



ARCHDIOCESE OF LIVERPOOL

INSPECTION REPORT

ST AIDAN'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

HUYTON

Date of Inspection Tuesday 22nd February 2011

Inspectors Mrs. Denise Hegarty Rev. Fr. David Melly

Unique Reference Number 104463

Inspection carried out under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005

Type of School Catholic Primary

Age range of pupils 3 – 11

Number on roll 185 (including Nursery)

Chair of Governors Mrs. C. Clancy

Head teacher Ms. Moira Kenneway

School address Adswood Road
Huyton
Liverpool
L36 7XR

Telephone number 0151 477 8370

E-mail address staidan.de@knowsley.gov.uk

Date of last inspection 25 September 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.

Description of the school

St. Aidan's is a smaller than average sized Catholic Primary school serving the parish of St. Aidan's, Huyton in the Knowsley District of the Archdiocese. The school is situated in area with above average levels of social and economic deprivation. The number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is well above average as is the no of pupils who have an entitlement to free school meals. There are currently 185 children on roll (including nursery) of whom 108 are baptised Catholic and 10 come from other Christian denominations. There are 2 children from another faith tradition. Sixtyfive have no religious affiliation. The vast majority of children are of a White British heritage. Children come in to school with levels of attainment that are below national expectations. Of the 11 teachers at the school, 6 are Catholic and 7 have a qualification in Religious Education. The headteacher was in post at the last inspection, but the Religious Education co-ordinator has only held the position for the last 2 years.

Key for inspection grades

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

© 2011 copyright – Archdiocese of Liverpool. This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

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:-

St. Aidan's Catholic Primary School is outstanding in providing Catholic Education. There is a clear vision for Catholic Education which is embraced by the whole school community and reinforced by the Mission Statement and its aims. The values of love and respect are reflected in the positive relationships that exist within the school community. It is clear that adults within the whole school care deeply about the needs of the pupils and do all they can to enable them to receive an all-round education in a safe, stimulating environment. The energy and enthusiasm of the staff is reflected in the response from pupils towards their work. Since the last inspection the school has securely and systematically built on its previous performance. Self evaluation is rigorous and comprehensive. School leaders know their school extremely well. The self evaluation document gives an accurate account of the priorities for improvement and contributes to the overall school development plan.

Achievement and attainment in Religious Education are outstanding. Children make excellent progress from a low starting point. There is no significant difference in performance between groups of pupils. Outcomes for pupils with additional or special needs are also outstanding. Children are polite, co-operative and caring towards each other. They show utmost respect towards adults in the school and are enthusiastic learners who enjoy coming to school. On the day of inspection, not one child was seen off task throughout the whole day and all appeared to be happy in their work. Across the school, the behaviour of pupils is outstanding.

On the whole, teaching and learning in Religious Education are outstanding and this promotes outstanding progress. Planning for the subject is exemplary. It is clear that teachers know their pupils' capabilities well and match tasks accurately to suit their needs and abilities. They use captivating activities and inspiring resources to motivate the children and keep their interest. This was evident in what the children could remember from previous topics and how the curriculum is so enriched by visitors from the parish etc.

Monitoring and evaluation process are well in place. 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 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. The subject leader undertakes her role in an

outstanding manner and approaches her work with energy and great enthusiasm. Governors are supportive and proactive in their roles.

Overall the school has outstanding capacity for sustained improvement.

