



## ARCHDIOCESE OF LIVERPOOL

INSPECTION REPORT

ST LUKE' S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

WHISTON

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Tuesday 9 June 2009

Inspectors Ms Nora Finnegan Mrs Mary Kearsley

URN 104460

Inspection carried out under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005

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Type of School	Catholic Primary
Age range of pupils	3 -11
Number on roll	480
Chair of Governors	Mr Vincent Cullen
School address	Shaw Lane, Prescot, Merseyside. L35 5AT
Telephone number	0151 477 8580
E-mail address	stluke@knowsley.gov.uk
Date of last inspection	28 <sup>th</sup> February 2006
Headteacher	Mrs Maria Clarke

## 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 Luke's is an average sized Catholic Primary School situated in Whiston near Prescot an area of socio-economic disadvantage. It serves the local parish of St Luke the Evangelist. The proportion of children eligible for free school meals is above average as is the percentage of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Although most children are White British, around a quarter are from a wide range of other cultural and ethnic heritages. The proportion of pupils who are at an early stage of learning English is larger than average. More pupils join or leave the school during the course of the primary years than in most other schools.

Children enter the school with skills that are below average for their age. There are 177 children on roll of whom 131 are baptised Catholics and 35 come from other Christian denominations. Eleven children are from other Faith traditions. There are 11 members of staff, 9 of whom are Catholic. Six of the 10 teachers who teach Religious Education have a Religious Education qualification and 3 teachers are currently undertaking the Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies. A new Religious Education Coordinator has been in post since last September.

## 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**

St Luke's is an outstanding Catholic Primary school which operates very successfully in challenging circumstances. It is very obviously a caring Christian community which "follows in the footsteps of Jesus" as they "live, love and learn together". This encourages children and staff to give of their best and establishes a very positive climate for work. Living the values of Jesus, especially mutual respect, are at the heart of this community. Positive relationships have been established by working in genuine partnership with home, parish and the local community. Standards are outstanding. Learners achieve well and make outstanding progress.

Teaching and learning are outstanding. Assessment is good and has begun to provide clear guidance on learning. Through its use of creative teaching and learning strategies the school is outstanding in meeting the Religious Education curriculum needs and interests of all learners. Children's behaviour is outstanding. They are also enabled to make an outstanding contribution to the school community. The new Religious Education subject leader provides outstanding leadership and support to staff.

The leadership and management of the school are outstanding in developing the Catholic life of the school through the Mission Statement. This is evident through the headteacher's understanding of the mission of a Catholic school. The senior leadership are aware of the school's strengths and have a clear vision of how to meet developmental needs. The commitment of the governors enables them to discharge their responsibilities in an outstanding manner. The quality of Collective Worship is outstanding. The provision for learners' spiritual and moral development is outstanding. Both curriculum Religious Education and Collective Worship make an outstanding contribution to this. The school is outstanding in promoting community cohesion. This is evident by the strong links fostered with the parish and both the local and wider community.

**Grade: 1**

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

The school had three key issues from its last Section 48 Inspection in February 2006. Since then, monitoring of Religious Education has been developed to include scrutiny of planning, workbooks, formal assessment and displays. Lessons have been observed and good practice shared to ensure greater consistency throughout the school. Areas for development have been highlighted and in-service provided to further develop teachers understanding of Religious Education, formal assessment and Collective Worship. Developmental marking has been introduced. Delivery of Religious Education has been enriched by the introduction of more creative teaching and learning strategies and through use of challenging questions and tasks. A *Here I Am* newsletter has been introduced to keep parents fully informed about Religious Education topics. Resources have been updated. Time and finance have been provided for the development of the new coordinator and to enable staff,

on a rota basis, to attend Topic Days. Teachers understanding of *Here I Am* topics and the new formal assessment procedures have been developed through sharing of information from Topic days. Documentation has been updated. Religious Education and the Catholic life of the school are evaluated on a regular basis.

