



## ARCHDIOCESE OF LIVERPOOL

### INSPECTION REPORT

### ST. BRIDGET'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

### WARRINGTON

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Inspection date                      Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> February 2012

Inspectors                              Julie Lockett    Maria Eves

Unique Reference Number    111377

Inspection carried out under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005

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Type of School                      Catholic Primary

Age range of pupils              4 - 11

Number on roll                      204

Chair of Governors              Mrs Gloria Prendergast

Head teacher                      Mrs Ceri Dobson

School address                      Capesthorne Road,  
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Date of last inspection            13<sup>th</sup> October 2009

# 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. Bridget's is a smaller than average sized Catholic Primary School serving the parishes of St Stephen's, St Bridget's and St Oliver Plunkett in the Warrington district of the Archdiocese of Liverpool. There are 204 children on roll of whom 77 are baptised Catholic, 59 come from other Christian denominations, and 8 from other faith or religious traditions. Sixty pupils have no religious affiliation. There are 9 teachers of whom 9 teach Religious Education, 7 are Catholic. Five teachers have a suitable qualification in Religious Education. Three members of staff including teaching assistants are studying for the Catholic Certificate in Religious Education. Since the last inspection a new headteacher has been appointed and there are also 2 new Religious Education co-ordinators.

### Key for inspection grades

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

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# Inspection Judgements

**Overall effectiveness:**

**How effective the school is in providing Catholic Education**

1
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**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

1
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## **Main Findings:-**

St Bridget's Catholic Primary School is outstanding overall in providing Catholic Education. St. Bridget's is a safe, secure environment where every member of the school is a vital part and a true reflection of the schools mission and vision. The school is an outstanding example of a loving and caring community. 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 its previous 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 outstanding. 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 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.

Overall the school has outstanding capacity for sustained improvement.

## **What the school needs to do to improve further**

- Improve standards of attainment by:
  - developing whole school tracking to identify children's progress;
  - identify groups of less able and more able pupils in Religious Education.
- Extend learning and progress by:
  - manageable whole school self and peer assessment.

## **How good outcomes are for individuals and groups of pupils**

Pupils' achievements overall in Religious Education is outstanding. On entry to school many children have a limited knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith. Pupils' attainment in Religious Education is good. Pupils make good progress in relation to their starting points and capabilities. Analysis of assessments undertaken provides evidence of pupils generally attaining the appropriate level for their stage of development in each key stage. There is no difference in performance between pupils of different gender. There is very good evidence of formal assessments and moderation of levels, particularly in Attainment Target 1. St Bridget's shows real strength in securing the lower levels, building solid foundations. From this the school can move in developing

assessment tracking to tackle particular groups of children, for example, by challenging the more able.

Pupils are becoming increasingly religiously literate. Their knowledge, understanding and skills are developing appropriate to their 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. The children respond and identify to the relevance of Religious Education through their work in 'Here I Am'. The children at St Bridget's link their learning to experiences at home and with their friends and proudly share this. Underachievement is challenged well through detailed discussion with pupils. Pupils' successfully work in collaboration with others and also enjoy working independently. They share ideas about learning with their peers and adults well. Pupils' behaviour at St Bridget's is outstanding, they are active, involved and show lively enthusiasm to produce their best work. Consistent self and peer assessment of their work would give children further opportunities to extend and improve their outcomes for learning.

