



ARCHDIOCESE OF LIVERPOOL

INSPECTION REPORT

TWELVE APOSTLES CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

LEIGH

Tuesday 22 May 2007

Inspectors Mrs. Marie Connolly Mrs. R. Purcell

URN 106503

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	216
Chair of governors	Mr. E. Taylor
School address	Nel Pan Lane, Leigh , Lancashire, WN7 5JS.
Telephone number	01942 674312
E-mail address	enquiries @admin.twelveapostles.wigan.sch.uk
Date of last inspection	18 June 2002
Head teacher	Mr. M. Farrimond

Introduction

This inspection was carried out under Section 48 of the Education Act 2006.

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

Twelve Apostles is a one-form entry Catholic Primary School. It serves an area of some significant social and economic hardship. Two thirds of the learners are drawn from the Pastoral Area of St. Edmund Arrowsmith. There are currently 216 children on roll of whom 144 are baptised Catholics. There are 71 children attending this school from other Christian denominations and 1 from another faith tradition. The majority of children come from a white British background. Attainment on entry overall is below that expected. There are 8 teachers teaching Religious Education, all are Catholic. Only 2 have a Religious Education qualification.

Key for inspection grades

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

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Overall effectiveness of the school

Twelve Apostles is an outstanding Catholic school. It is an inclusive community, underpinned by an exceptionally strong Catholic ethos, which establishes a positive climate for work. The Mission Statement clearly drives every aspect of school life. This is a school where the uniqueness of every child is celebrated. The gospel values of love, care and mutual respect very evidently underpin every aspect of school life. Excellent relationships exist at every level. All are made welcome and made to feel that they matter. The school works closely with home, the parish, pastoral area and the wider community. Standards are outstanding. Learners achieve well consistently and make outstanding progress throughout the school. Overall, teaching is outstanding. Assessment provides clear guidance on learning. The curriculum is well planned. Learners' behaviour is outstanding. Collective Worship is good. The provision for learners' spiritual and moral development is outstanding. Creative and imaginative strategies have been employed to enable this to happen through the curriculum and informally. Both curriculum Religious Education and Collective Worship make a significant contribution to this development. The headteacher and coordinator who has only been in place since September are exceptional in the manner in which they direct and guide the school. They understand the outstanding nature of the school but are realistic in appreciating the hard work and effort that enables this to be maintained and developed further.

Grade: 1

Improvement since the last inspection

Following the last Section 48 Inspection in June 2002 effective steps have been taken to address all the previous areas for development. The development of the school council has been tremendously successful as it provides an additional voice for the children. Planning has developed. Monitoring and assessment procedures have also been introduced. These will continue to develop and further raise standards. Portfolios of work, display and photographic evidence bears witness to the outstanding Catholic life and work of this school community.

Grade: 1

Capacity to improve

The school's self-evaluation is excellent. The judgements made in this document broadly match the judgements made in this report. The updating of the school's self-evaluation is undertaken regularly and informs the school improvement plan. The minor areas for development identified in this report should now be included. The leadership has a clear understanding of what needs to be developed, and openness to change. There is outstanding capacity for further improvement as shown by the shared commitment to Religious Education and related whole school issues by all.

Grade: 1

What the school should do to improve further

- Monitoring of teaching through class observation to enable consistency throughout the school and enable elements of outstanding practice to be shared;
- Update and discard older less appropriate resources to enhance the school environment and support the delivery of Religious Education;
- Provide in-service to nurture staff spiritual development.

Achievement and standards

Learners' attainment on entry to the school is below that expected. Learners make outstanding progress in the school. Standards in Religious Education overall are outstanding, with the majority of learners meeting the learning objectives and outcomes set, according to their age and stage of development. There is no significant difference in performance by learners of different gender. Learners with special needs make very good progress in Religious Education with the help provided by excellent teaching assistants and some differentiation of tasks to meet their needs. This needs developing further across the school. The school checks on the progress made by all through assessment and some positive but challenging marking. In all key stages learners show confidence in discussion and feedback, showing a real knowledge and understanding of the subject and its relevance in their lives. All children show joy, enthusiasm and excitement in their work. Standards will continue to rise and further progress be made by the ongoing use of the information gathered through the monitoring of planning, teaching and learning and scrutiny of the formal assessments made each term.

Catholic beliefs and values are at the heart of learners' spiritual and moral development. Children have a very good understanding of the life and teaching of Jesus. Many wonderful strategies are used to enable them apply this teaching to their own lives and experiences. The work undertaken on *Other Faiths* has helped the children understand how others make sense of the world in which we live. New ways of making links with the parish are being explored since the appointment of the parish priest in the autumn. The behaviour of children throughout the school is outstanding. Children have an excellent sense of right and wrong. The school provides outstanding opportunities for their spiritual and moral development. Displays and photographs provide evidence of this excellent practice. The children make an outstanding contribution to the school and wider community. Their parents are understandably proud of them and the school.

Grade: 1

Quality of Provision for Religious Education

Teaching and learning

Overall, the quality of provision for Religious Education is outstanding. The learning needs of all children are addressed through the use of some creative and imaginative teaching and learning strategies, some differentiation of tasks and by very committed teaching assistants. Sharing outstanding practice through the monitoring process enabling teachers to shadow where this has been identified will enable the ongoing development of all. Enthusiastic teaching helps learners engage with the material presented and thoroughly enjoy their lessons. Some excellent use is being made of information communications technology. This is strength of the school. Well-prepared resources significantly enhanced the delivery of lessons. Teachers make use of very good teaching assistants to support those learners with additional learning needs.

