



ARCHDIOCESE OF LIVERPOOL

INSPECTION REPORT

SAINT MARY'S CATHOLIC JUNIOR SCHOOL

NEWTON-LE-WILLOWS

Inspection Date Tuesday 22 February 2011
Inspectors Mrs. P. Peel Mrs. M. Buckley
Unique Reference Number 104816
Inspection carried out under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005

Type of School Catholic Junior School

Age range of pupils 7 - 11

Number on roll 239

Chair of Governors Mr. John O'Connell

Head teacher Mr. Gerry Southworth

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Date of last inspection 13 March 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. Mary's is an average sized Catholic Junior School situated in Newton-le-Willows and serves three local parishes in a socially mixed residential area. There are 239 number of children on roll of whom 212 are baptised Catholic and 27 come from other Christian denominations,. There are 10 teachers of whom 9 teach religious education 6 are Catholic. Nine teachers have a suitable qualification in Religious Education. Since the last inspection a new Headteacher and Deputy have been appointed.

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:-

The school is good with many outstanding features 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 maintained and built on previous performance. Self evaluation is rigorous and accurate. 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 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. Any underperformance is challenged.

Overall the school has good capacity for sustained improvement.

What the school needs to do to improve further

- Further develop the work being done in assessment, monitoring and tracking of children's progress by:
 - making more use of information gleaned through analysis of assessment data to inform future planning;
 - improving the consistency and rigour of moderation across year groups.
- . Raise the standards of attainment in Religious Education further by:
 - ensuring that there is sufficient progression and challenge across year groups;
 - making greater use of driver words in 'next steps' when marking to inform pupils learning.

How good outcomes are for individuals and groups of pupils

Pupils' achievement in Religious Education is good. Pupils' attainment in Religious Education is good. Pupils make outstanding progress in relation to their starting points and capabilities. Analysis of assessments undertaken provides evidence of pupils' generally attaining the appropriate level 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 very good. Pupils are becoming increasingly more religiously 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 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 involvement in reviewing the Mission Statement and living out its aims of 'loving, caring and forgiving' each other. 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 by becoming school and eco councillors, ICT monitors and play leaders. Pupils benefit from attending the Rosary Club which the Legion of Mary runs at lunchtime on a monthly basis. Personal relationships in school are excellent and the effective use of the SEAL materials has fostered positive attitudes in pupils. Vulnerable children have benefitted from participation in the Rainbows programme. Pupils are considerate and caring of others both in school and the wider community. This is evident in their charitable fundraising events in support of CAFOD, Operation Christmas Child, Children in Need and the Haiti Earthquake Appeals. 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 very good in responding to and participating in the schools Collective Worship. The older pupils are becoming increasingly more confident preparing and leading worship and this needs to be further developed across the whole school community. They act with reverence and are keen to participate in a variety of gatherings. They sing joyfully, 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	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pupils' standards of attainment in Religious Education 	2
<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 very good 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. Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to work independently

and collaboratively. Very good use is made of time and resources e.g. God's Story, Church's Story, Bibles, Information Technology, Audio files and CD ROMs etc. Teacher's and others use a variety of strategies visual, auditory and kinaesthetic to sustain and motivate pupils. Pupils are informed of their progress and how to improve both orally and through marking but this could be improved further by wider usage of driver words linked to outcomes to support pupils' next steps.

The assessment of pupils work in Religious Education is good. The school has made a good start in implementing assessment strategies which provide information on the achievement of all the pupils but this needs further development to ensure the accuracy and rigour of the process is transferred through evaluation into future planning and more differentiated tasks. Teachers enable pupils to evaluate their own work through the use of self assessment; this can be further enhanced through the use of a variety of methods. 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 parents. The school celebrates effort and achievement by awarding house points, hosting Rainbow's 'Celebrate Me' days and giving out pupil of the week awards. Pupils are affirmed, know how well they are doing but more development is needed to ensure pupils know what they need to do to improve further.

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. A great strength of the school is in providing a rich and varied curriculum where pupils' artwork is used extensively to creatively express what they have learnt in Religious Education. The school environment is vibrant with displays of work produced for the current Religious topics including memory boxes, book marks, book stands, shining stars, outstanding memory tree, wonder wall and a happiness train. Pupils' commented 'we love Religious Education because teachers make it creative and fun'. 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 cricket, football, cookery and fitness clubs have a positive impact on the curriculum. The craft club have recently created a wall hanging covered with Religious symbols which is later going to be used as an altar cloth in school. The Religious Education curriculum provides good opportunities for pupils' spiritual and moral development.

The Collective Worship provided is outstanding in reflecting the Catholic character of the school. 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. Opportunities are

provided for parents, carers and the local and wider Faith communities to participate in a variety of celebrations of the 'Here I Am' programme. Father Fedigan is a frequent visitor to the school and celebrates regular class and family Masses throughout the Church's liturgical year.

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	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 Schools own new Mission Statement "a family where love and happiness inspire all!" All who form part of the school community including parents, parish priest, 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 evaluate its effectiveness. The new child friendly motto and logo 'Shine like the Stars' enables it to be known and owned by all. Excellent opportunities are provided for the staff and pupils to play an active part in Catholic life and Mission of the Church. Parents, the Parish Priest and governors are fulsome in their praise of the schools commitment to its Catholic Mission and ethos. The Self Evaluation Document provides evidence of the schools monitoring, analysis and self challenge. Their analysis provides a basis to celebrate the schools strengths and outlining areas for development. A range of opportunities for Spiritual and Moral developments are provided for staff through attendance at school based in-service on the Mission Statement, Collective Worship, CCRS and Topic Days at LACE. 'Before you begin' reflections are provided for staff at the start of each new topic.

Leaders and managers are good in the way they use monitoring data to evaluate the schools performance, celebrate, and plan future improvements. There is very good evidence of monitoring however establishing a more rigorous and consistent approach to moderating pupils' work across the year groups will ensure greater impact on future planning of teaching and learning. The subject leader is very good in guiding Religious Education. She shows a real commitment and enthusiasm for the subject and introduces new initiatives when appropriate. Excellent documentation guides and directs all staff in the delivery of the subject. This is updated as necessary. The school, led by the subject leader, has made very good use of reflective focal points to stimulate pupils' interest in Religious Education.

Governors are good in fulfilling their responsibilities. They have helped to shape the direction of the school and they discharge their duties effectively. With the help of and information provided by the Headteacher they have a good understanding of practise in Religious Education. Their relationships with staff

are constructive and supportive. The Chair of Governors and Link Governor with responsibility for Religious Education are both frequent visitors to the school. Their support and input, and that of other Governors are valued and appreciated.

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 religious diversity. There are positive relationships at every level within the school. Leaders and managers facilitate pupils' involvement in service to the local Faith and religious communities such as visits to the Metropolitan and Anglican Cathedrals, the immediate neighbourhood served by the school in shared collaboration with District Church of England Primary School and the wider community. Parents are consulted regularly and involved in a variety of ways in the life of the school such as Sex and Relationship talks, Induction evenings and Sacramental preparation. There is a very active Parent, Teacher and Friends Association who raise funds for a variety of purposes through the organisation of an annual Sports and Gala Day. Their valuable contributions help to fund the garden and bulb planting, provide medals and Christmas and Year 6 leavers gifts. The use of the 'Here I am' programme promotes community cohesion. Pupils have explored the beliefs and values of other faiths and religions including Judaism, Hinduism and Sikhism. This helps to promote tolerance and respect for those who think differently.

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	2
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	1