Pupils' are outstanding when contributing and benefitting from the Catholic Life of the school. They are fully involved in developing and evaluating the Catholic character of the school by taking on roles of responsibility, for example, the School Council who have supported and been a part of the anti-bullying policy. Pupils have an outstanding sense of belonging to the school community by living out St Bridget's mission, *'We work together, learn together, care together in God's love. May your life in this world be a happy one'*. Pupils are encouraged to take on roles of responsibility in the school and wider community, for example, being a part of the local parish communities by regularly attending Holy day masses, fundraising for local charities such as, St Joseph's Homeless Shelter and St. Rocco's Hospice. Pupils benefit from participation in a yearly residential to Kingswood; this fosters close nurturing bonds between adults and children. Pupils are considerate and caring of others both in school and the wider community. St Bridget's has a good partnership with their link school, Putalashaka, South Africa. Pupils have a good sense of right and wrong and apply this in their personal relationships. St Bridget's has excellent plans in place to nurture children by giving support through the Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning Programme and a pastoral support worker. 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 schools collective worship. There is strong evidence to show pupils are becoming increasingly more confident preparing and leading worship from their earliest years. Pupils are using quality resources that give them ownership of collective worship. This could be further developed by giving children more independence with larger collective worship gatherings for key phases and with smaller groups of children. Pupils proudly create meaningful focus areas, enabling opportunities to give reverence to their worship. Pupils' responses are considered and thoughtful, which reflects their ongoing understanding of Scripture. They appreciate and are open to the Word of God in the Scriptures. They sing joyfully, reflect in silence and join in community prayers appropriately and with confidence. Pupils' knowledge of prayer and liturgy is increasing. They are becoming familiar with a

variety of prayer styles. St Bridget's is inclusive and no-one is expected to act in a manner contrary to their beliefs and all show mutual respect.

<b>How good outcomes are for individuals and groups of pupils</b>	
How well pupils achieve in Religious Education	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• pupils' standards of attainment in Religious Education</li> </ul>	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the quality of pupils' learning and their progress in Religious Education</li> </ul>	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 and make outstanding progress. Teachers take into account pupils' prior learning and ensure differentiated tasks when planning so that the work consolidates, builds and extends their knowledge and understanding. Driver words are displayed and used within lessons. Consistent use of driver words in planning and delivery of lessons will enrich provision. Excellent use is made of time and resources. In lessons observed there were a range of innovative ideas. The use of talking buttons provided the youngest children with motivation to continue and develop throughout their independent work. Information Communication Technology was also used effectively in a plenary session to pinpoint aspects of learning objectives by observing their own recorded role play. Creative lessons showed how children could share and deepen their understanding of Scripture by researching in teams through a 'marketplace' where children bought and sold information. Thorough exploration of the learning objective for older children enabled lengthy discussion of their prior learning and how to move forward from this. The support and dedication shown by teaching assistants throughout the school is outstanding. There is a very good system of support for the teachers and pupils, showing consistency and care for all. Pupils have a stable environment with adults known and familiar to them, providing strong foundations for learning. Children are engaged because of the excellent relationships between pupils and adults. Pupils are sustained and motivated through a variety of strategies. Reward charts are clearly displayed, oral feedback is positive, affirming and stretches pupils to think further about their responses. Achievement and effort are celebrated. Respect and teamwork for both adults and pupils has high priority. Clear boundaries for behaviour enable humour to be used to motivate and engage pupils. There is evidence of some challenging, effective marking of pupils work.

The assessment of pupils work in Religious Education is good. The school has good assessment strategies which provide good information on the achievement of all the pupils. Formal assessment tasks are undertaken in line with Archdiocesan guidance. Teachers are able to identify how well pupils are achieving and tackle underachievement from formal tasks given and informally through discussions, marking and assessing children's work and evaluations on planning. There is a good portfolio of formal assessment tasks. Tasks are moderated very well by the subject leaders. Formal assessments given are appropriate to the stage of each child. The portfolio of formal assessment

evidence shows strength in the lower levels of the attainment targets. The subject leaders inform the leadership team, governors and parents of formal and informal assessment progress the children are making. The subject leaders have action plans in place to formally track pupils throughout the school. This should better inform subject leaders of groups of children that may be underachieving and groups more able that can be challenged.

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. Planning ensures full coverage of the Religious Education programme. Imaginative and creative strategies are deployed to enrich pupils learning. 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 a 'Life Skills' curriculum, written by the school enriches children's experiences, providing skills that will support them as they reach secondary education and have a very positive impact on the curriculum. The appointment of a Pastoral Support Worker, which is funded by the school, provides support to the headteacher with child protection procedures, support to vulnerable families and one to one nurturing for children. 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. A real strength of the school is the inclusive ethos that takes 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 provides opportunities for Staff to develop the skills in planning and leading Collective Worship. Staff plan and lead 'Before You Begin' worship, prior to new 'Here I Am' topics. Staff and pupils are involved for example, in the preparation and writing of class masses. The teachers provide quality resources and opportunities to help children to develop the skills necessary to plan, lead and participate in Collective Worship. 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.

