an appropriate or above level for their age and stage of development in each key

stage. There is no difference in performance between pupils of different gender. Outcomes for pupils with additional or special needs are very good. Pupils are becoming increasingly more religiously literate. Their knowledge, understanding and skills are developing appropriate to their age and capacity. They are developing the skills that enable them to think spiritually, ethically and theologically and are becoming more aware of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life. Any underachievement is challenged. Pupils are encouraged to work independently and collaboratively. Pupils' enjoyment of their learning is outstanding as shown by their interest, enthusiasm and behaviour. Pupils are actively involved in developing and evaluating the Catholic character of the school by their care and concern for each other, their leadership of and participation in Collective Worship and their living out of the school Mission Statement. Pupils' have an outstanding sense of belonging to the school community and value and respect others. Pupils are encouraged to take on roles of responsibility in the school and wider community by their membership of the school and eco councils, being play leaders and monitors. Pupils benefit from participation in away days and retreat activities: visits to the Conway Centre and Low Bank Ground. Pupils are considerate and caring of others both in school and the wider community. Pupils have a good sense of right and wrong and apply this in their personal relationships. Pupils take an increasing responsibility for themselves and their actions. They praise and acknowledge the contribution of others. They show a readiness to embrace and celebrate their lived experiences.

Pupils are outstanding in responding to and participating in the school's Collective Worship. They are becoming increasingly more confident preparing and leading worship especially in Key Stage 2. They act with reverence and are keen to participate in a variety of gatherings. They listen attentively, reflect in silence and join in community prayers appropriately and with confidence. No-one is expected to act in a manner contrary to their beliefs and all show mutual respect. Pupils' knowledge of prayer and liturgy is increasing. They are becoming familiar with a variety of prayer styles. They appreciate and are open to the Word of God in the scriptures.

How good outcomes are for individuals and groups of pupils	
How well pupils achieve in Religious Education	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pupils' standards of attainment in Religious Education 	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the quality of pupils' learning and their progress in Religious Education 	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school	1
How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship	1

How effective the provision is for Catholic Education

The quality of teaching is consistently effective in ensuring that pupils are interested and engaged. They make outstanding progress. Teachers take into account pupils' prior learning and ensure, when planning, that the work consolidates, builds on and extends their knowledge and understanding. Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to work independently and collaboratively. Outstanding use is made of time and resources: teaching assistants, the Nature Garden, ICT (IWB, cameras, CD's, DVD), chime bars,

literature (poetry and scripture) and a question box. Teachers and others use a variety of strategies to sustain and motivate pupils: questioning to recall previous learning and encourage deep discussion and good written work, cross curricular links, talking partners, hot seating, drama, affirmation of children and time for reflection. Pupils are informed of their progress and how to improve both orally and through marking.

The assessment of pupils work in Religious Education is secure and appropriate. The school has good assessment strategies which provide accurate and detailed information on the achievement of all the pupils. Teachers are able to identify how well pupils are achieving and tackle underachievement. Formal assessment tasks are undertaken in line with Archdiocesan guidance. Assessment information is collated by the subject leaders and shared with governors and parents. Achievement and effort are celebrated. Pupils are constantly affirmed.

The curriculum is outstanding in meeting pupils' needs. The school using the Here I Am programme recommended by the Archdiocese meets the requirements of the Curriculum Directory for Religious Education. A whole school approach is used and appropriate levels of the programme are being followed in different classes. This ensures complete Religious Education entitlement for each child and meets National and Archdiocesan requirements. Of the total curriculum time 10% is allocated to Religious Education. This fulfils the requirements of the Bishops of England and Wales. Excellent planning ensures full coverage of the Religious Education programme. Imaginative and well planned strategies are deployed to enrich pupils learning. These are delivered with enthusiasm and dynamism. Curriculum outlines are provided for parents who are consulted on different issues depending on the topic being covered. The school implements new curriculum developments as appropriate. Enrichment activities such as Fair Trade workshops, trips and visitors, including the parish priest, have a positive impact on the curriculum. The Religious Education curriculum provides outstanding opportunities for pupils' spiritual and moral development.