The quality of planning is very good. The majority of lessons observed had good pace and timing, which maintained the interest and concentration of learners and kept them on task and focussed. Work is provided that enables learners to work independently and collaboratively. Most teachers ensure that learners understand the purpose of the lesson by sharing the learning objective. This is then re-visited during the plenary session. Learners' religious literacy is being enhanced by use of the key words for each topic. Assessment is rigorous. It would be good for teachers to select pieces of children's own work for assessment purposes that show clearly which targets have been met to include in school portfolios of work.

Parents and carers are enabled to become involved in their children's Religious Education by the provision of regular newsletters and curriculum meetings informing them of what is to be covered. They are very happy with all that the school does to support their children's Religious Education.

Grade: 1

Curriculum

The Religious Education curriculum is outstanding in meeting the needs and interests of learners. 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 diocesan requirements. Of the total curriculum time 10% is allocated to Religious Education. This fulfils the requirements of the Bishops of England and Wales. The leadership of the school ensures suitable positioning of Religious Education on timetables. Effective links are made with home and the parish. The parish priest has supported the delivery of the curriculum e.g. re-enacting a Baptism. Overall the Religious Education curriculum makes an outstanding contribution to learners' spiritual and moral development. The overwhelming enthusiasm of teachers in caring for the

children and each other is a powerful example to the children of 'living faith'. They make the curriculum challenging and relevant.

Grade: 1

Leadership and Management

Religious Education

Leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners in Religious Education are outstanding. There is a clear vision for the subject within the mission of the school with a focus on raising standards even further. The coordinator supported by the headteacher provides effective and efficient support to staff. She is outstanding in the area of school religious leadership, showing enthusiasm, flair and commitment since her appointment to this post in the autumn. Excellent documentation guides and directs all staff in their delivery of the subject. Coordinators' meetings have been attended and information is disseminated to all staff during staff meetings or in-service time. Regular in-service is provided for all staff in Religious Education. This is a priority of the school. Performance in Religious Education is currently monitored through scrutiny of planning, workbooks and assessments. The school has identified the need to monitor lessons. This will enable some excellent practice to be shared and further raise standards. Self-assessment is undertaken for each topic by staff and learners. Twelve Apostles is socially inclusive by providing equality of access and of opportunity for all learners to make progress. Of the 8 staff teaching Religious Education only 2 have a suitable qualification. The leadership needs to encourage those without a qualification to undertake the *Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies*. Priorities for the subject are identified and targets set. Funding for Religious Education is good. Older less effective resources need to be discarded. Some good resources have been purchased and are deployed to achieve high standards. The provision of human resources has been the school's priority and all have clearly benefited by this. This should continue. The school is making some very good use of interactive white boards. Greater use of the CD Rom for *The Church's Story* and *God's Story* will further enhance the delivery of Religious Education. There are some good displays in classrooms and excellent use is made of photographic evidence, which is annotated in portfolios. The headteacher keeps the governors informed on matters relating to Religious Education. Governors discharge their responsibilities effectively, and are most supportive in the life and work of the school.

Grade: 1

Catholic Life of the School

The leadership and management in developing the Catholic life of the school through the Mission Statement are outstanding. Twelve Apostles is a place in which the gospel spirit of love, consideration, care and respect permeates every aspect of its life and work. It is a place that clearly follows 'Jesus' path of love'. Relationships at every level are excellent. An atmosphere of joy and happiness permeates the school. The school has a clear sense of its mission

in reaching out to those less fortunate than itself. Learners support a variety of local, national and international charities both by becoming better informed and by raising funds. The Mission Statement has recently been reviewed and informs all policies and documents. Its aims direct and guide every aspect of school life. The school council started the review of the Mission Statement and have discussed its implications for them. The practical ways in which the school delivers the Mission Statement's aims should be made clear for the whole school community. This will serve to ensure ownership and also affirm the enormous contribution made by all.

Grade: 1

Collective Worship

The quality of Collective Worship is good. The school provides Collective Worship in a variety of ways for each child daily, in class and whole school gatherings. Throughout the year Collective Worship provides a variety of experiences for learners. This fulfils government and Archdiocesan guidance. A policy that states the nature and purpose of Collective Worship has been produced. Guidelines that support the planning and delivery of Collective Worship wherever and whenever it takes place have also been produced and included in this policy. Collective Worship stimulates reflection on spiritual and moral issues and on personal beliefs. The school monitors the planning and delivery of Collective Worship to enable good practice to be shared.

A focus for worship is provided in each classroom using suitable religious objects and artefacts. This helps children reflect more readily on the concept being covered. Learners are encouraged to participate in a meaningful manner both in class and larger gatherings. This enriches their experience. Teachers need to ensure the time given to Collective Worship is appropriate to children's age and stage of development. Creativity is used to support learners' ongoing spiritual and moral development during acts of Collective Worship e.g. use of different types of prayer, music and symbol. The school makes use of the garden area created outside for class acts of worship when the weather permits. Parents, governors and friends of the school community are invited to a variety of assemblies and services. This is greatly appreciated.

Grade: 2