What the school needs to do to improve further

- Continue to implement targets set out in the school's self evaluation document. That includes:
 - continuing to develop and embed formal assessment procedures, moderate of levels and track of pupils attainment
 - involving children more in planning and leading Collective Worship

How good outcomes are for individuals and groups of pupils

Pupils' achievements and attainment in Religious Education are outstanding. As they enter school, many children have a limited knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith so they make outstanding progress in relation to their starting points and capabilities. Analyses of assessments undertaken provide evidence of pupils' generally attaining appropriate or higher levels for their age and stage of development. There is no difference in performance between pupils of different gender. Outcomes for pupils with additional or special needs are outstanding. Pupils are becoming increasingly more religiously literate as they become very familiar with the key words from the topics and assimilate them into their vocabulary. 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 becoming more aware of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life. Pupils are encouraged to work independently and collaboratively. Many examples of this were seen on the day of inspection and the children worked particularly well working with partners in paired activities. Pupils' enjoyment of their learning is outstanding as shown by their behaviour, interest and enthusiasm for work. Pupils are actively involved in developing and evaluating the Catholic character of the school by, for example, their involvement in developing the Mission Statement and their eagerness to ensure that it is lived and their work for those in need. Pupils have an outstanding sense of belonging to the school community and value and respect others. They are encouraged to take on roles of responsibility in the school and wider community e.g. as active school councillors. Pupils benefit from participation in away days e.g. their Robin Wood residential where they undertake team building and other activities that raise self esteem. Pupils are considerate and caring of others both in school and in the wider community. Pupils have a good sense of right and wrong and apply this in their personal relationships. Education for personal relationships has fostered positive attitudes in pupils. Pupils take an increasing responsibility for themselves and their actions. They show a readiness to embrace and celebrate their lived experiences.

Pupils respond to and participate well in the school's Collective Worship. They act with reverence and are keen to participate in a variety of gatherings. They sing joyfully and with actions, reflect in silence and join in community prayers

appropriately and with confidence. No-one is expected to act in a manner that is contrary to their beliefs and all show mutual respect. Pupils' knowledge of prayer and liturgy is increasing. They are being encouraged to lead others in informal prayer and should now be helped to prepare and lead worship themselves. The school has identified this as an area for development. Pupils 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	2

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 tasks are differentiated when planning so that the work consolidates, builds on and extends knowledge and understanding. Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to work independently and collaboratively. Outstanding use is made of time and resources e.g. through the use of their interactive whiteboards, deployment of additional adults and the use of God's Story and Church's Story. Teachers, teaching assistants and other adults use a variety of strategies and exciting and captivating tasks to inspire and motivate pupils e.g. through affirmation, role play, talking partners etc. Pupils are informed of their progress and of the next steps to take in their learning. They are given opportunities to discuss their work and progress.

The assessment of pupils' work in Religious Education is outstanding. The school uses outstanding assessment strategies which provide accurate information on the achievement of all the pupils. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the levels of attainment in Religious Education enable them to quickly identify how well pupils are achieving and tackle any underachievement. They know their pupils extremely well; have high expectations and set appropriate targets. Work is marked with positive comments and written guidance is often given to the children for the next steps to take in their learning. Pupils are regularly affirmed during lessons, are told how well they are doing and are given guidance as to what they need to do to improve further. Information gleaned from assessments is used very effectively to inform planning. This is outstanding practice and has contributed to a significant rise in standards since the last inspection. Teachers consistently enable pupils to evaluate their own work and they, in turn, evaluate their own teaching. Formal assessment tasks are undertaken in line with Archdiocesan guidance. Assessment information is collated by the subject leader and shared

with the leadership team, governors and with parents at open evenings and in reports. Achievement and effort are celebrated.

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 mixed aged 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. Exemplary planning ensures full coverage of the Religious Education programme in ways that meet the varying learning styles of the pupils. Imaginative and well-planned strategies are deployed to enrich pupils' learning. Curriculum outlines are provided for parents and further termly information given to them about the topics being covered. To reinforce and enhance work covered in school, children are encouraged to talk with their parents about it at home as part of their 'talking homework'. This also informs parents about their child's learning experiences. The *'Wednesday Word'* is provided for families to read and discuss at home. The school implements new curriculum developments, as appropriate, with guidance from the subject co-ordinator. Enrichment activities, such as the many school clubs which cater for a huge range of interests and abilities, have a positive impact on the curriculum. The Religious Education curriculum provides outstanding opportunities for pupils' spiritual and moral development.