The Collective Worship provided is outstanding in reflecting the Catholic character of the school and taking into account the variety of faith backgrounds among the pupils. Collective Worship plays a key part in meeting the Spiritual needs of the pupils. Opportunities are provided to enable full, active and conscious participation of the whole school community. Children are enabled to pray formally and informally. The school has provided opportunities for staff to develop the skills necessary for the planning and leading of Collective Worship. The teachers are providing the necessary resources and opportunities to help children to develop the skills necessary to plan, lead and participate in Collective Worship especially in Key Stage 2. Outstanding opportunities are provided for parents, carers the local and wider Faith communities to participate in a variety of celebrations of the Here I Am programme and the Church's liturgical year.

How effective the provision is for Catholic Education	
The quality of teaching and purposeful learning in Religious Education	1
The effectiveness of assessment in Religious Education	2
The extent to which the Religious Education curriculum meets pupils' needs	1
The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school	1

How effective leaders and managers are in developing the Catholic Life of the schools

Leaders and managers are outstanding in promoting and developing the Catholic life of the school and show an outstanding understanding of, and commitment to, the Mission of the Church. This is reflected in the School's own Mission Statement which has recently been celebrated and affirmed through a whole School Mission Day. All who form part of the school community including parents, the parish priest, governors, staff and children were involved in this celebration. The aims and practical objectives direct and guide every aspect of school life and are a useful tool by which the school can evaluate its effectiveness. Outstanding opportunities are provided for the staff and pupils to play an active part in Catholic life and Mission of the school in their care, guidance and support of all and in their leadership of, and participation in, Collective Worship. The Self Evaluation Document provides evidence of the school's monitoring, searching analysis and self challenge. Their analysis provides a basis to celebrate the school's strengths and outline areas for development. The Self Evaluation Document is very comprehensive and accurate and obviously has a great impact on the Catholic life of the school. The school provides very good induction and in-service training to enable staff to further understand the Church's Mission in Education and to play their unique part in it. They are given opportunities to attend In-service provided by the Department for Christian Education. They are also encouraged to obtain the Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies. A range of opportunities for Spiritual and Moral developments are provided for staff and pupils particularly during their times for personal reflection at staff meetings and on their away days.

Leaders and managers are outstanding in the way they use monitoring data to evaluate the school's performance, celebrate, and plan future improvements. Planning and monitoring is outstanding and impacts on the future planning. The subject leaders lead and manage in an outstanding way. They are outstanding in guiding Religious Education. They show commitment and dedication and introduce new initiatives when appropriate. Excellent documentation guides and directs all staff in the delivery of the subject. This is updated as necessary.

Governors are outstanding in fulfilling their responsibilities. They have effectively helped to shape the direction of the school through active involvement in the life of the school, their promotion of staff Continuing Professional Development and their encouragement to provide the best possible learning environment both internally and externally. The new parish priest is a particularly valued member of the school community and his contribution to the life of the school is appreciated by staff and children alike.

Leadership at all levels respects difference, values diversity and ensures equal opportunities for all. Prayer, worship and the liturgical life of the school reflects relationships at every level. Leaders and managers facilitate pupils' involvement and respects the religious diversity within the school. There are very positive in service to the local community through their involvement with the Nature Garden which involved local enterprise, the local residents and neighbouring schools. Pupils have also visited the local care home, Lyme house and some of the residents also came to school to be part of the Mission Day. Parents are consulted regularly and involved in a variety of ways in the life of the school: newsletters outlining what is being covered in Religious Education, together with

ways the parents can support this work, are sent to the homes and also posted on the web site. The use of the Here I am programme promotes community cohesion in an outstanding way. Recently a link has also been set up with a school in South Africa which the Headteacher has visited. Children have explored the beliefs and values of other faiths and religions including Judaism, Hinduism, Islam and Sikhism. This helps to promote tolerance and respect for those who think differently. This work could be further enhanced by putting in place the planned visits to places of worship and museums and the invitations to guest speakers to visit the school.

How effective leaders and managers are in developing the Catholic Life of the School	
How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school and plan and implement improvement to outcomes for pupils	1
How well leaders and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education and plan and implement improvement to outcomes for pupils	1
The extent to which the governing body provides effective challenge and support for the Catholic dimension of the school so areas needing development are addressed decisively and responsibilities met	1
How effectively leaders and managers promote community cohesion	1