



## ARCHDIOCESE OF LIVERPOOL

### INSPECTION REPORT

## ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

### RAINHILL

---

Tuesday 25 September 2007

Inspectors      Rev. D. Melly   Mrs. P. Cooney   Miss. J. Coughlan

URN              104815

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	332
Chair of governors	Dr. J. O'Donnell
School address	School Lane, Rainhill, Prescot, L35 6NN.
Telephone number	01744 678550
Fax number	01744 678554
E-mail address	edwardsm@sthelens.org.uk
Date of last inspection	13 November 2001
Headteacher	Mr. M. Edwards

## 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. Bartholomew's School is a larger than average sized primary school. It is situated in Rainhill and mainly serves the parish of St. Bartholomew though a number of pupils are from surrounding parishes. It is part of the St. Helens Local Authority. The catchment area is very good with families that are very supportive of the work of the school. There are 332 learners on role of whom 316 are baptised Catholics, 11 come from other Christian denominations, 5 are from an *Other Faith* tradition. The number of learners eligible for free school meals is below average as is the number with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. There are 16 members of staff teaching Religious Education 15 of who are Catholic. Twelve of the teachers teaching Religious Education have a Religious Education qualification and a further 2 are in the process of obtaining the *Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies* and a further two have just begun.

## Key for inspection grades

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

---

© 2007 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.

## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

St. Bartholomew's is an outstanding Catholic school. It is a lively, caring, supportive community. A strong Catholic ethos is evident in the positive climate which has been created for work and play; learning is fun there. Outstanding relationships have been established by working closely with home, parish and the local and global community. All are obviously valued, respected, cared for and affirmed. Standards are outstanding overall. Learners achieve well and make outstanding progress. Teaching is outstanding overall. Assessment is in place and is well developed. The curriculum planning is very good and thorough and results in a very effective delivery of the *Here I Am* programme. Learners' behaviour is outstanding. The Religious Education programme, Collective Worship and the Catholic life of the school make an outstanding contribution to the learners' spiritual and moral development. The school is outstanding in promoting community cohesion. The headteacher, and senior management team, have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and a vision of how to meet development needs.

**Grade: 1**

### **Improvement since the last inspection**

Following the last Section 23 Inspection in November 2001 the school has taken effective steps to celebrate other faiths and to purchase resources to support this work. Termly newsletters are now sent to parents with information about Religious Education topics and suggestions for involvement, global issues of fair trade have been introduced with the help of the Parish CAFOD Group and the involvement of CAFOD representatives; there are interactive white boards in all classes now.

**Grade: 1**

### **Capacity to improve**

The school's self-evaluation is accurate and comprehensive though self-effacing. The priorities for both the improvement of Religious Education and the Catholic life of the school stem from the self-evaluation and the school development plan. The leadership has a clear understanding of what needs to be developed and is committed to improvement. There is outstanding capacity and eagerness for further improvement.

**Grade: 1**

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

- Continue to implement the targets set out in the school self-evaluation document and development plan.

## **Achievement and standards**

Learners' attainment on entry to the school is that expected of children of their age. Learners make excellent progress in the school and by Year 2, not to mention Year 6, exceed the expectations of the *Here I Am* programme. Standards in Religious Education overall are outstanding. There are no significant differences in performance by learners of different gender or ethnic background. Learners with special needs make very good progress in Religious Education with the provision of differing tasks and the help provided by the teachers and learning support assistants. The school checks on the progress made by all through assessment. Learners' work is always marked with positive comments that affirm and challenge and learners appreciate how they might further improve. Learners are very confident and articulate in discussion. They ask good questions which show good knowledge and understanding of Religious Education. Learners are given opportunities to record their knowledge and understanding and express their own thoughts and feelings in a variety of styles. The structured monitoring processes and procedures, which are in place, support the high quality teaching and learning so evident in the school.

Catholic beliefs and values are at the heart of learners' spiritual development. The school celebrates achievements in lessons and assemblies. Children throughout the school are confident, enthusiastic and enjoy work. They have a good understanding of the life and teaching of Jesus and his Church and are able to apply this to their own lives and experiences. Learners' behaviour is outstanding. They have a very good sense of right and wrong. The Gospel values of love, respect, honesty, truth, justice and forgiveness underpin the provision for learners' moral development enabling learners to make an outstanding contribution to the school community. Teachers and learners show genuine care and concern and respect for each other.