The Collective Worship provided reflects the Catholic character of the school very well and 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 has produced a prayer book of suitable prayers to use with each age level. Outstanding examples of children's spontaneous prayer were experienced on the day of inspection. The school provides opportunities for staff members to develop their skills in planning and leading Collective Worship and they have also joined with another parish school to do this. The teachers are beginning to provide the necessary resources and opportunities to help children to develop the skills necessary to plan and lead Collective Worship. Outstanding opportunities are provided for parents, carers the local and wider Faith communities to participate in a variety of celebrations throughout 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	1
The extent to which the Religious Education curriculum meets pupils' needs	1
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 an outstanding understanding of and commitment to the Mission of the Church. This is reflected in the Schools' own Mission Statement. All who form part of the school community including parents, the Parish Priest, governors and children were involved in the review and development of this Mission Statement. It is well known by all and could be recited even by the group of pupils who were interviewed from Year 2 and knew what it said and what it meant. The pupils were justly proud of the contribution they made to its development. The aims and practical objectives which emanate from the statement now direct and guide every aspect of school life and are a useful tool by which the school can evaluate its effectiveness in future. Outstanding opportunities are provided for the staff and pupils to play an active part in Catholic life and Mission of the school e.g. their obvious love and care for all, their involvement in Collective Worship and their efforts to support the less advantaged. The Self Evaluation Document provides evidence of the schools monitoring, searching analysis and self-challenge. Their evaluation provides a basis to celebrate the schools strengths and outline any areas for development. It is very accurate and comprehensive, though modest in its evaluations. It is obviously having a great impact on the Catholic life of the school. The school provides outstanding induction and in-service training to enable all staff members to further understand the Church's Mission in Education and to play their own unique part in it. Members of staff are regularly given opportunities for their continuing professional development. A range of opportunities for Spiritual and Moral developments are provided for staff and pupils. Staff members meet regularly with the staff of St Joseph's school where their spiritual development is a priority.

Leaders and managers are outstanding in the way they use monitoring data to evaluate the schools performance, celebrate, and plan future improvements. The quality of planning is absolutely outstanding. This, together with the findings from monitoring, has an outstanding impact on the rise in standards. Teaching and learning are monitored very well. Teachers are given oral and written feedback and support is put in place if necessary.

The subject leader leads and manages in an outstanding manner. She shows deep commitment and dedication to the subject. Excellent, up to date documentation guides and directs all staff in their delivery of the subject. She attends Archdiocesan briefings, disseminates information and provides great support to staff individually, at morning briefings and whole staff meetings.

Governors are outstanding in fulfilling their responsibilities. They have effectively helped to shape the direction of the school through setting challenging targets and providing support to all. They are regular visitors and are fully involved in the life of the school. The governors interviewed spoke with pride about the schools' improvements in attitude, behaviour and standards since the last inspection.

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. Parents, carers and members of the parish and local community value and support the school very well. There are strong links with outside agencies and other partners to enable the school to support the development of the whole child. Leaders and managers facilitate pupils' involvement in service to the local Faith and religious communities e.g. working with local schools involved in many projects in Knowsley looking at the different cultures in the area, barriers to learning and the Bluebell Project. The pupils have even assisted the police to discourage people using mobile phones while driving. Dialogue and collaboration is encouraged with people who hold different beliefs and values e.g. African and Indian dancers. Parents are consulted regularly and are involved in a variety of ways in the life of the school e.g. parents are welcomed into school and supported to attend events, workshops and activities in ways they feel comfortable. The use of the '*Here I am*' programme promotes community cohesion in an outstanding manner. Children have explored the beliefs and values of other faiths and religions. This helps to promote tolerance and respect for those who think differently. Links with the parish are very strong and the school works closely with families to support their Catholic Faith.

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