



ARCHDIOCESE OF LIVERPOOL

INSPECTION REPORT

ST TERESA'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

ST HELENS

Inspection Date 9 November 2010
Inspectors Mrs Marie Connolly Mrs Sue Bannister
Unique Reference Number 119674
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 196
Chair of Governors Mrs Joan Ashcroft
Head teacher Mr Paul Allen
School address Devon Street
St Helens
Merseyside
WA10 4HX
Telephone number 01744 678667
E-mail address allenp@st-teresas.st-helens.sch.uk
Date of last inspection 1 May 2007

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 Teresa's is a smaller than average sized Catholic Primary School situated in St Helens, Merseyside serving the parish of the same name. There are 196 children on roll of whom 169 are baptised Catholic, 27 come from other Christian denominations. There are no children from other faith or religious traditions. There are 8 teachers 7 of whom teach religious education. Six are Catholic. Five teachers have a suitable qualification in Religious Education. Since the last inspection a new Religious Education co-ordinator has been appointed. The same Headteacher and Chair of governors have remained in post.

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

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main Findings:-

This is a good and improving school in providing Catholic Education. It has some outstanding features. There is a clear vision for Catholic Education which is embraced by the whole school community. Since the last inspection all involved in the school have undertaken excellent work reviewing its mission. This has ensured that its distinctive Catholic nature has been highlighted and upheld. The pursuit of excellence has ensured the school has maintained and built on previously good performance. This is clearly evident in all aspects of school life and reflected throughout all the displays around the school. Self evaluation is honest and good, and broadly matches the judgements made in this report. Outcomes for pupils are good. There is no significant difference in performance between groups of pupils. Outcomes for pupils with additional or special needs are good. The school is successfully addressing the areas it has identified for improvement. The leadership, coordinator and headteacher are deeply motivated and consistently communicate high expectations to staff and Governors in order to secure improvement. Staff are affirmed and supported. Morale is high. Teachers are provided with In-service to support their ongoing development. Realistic and challenging plans stem from the analysis obtained through some recent monitoring and will continue to be used to ensure outcomes improve further. Any underperformance is challenged.

Overall the school has good capacity for sustained improvement.

What the school needs to do to improve further

- Provide inservice to ensure planning and assessment are undertaken consistently throughout the school outlining any 'non negotiable' principles.
- Ensure the comprehensive information gained through formal assessment impacts on future planning, enables differentiation and challenge by:
 - moderation
 - monitoring
 - sharing information with all relevant parties teachers, children, parents and governors.
- Continue to monitor planning, teaching and learning to ensure excellence in practice is shared and celebrated, and teachers gain greater confidence and creativity in the teaching strategies and methods of recording used.
- Implement any ongoing areas for development outlined in the coordinators action plan including:
 - tracking and analysis to be reported back to relevant bodies

- keeping portfolios of annotated assessment
- invite suitable representatives from other religious backgrounds to support provision in the Other Faith units
- undertake the excellent initiatives planned to enhance community links
- provide more opportunities for children to plan and deliver Collective Worship
- provide more opportunities for parents to engage in Collective Worship
- use of the Virtual Learning Platform to support Religious Education and promote Catholic Life

How good outcomes are for individuals and groups of pupils

Pupils' achievement in Religious Education is good. On entry to school some children have a limited knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith. Pupils' attainment in Religious Education is broadly average but improving and children make good progress in relation to their starting points and capabilities. Analysis of assessments undertaken has begun to provide evidence of pupils' generally attaining the appropriate level for their age and stage of development in each key stage. There is no significant difference in performance between pupils of different gender. Outcomes for pupils with additional or special needs are good. Pupils are becoming increasingly more literate. Their knowledge, understanding and skills are developing appropriate to their age or capacity. They are developing the skills that enable them to think spiritually, ethically and theologically and are starting to become more aware of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life. The detailed analysis of assessment outcomes will ensure any underachievement is challenged. Pupils are encouraged to work independently and collaboratively. Pupils showed enthusiasm for and some great enjoyment of their learning in Religious Education. Pupils' behaviour overall is outstanding. Pupils have been actively involved in developing and evaluating the Catholic character of the school by reviewing the Mission Statement, its aims and objectives, through the work of the school council and other initiatives e.g. 'Eco' activities. Children have a sense of belonging to the school community and value and respect others. The Mission Statement is based on the prayer of St Teresa 'Christ has no body but yours, no hands but yours, no feet on earth but yours, yours are the eyes with which he looks'. The children have created an excellent Acrostic based on the letters OUR SCHOOL which interprets the Beatitudes in their own language and enables them live their mission. Pupils are encouraged to take on roles of responsibility in the school for example school council, and also the wider community e.g. organising fund raising events for charity and its links with Tanzania. Children benefit from participation in away days e.g. visiting the local Carmelite convent. Pupils have a good sense of right and wrong and apply this in their personal relationships they appreciate that good behaviour is an expectation. Evidence was provided in classrooms of the many initiatives that help support positive behaviour e.g. class rules, code of conduct etc. Positive attitudes in pupils are fostered in numerous ways e.g. the Rainbows programme supporting those children who have suffered loss through death, divorce or separation, the gardening club considering ways in which to improve the school environment. Pupils are considerate and caring of others both in