**Grade: 1**

## **Quality of Provision for Religious Education**

### **Teaching and learning**

The quality of provision for Religious Education is outstanding. Teaching is outstanding overall. Teachers are secure in their knowledge and understanding of the programme and this is reflected in their thorough planning and delivery of the topics. This lends confidence to their teaching styles and helps engage the learners to work well independently and collaboratively even in the reception class where the children are just beginning their first full week in the school. Music and lighted candles supported reflective learning in some classes. Children's behaviour is outstanding in all lessons where relationships are also outstanding. Some teachers are extremely enthusiastic and energetic and show wonderful creativity and imagination in lessons. This challenges the learners and enables them to respond enthusiastically. All learners are obviously valued in

class. They are respected and shown great affirmation. Some extraordinary use was made of information communication technology. The tasks set are challenging and some are also fun. Because of this approach the children are able to learn, progress and have fun at the same time. There is very good structure and pace in lessons, which helps learners stay focussed. Differing, appropriate tasks, suited to the needs of the learners, are provided. Monitoring of teaching and learning through observation of planning, lessons and learners' workbooks has been put in place. There are plans to develop this very effective process. This programme of monitoring will ensure that the outstanding and good practice observed is shared, that there is consistency in application throughout the school, and standards will be raised further. Very effective use is made of learning assistants throughout lessons. The learning objective is shared at the beginning of all the lessons and sometimes is revisited at the end. This helps maintain the sharp focus of the lesson. Learners' work is regularly assessed and records are effectively kept in portfolios.

Parents and carers are enabled to become involved in their children's Religious Education in a variety of ways. Newsletters are sent to the homes regularly with an outline of the religious topics to be covered and suggestions for involvement. Parents are also invited to attend school assemblies. The leadership team is keen not only to reach out to the homes and the parish but also to the wider community in order that they might bring the love of God to all. The school also reports on progress in Religious Education.

**Grade: 1**

## **Curriculum**

The school is effective in meeting the Religious Education curriculum needs and interests of learners. Through using the *Here I Am* programme recommended by the Archdiocese the school 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. Extremely strong links are made with home, parish and the local and global community. The Religious Education curriculum makes an outstanding impact on learners' spiritual and moral development.

**Grade: 1**

## **Leadership and Management**

### **Religious Education**

The leadership and management in Religious Education are outstanding. There is a clear vision for the subject within the mission of the school, which is

shared by all and is reflected in the very positive relationships throughout the school. The headteacher, leadership team and the Religious Education coordinator are very committed. They are making an excellent contribution in leading and supporting staff and have a clear vision for the further development of the school. The Religious Education coordinator shows enthusiasm for her role, is very committed to raising standards and works tirelessly. An excellent handbook guides and directs all staff in their delivery of Religious Education. Monitoring through scrutiny of planning, workbooks, teaching and learning is in place. A process of assessment is also in place and is very effective. Twelve of the sixteen staff teaching Religious Education has a suitable qualification, two are in the process of obtaining the *Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies* and two have just begun. Teaching assistants are effectively deployed. The subject leader attends coordinators' meetings and information is disseminated to all staff during staff meetings or in-service time. Priorities for the subject are clearly identified and targets set. Religious Education is well funded and money has obviously been well spent. The headteacher and Religious Education coordinator keep governors informed on matters relating to Religious Education. Governors discharge their responsibilities most effectively. They are very involved in the life of the school and are not only supportive but also challenging.

**Grade: 1**

### **Catholic Life of the School**

There is outstanding leadership and management in developing the Catholic life of the school through the Mission Statement, which is well known by all. St. Bartholomew's is a school in which the Gospel spirit of love and respect permeates every aspect of its life and work. The learners are valued and respected in an outstanding manner as a result they are confident and have high self-esteem. An excellent Mission Statement, which expresses the philosophy of education in this Catholic school, is in place. Aims, flowing from the Mission Statement, are also in place. All who form the school community were involved in the development of the Mission Statement, which is at the heart of all that is done in the school. Aims and objectives, showing how these aims are achieved, are in place.

**Grade: 1**

### **Collective Worship**

The quality of Collective Worship overall is outstanding. The school provides Collective Worship in a variety of ways for each child daily, in class, phase or whole school gatherings. This fulfils government and Archdiocesan guidance. An outstanding policy and guidelines to support the planning, delivery and nurturing of Collective Worship is in place. Acts of worship are very creative and enthusiastically led especially by the pupils who are extremely confident, clear and articulate. Collective Worship included quiet music to create an atmosphere, a lighted candle, focal points, prayer both formal and informal, and some time for personal reflection which was very well used. Scripture

and story was also extremely well used. Hymns were sung enthusiastically. There was great use of information communication technology. The parish priest and all learners and staff present responded enthusiastically. Focus tables and displays in each classroom and throughout the school are relevant to the current topic and enhance delivery of the curriculum and Collective Worship. Collective Worship makes an outstanding contribution to the spiritual and moral development of the children.

**Grade: 1**

## **Community Cohesion**

The school is outstanding in promoting community cohesion. There is a shared vision and commitment to serve the common good. Leadership at all levels respects difference, values diversity and ensures equal opportunities for all. Parents and carers are very involved in decision-making and in the life of the school. Collective Worship celebrates, reflects and respects the diversity of belief within the school. The use of the Religious Education programme, *Here I Am*, supports community cohesion. Learners have explored the beliefs and values of Judaism, Sikhism and Islam. All show a concern for the well being of those less fortunate than themselves in their support of St. Jacob's Campalung Romania, Orphans in Malawi, Nugent Care, CAFOD and the work of the Seedlings Trust in South Africa.

**Grade: 1**