## **Grade: 1**

### **Capacity to improve**

The school's self- evaluation is comprehensive and its view of its overall performance is mostly accurate. It is recommended that when updating the self-evaluation the school is more comprehensive in outlining the projected timescale of developmental strategies. The priorities for both the improvement of Religious Education and the Catholic life of the school stem from the self-evaluation and will be influenced by the findings of this inspection. The leadership has a very clear understanding of what needs to be developed and is fully 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 documentation.

## **Achievement and standards**

Learners' attainment on entry to the school covers the full spectrum but, overall is below that expected nationally. The number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average. Most learners, in relation to their capability and starting points, make outstanding progress in the school. Standards in Religious Education are outstanding overall. There are no significant differences in performance by learners of different gender or ethnic background. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress in Religious Education with the help provided by other adults and differentiation of tasks to meet their needs. Differentiation, through outstanding use of challenging questions and tasks, enables more able children in all classes fulfil their potential. The school checks on the progress made by all children through good use of informal assessment and the expectation statements. Children's work is marked with positive challenging comments. Formal assessment of Religious Education is fully in place and the information gathered has been analysed to enable the school raise standards further. Children are very confident in discussion and feedback and have an outstanding knowledge of the subject and it's relevance to their lives. They show real enthusiasm for Religious Education.

The behaviour of children throughout the school is outstanding. Children are enabled to make an outstanding contribution to the school community e.g. the

School Council suggesting playground seating, games tables etc; Children are also Playground Leaders and Reading Buddies.

**Grade 1:**

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

### **Teaching and learning**

The evidence in planning, workbooks and formal assessment, together with the observation on the day of inspection, show that teaching and learning is outstanding overall. Lessons are very well planned taking account of the needs of different learners within the class. Teaching is very precise and clearly focussed on the learning objective. This enables the children to understand clearly what they are learning about. Teaching is confident and enthusiastic and lessons are very well paced. Use is made of a range of resources to challenge and stimulate the children. The learning needs of all children, including those who are more able, are addressed through outstanding use of creative teaching and learning strategies. Challenging, differentiated questions and tasks, together with good support for those less able, ensures that all children are enabled to make outstanding progress. The work given enables the children to work well independently and collaboratively. Learning is summed up very effectively during the plenary session and related to the objective. In many classes children are also given time to reflect at a deep level in order to relate their learning to their everyday lives.

It is recommended that use of self-assessment, seen in a few classes, is introduced throughout the school to enable learners check on their own progress and celebrate their new knowledge and skills. Children's religious literacy is developed very well e.g. exploring what "consequences and "conscience" mean. *Here I Am* displays are used very effectively to support teaching and learning. Outstanding use of formal assessment, through use of the tasks provided by the Archdiocese, is made. The information gathered has been analysed by the leadership team and the Religious Education coordinator and used to highlight what the school needed to do to improve standards further e.g. provision for more able children through challenging questioning and differentiated tasks.

Parents and carers involvement in their children's Religious Education is outstanding. They are sent a *Here I Am* newsletter each term which gives them detailed information about the topics being studied. This enables them to become involved in their children's Religious Education. Parents/carers are also invited to celebrations. They receive regular verbal and written reports of their child's progress.

**Grade: 1**

## **Curriculum**

The school is outstanding in meeting the Religious Education curriculum needs and interests of learners through use of creative teaching and learning strategies. Those children who are less able are very well supported by other adults. Outstanding use of challenging questions and tasks is made in all classes to enable more able children fulfil their potential. 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. The time allocated to Religious Education is 10% of total curriculum time. This fulfils the requirements of the Bishops of England and Wales.

The leadership of the school ensures that quality time is given to the positioning of Religious Education on timetables. Children are given opportunity to apply their learning to their own lives e.g. "In order to make the right choice I need to think about how it will effect me and other people". The use of role play, hot-seating, music, information communication technology and other creative activities enrich the delivery of the Religious Education curriculum.