school and the wider community and take an increasing responsibility for themselves and their actions. This is evident in their charitable fundraising events for CAFOD, the Fair Trade tea party and toy sale for Willowbrook Hospice to name but a few. They show a readiness to embrace and celebrate their lived experiences through music and participating at liturgical events.

Children are good in responding to and participating in the schools Collective Worship. They are keen to participate in acts of worship for example by reading, or using objects symbolically. They sing joyfully, act with reverence and join in traditional and community prayers appropriately. All show mutual respect. Pupils' knowledge of prayer and liturgy is increasing. They are becoming more familiar with a variety of prayer styles. They are learning to appreciate and are open to the Word of God in the scriptures using some creative ways to explore it and recognising its relevance today.

They need to be encouraged to become more confident in preparing and leading worship from their earliest years. Teachers need to guide children when they plan acts of worship to ensure opportunities are given for personal reflection and stillness and the full active participation of all.

How good outcomes are for individuals and groups of pupils	
How well pupils achieve in Religious Education	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pupils' standards of attainment in Religious Education 	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the quality of pupils' learning and their progress in Religious Education 	2
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	2

How effective the provision is for Catholic Education

The quality of teaching overall is good in ensuring that pupils are interested and engaged and make good progress. Some teaching is outstanding. Teachers have begun to take into account pupils' prior learning. Differentiated tasks have started to be employed but must be indicated when planning. This needs to be consistent throughout the school and should also take into consideration the 'driver words'. The work planned consolidates, builds and extends on pupils knowledge and understanding and meets the learning objectives and outcomes set in the Here I Am programme. Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to work independently and collaboratively. Some creative and imaginative teaching and learning strategies are employed. When this happens children show a real enthusiasm for and enjoyment of their work. Monitoring of teaching, planning and workbooks will indicate where this happens and this good practice should be shared to ensure greater consistency throughout the school. Time management is effective. The school is well resourced. Teachers ensure that resources are used efficiently to challenge and stimulate learning i.e. God's Story, Church's Story CD Roms, Power Point presentations etc. Excellent use is being made of ICT in some classrooms. This has started to be shared and will further enhance teaching throughout the school.

Teachers and others use a variety of strategies to sustain and motivate pupils e.g. marking, rewards and positively affirming pupils throughout lessons. Marking needs to be more personalised and challenging. Teaching assistants provide very good support.

The assessment of pupils work in Religious Education is satisfactory and improving. The school has made a good start in implementing assessment strategies. Inservice needs to be provided to ensure assessment information is recorded fully and accurately on the attainment record of all pupils. Teachers will then be able to identify how well pupils are achieving and begin to use this information to differentiate appropriately and tackle any underachievement. Teachers need to provide pupils with greater opportunities to evaluate their own work particularly during plenary sessions. This is undertaken well in some classes. Assessment information has started to be collated by the subject leader and shared with all concerned e.g. teachers, governors and parents. Achievement and effort are celebrated.

The curriculum is good 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. Teachers ensure full coverage of the Religious Education programme when planning to meet the learning outcomes. The majority of timetables indicate that Religious Education lessons are appropriately distributed. Some imaginative and well planned strategies enrich pupils learning. Greater creativity e.g. use of the interactive whiteboard, art, music, drama etc and differentiation needs to be evidenced in planning. Parents are informed of the Religious Education topics to be covered each term and are consulted depending on the topic being covered. The virtual learning platform will be used to further enable parents share their children's work in Religious Education online. This will be excellent. The school implements new curriculum developments as appropriate. Enrichment activities such as the after school clubs have a positive impact on the curriculum. The Religious Education curriculum provides many opportunities for nurturing pupils' spiritual and moral development e.g. in the current topic 'Judaism' children were encouraged to look at how others make sense of the world, deepen their understanding and explore differences in belief and practice to their own. This work is promoting respect and tolerance.