<b>How effective the provision is for Catholic Education</b>	
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 St Bridget's and show an outstanding understanding of and commitment to the Mission of the Church. This is reflected in the Schools own Mission Statement. *'We work together, learn together, care together in God's love. May your life in this world be a happy one'*. All who form part of the school community including staff, parents, Priests, governors and children were involved in the development and 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 evaluates its effectiveness. There are many excellent opportunities provided for the staff and pupils to play an active part in Catholic life and Mission of the school. The Self Evaluation Document provides evidence of the schools monitoring, searching analysis and self challenge. Their analysis provides a basis to celebrate the schools strengths and outlining areas for development. The quality and accuracy of the Self Evaluation Document is outstanding. It has clear vision and purpose and is a reflection of the mission of the school.

The school provides outstanding induction and In-service training to enable staff to further understand the Church's Mission in Education and play their unique part in it. An outstanding example of support and encouragement was recently shown to a newly qualified teacher who took part in a Newly Qualified Teacher conference ran by the Archdiocese of Liverpool. Staff are encouraged and supported to complete the Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies. There are currently three completing the certificate. There are two members of staff who have trained with new Catechesis material, providing support for Sacramental preparations and also ongoing support for parish work.

Leaders and managers are outstanding in the way they use monitoring data to evaluate the schools performance, celebrate, and plan future improvements. Detailed action plans stem from the monitoring of planning and formal assessments. There are very detailed guidance outlines for lesson observations. The subject leaders along with the headteacher implement changes through staff meetings and are proposing further action for assessment training materials. The subject leaders are outstanding in guiding Religious Education. There are two subject leaders, a teacher and teaching assistant. Both have high levels of expertise, working in close partnership with one another. They have good action plans in place and are fully aware of the direction for Religious Education. They regularly attend co-ordinators meetings and update staff regularly. They give each staff member opportunities to attend Archdiocesan Topic days to support their Religious Education teaching. The subject leaders are very organised in their approach to new challenges and ensure they are fully prepared to introduce new initiatives when appropriate to the staff. Good 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. The Chair of Governors comes into school on a weekly basis to support and affirm school staff. The chair has a wealth of experience and has the backing of a very strong and challenging governing body. All policies are ratified by the Governors. They are kept fully informed of the religious life of the school through a regular termly timetable of

events. Religious Education outcomes and action plans are shared with Governors. There are plans in place to update Governors on levels of attainment and assessment. The Governors have ensured a healthy budget for religious education. There is a very strong bond between school and parish and the Chair of Governors ensures the work of the school is known to parishioners. The Governors use their parish links and school links within the community to support the work of the staff, in particular there is a very good sacramental programme supported by the Governors and parish communities. There are a high number of admissions of pupils from other Christian denominations and those with no specified religion. The Governors are proud that parents and carers choose St Bridget's because *'it has the ethos that families crave for'*. The Governors ensure that community cohesion is developed through links with Friends of Peel Hall Park and inviting and welcoming visitors from a link school, Putalashaka in South Africa.

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 positive relationships at every level within the school with a strong emphasis on teamwork. Teamwork is very evident in the partnerships between teachers and teaching assistants, setting high expectations for pupils. Leaders and managers facilitate pupils' involvement with people from different backgrounds. Pupils are partnered with Ebrington Primary, a Church of Ireland school, Northern Ireland. Children communicate regularly by video diaries and letters and are encouraged to share values and reflect on the theme of peace and conflict. Parents are consulted regularly and involved in a variety of ways in the life of the school, for example through a very active Parent, Teacher and Friend Association. Parents are given every opportunity to discuss opinions verbally; the open communication is vital to those who may need reading support. The use of the 'Here I Am' programme promotes community cohesion by supporting the work of CAFOD. St Bridget's has close links with a local, 'Friends of Peel Hall', Parish Council. Pupils were encouraged to become a voice within the community to improve the local area and school grounds. Children have explored the beliefs and values of other faiths and religions, i.e. Hinduism. This helps to promote tolerance and respect for those who think differently.

<b>How effective leaders and managers are in developing the Catholic Life of the School</b>	
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