The parish clergy are very involved in the life of the school and make a good contribution to the Religious Education curriculum e.g. supporting staff and children during topics. The Religious Education curriculum makes an outstanding contribution to learners' spiritual and moral development. Children have a good sense of right and wrong and are given opportunities during topics to develop this e.g. how "the choices I make have consequences for me and other people". The school has policies to support spiritual and moral development. These are very obviously lived out in the daily life of the school.

**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. A new Religious Education coordinator, who is also the Deputy headteacher, has been in post since last September. He provides outstanding leadership for the staff who share a commitment to the subject's aims and values. He shows a genuine enthusiasm for his role and is fully committed to his task. An excellent handbook guides and directs all staff in their delivery of Religious Education. Coordinators' meetings and Topic days are attended on a regular

basis and information is disseminated to all staff during staff meetings or in-service time. Staff are also given opportunity, on a rota basis, to attend Topic days.

Performance in Religious Education is monitored through observation of teaching and learning, scrutiny of planning, workbooks and displays. Formal assessment is analysed to ensure that the information gathered is used effectively to further improve teaching and ensure that the needs of all children are met. This enables the school to share good practice and raise standards. St Luke's is socially inclusive by providing equality of access and of opportunity for all learners to make progress. Of the 10 staff teaching Religious Education 6 have a suitable qualification and 3 teachers are currently undertaking the Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies. Other adults are planned for and are very involved in supporting teaching and learning during lessons. Priorities for the subject are clearly identified and targets set. Religious Education is funded on par with other core subjects and resources have been updated since the last inspection. The Religious Education coordinator keeps governors fully informed of the strengths and areas for development relating to Religious Education. The commitment of the governing body enables them to discharge their responsibilities in an outstanding manner.

**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. The Mission Statement has been developed by all members of the school community. This ensures that it is known and owned by all. "Following in the footsteps of Jesus as we live, love and learn together" is very much at the heart of St Luke's community. It is a place where the values of Jesus, especially respect for each other, are lived out. The Mission Statement is supported by clear aims and practical objectives which show how it is lived out in the daily life of the school. It informs all school policies and is central to all that happens in the school community.

Regular reviews of the Mission Statement enable the governors and staff to effectively monitor and evaluate the Catholic life of the school.

**Grade: 1**

### **Collective Worship**

The quality of Collective Worship is outstanding. The school provides Collective Worship in a variety of ways for each child daily, in class, whole school or key stage gatherings. This fulfils government and Archdiocesan guidance. A good policy, which has recently been updated, supports the planning and delivery of Collective Worship wherever and whenever it takes place. Since the last inspection in-service has been provided to further develop teachers understanding. The school has adopted the planning format

provided by the liturgy office to ensure that all Collective Worship is an enriching experience. Teachers and children plan and deliver Collective Worship. The parish clergy support delivery of Collective Worship.

Parents/carers are invited to participate in celebrations. Acts of worship include various forms of prayer, scripture, powerpoint presentations, reflection, joyful singing and other elements that support liturgical formation. Worship stimulates reflection on spiritual and moral issues and on personal beliefs. The Collective Worship observed was outstanding. Children and adults actively participate in acts of worship. In many classes they are also given quality time for reflection at the end of Religious Education lessons. Collective Worship makes an outstanding contribution to spiritual and moral development.

**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. Parents and carers are involved in decision-making and the life of the school. They are invited to celebrations, receive regular newsletters and have opportunities to share their views e.g. questionnaires, home-school agreement etc.

Collective Worship celebrates, reflects and respects the diversity of belief within the school. The use of the Religious Education Programme, *Here I Am*, provides outstanding support to Community cohesion. Children have had opportunity to explore the beliefs and values of other faiths: Judaism and Hinduism. This has been greatly enriched by the contribution made by parents and visitors. St Luke's has very strong links with the parish and local community e. g. clergy leading Collective Worship , celebrations in Church to which parishioners are invited, singing carols in Whiston hospital and local residential home etc.

The school community shows a concern for the well being of those less fortunate than themselves in their support of local and global charities e.g. CAFOD, Nugent Care, Willowbrook Hospice, Starfish project in South Africa etc.

**Grade: 1**