The Collective Worship provided is good in reflecting the Catholic character of the school. It takes into account the variety of Faith backgrounds among the pupils. Collective Worship plays an important part in meeting the Spiritual needs of all staff and pupils. Key seasons of the Church's year are celebrated and other festivals and feasts e.g. St Teresa's feast day. A prayerful atmosphere is created to ensure all gather respectfully. Creativity in presentation enables children engage with the theme, readings and prayers. Opportunities are provided to enable full, active and conscious participation of all those present when listening and responding. Children are enabled to pray formally and informally. The coordinator has provided inservice opportunities for Staff to develop their skills in planning and leading Collective Worship. This needs to be

passed on to pupils. Opportunities are sometimes provided for parents, carers, parishioners and governors to participate in celebrations.

How effective the provision is for Catholic Education	
The quality of teaching and purposeful learning in Religious Education	2
The effectiveness of assessment in Religious Education	3
The extent to which the Religious Education curriculum meets pupils' needs	2
The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school	2

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 a real understanding of and commitment to the Mission of the Church. This is reflected in the Schools own excellent Mission Statement. All who form part of the school community including parents, the Parish Priest, governors and children were involved in the development and recent review of the Mission Statement. Its aims and practical objectives direct and guide every aspect of school life and are a useful tool by which the school evaluate its effectiveness. The children's own acrostic OUR SCHOOL enables the mission to be owned and known by all. Opportunities are provided for the staff and pupils to play an active part in Catholic life and Mission of the school for example the work undertaken on other faiths or Religions, charity work etc. They are constantly striving to improve. The Self Evaluation Document provides evidence of the schools monitoring, searching analysis and self challenge. The schools analysis provides a basis to celebrate strengths and outlines areas for development. Induction and in-service training has enabled staff to further understand the Church's Mission in Education and play their unique part in it for example NQT and new Co-ordinator training. A range of opportunities for Spiritual and Moral developments are provided for staff and pupils' such as staff praying together, links with the parish and local community, staff and pupils celebrating together throughout each year etc. Pupils have a keen awareness of their need for outreach and support many local, national and international charities first hand and through fundraising. Parents, the Parish Priest and governors are fulsome in their praise of the schools commitment to its Catholic Mission.

Leaders and managers are satisfactory in the way they use self evaluation and monitoring data to evaluate the schools performance, celebrate, and plan future improvements. A good start has been made in this area and the school continues to improve. Targets, timescales and clear lines of accountability are clearly identified. Key areas for development are tackled systematically. Statistical analysis has begun to be produced. This will now impact on future planning. Excellent practice needs to be shared through monitoring of teaching. Lesson observations must ensure that there is creativity and differentiation when appropriate. Plenary sessions should include pupils self evaluation of learning. The leadership of the school has enabled and supported the new Religious Coordinator. The new coordinator has made a tremendous impact in the 12 months he has undertaken the role. He has brought fresh insights and

approaches and a gentle dynamism to the role. He listens well to advice, welcomes future challenges and is willing to share his own expertise with others. Excellent documentation is now available to guide and direct all staff in the delivery of the subject. This is provided electronically and in hard copy.

Governors are good in fulfilling their responsibilities. They are effectively helping to shape the direction of the school through setting priorities for improvement, monitoring and evaluating the impact of outcomes. They are well organised and fully involved in evaluating the Catholic life of the school. With the help of and information provided by the Headteacher and coordinator they have a good understanding of practise and achievement in Religious Education. Their relationships with staff are constructive, challenging and supportive. They engage effectively with parents and children.

Leadership at all levels respects difference, values diversity and ensures equal opportunities for all. Prayer, worship and the liturgical life of the school reflects and respects the religious diversity within the school. There are extremely positive relationships at every level within the school. Leaders and managers facilitate pupils' involvement in service to the Parish, local and wider communities, e.g. the work with the St Vincent de Paul society, singing at sheltered accommodation, sending Christmas cards to the housebound etc. Excellent links are fostered through the Parish Priest and Chair of Governors. Parents are consulted regularly and involved in a variety of ways in the life of the school e.g. Sacramental programmes and through the virtual learning platform.

The use of the 'Here I am' programme promotes community cohesion. Children have explored the beliefs and values of other faiths and religions. This helps to promote tolerance and respect for those who think differently. It would be good to invite visitors from other religious background to enhance this work.

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	3
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	2
How effectively leaders and managers promote community cohesion	2