



ARCHDIOCESE OF LIVERPOOL

INSPECTION REPORT

ST BENEDICT'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

NETHERTON

Inspection Date 8th February 2011
Inspectors: Maria Eves Maria M^cGarry
Unique Reference Number 135085
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 235
Chair of Governors Mr A. Short
Head teacher Mr C. Vaudrey
School address Copy Lane
Bootle
Merseyside
L30 7PG
Telephone number 0151 526 6423
E-mail address admin.stbenedicts@schools.sefton.gov.uk
Date of last inspection 26th June 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 Benedict's school is an average sized Catholic Primary School situated in Netherton serving the parish of St Benet's. There are 235 children on roll of whom 198 are baptised Catholic, 37 come from other Christian denominations. There are 14 teachers including the Headteacher of whom 12 teach Religious Education 11 are Catholic. Nine teachers have a suitable qualification in Religious Education. Only the Headteacher and 5 teachers still remain from the original 14.5 present during the last inspection. A new Religious Education team was formed in September 2010.

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**

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main Findings:-

St. Benedict's is an outstanding Catholic school. There is a clear vision for Catholic Education which is embraced by the whole school community. It is evident that Gospel values underpin every aspect of school life. This is a school where the wellbeing of every child is of paramount importance to all staff. Staff provide a secure, calm, nurturing environment in which all pupils thrive and are well cared for. The well established Pastoral team works closely with staff to ensure the emotional and social needs of all pupils are met. The pupils' spiritual and moral development is outstanding and this is reflected in their excellent behaviour and attitudes. The highly effective and inspirational leadership of the Headteacher Religious Education team and governing body is committed to ensuring excellence in all aspects of the Catholic life of the school. 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. The Mission Statement was reviewed by all stakeholders in September 2010 and the impressive children's version displayed in the hall demonstrates how pupils live their Mission on a daily basis. Since the last inspection the school has securely maintained and built on previously outstanding performance. Self evaluation in the main is rigorous and accurate. Outcomes for pupils are outstanding. There is no significant difference in performance between groups of pupils. Outcomes for pupils with additional or special needs are outstanding. 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.

Given the commitment demonstrated by the Headteacher, Religious Education team, governors and Parish Priest the school has outstanding capacity for sustained improvement. The school has an outstanding capacity to continue to improve due to an accurate knowledge of its strengths and development needs identified through self evaluation. Excellent appointments have been made in recent years and all staff are committed to the success of the school and to further their skills through collaborative training. The school's self evaluation process takes place regularly and involves staff, governors, children and parents.

What the school needs to do to improve further

As identified in the self evaluation document assessment procedures should be further developed and embedded to ensure pupils reach their full potential in Religious Education.

How good outcomes are for individuals and groups of pupils

Pupils' achievement in Religious Education is outstanding. On entry to school many children have a limited knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith. Pupils' attainment in Religious Education is good. Pupils make excellent progress in relation to their starting points and capabilities. Analysis of assessments undertaken, together with scrutiny of pupils' work books and discussion with pupils, provide evidence of pupils generally attaining appropriate levels for their age and stage of development in each key stage. 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 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 sensitively 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. Every child in every year is involved in preparing, participating in or leading celebrations which contribute to the Catholic life of the school. Through Religious Education, SEAL and the general ethos of the school pupils develop skills and attitudes which will serve themselves and others now and in the future. Pupils have a real sense of belonging to the school community and value and respect others. Pupils are encouraged to take on roles of responsibility in the school and wider community e.g. children in all year groups are involved in taking on responsibilities such as school council, eco reps, class monitors. Every pupil in Year 6 has a leadership role and these include peer mediators, play leaders and lunch time monitors. Pupils are considerate and caring of others both in school and the wider community. Pupils have a good sense of right and wrong and apply this in their personal relationships. Pupils take an increasing responsibility for themselves and their actions. They praise and acknowledge the contribution of others; this was particularly evident in lessons observed. They show a readiness to embrace and celebrate their lived experiences.

Pupils are outstanding in responding to and participating in the schools Collective Worship. They are becoming increasingly more confident preparing and leading worship from their earliest years. 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 become 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	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	1

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 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. Teaching assistants are effectively deployed and make an outstanding contribution to pupils' learning. There is excellent pace to all lessons. Resources are relevant and appropriate. Praise is used to great effect and good use is made of time. Pupils are informed of their progress and how to improve both orally and through marking. They are given opportunities to discuss their work and progress.

The assessment of pupils work in Religious Education is good. Teachers are becoming increasingly more confident in assessing pupils and this has resulted in assessment strategies which provide accurate and detailed information on the achievement of all the pupils. Teachers are able to identify how well pupils are achieving and tackle underachievement. Teachers enable pupils to evaluate their own work. Formal assessment tasks are undertaken in line with Archdiocesan guidance. Assessment information is collated by the R.E. team and shared with the leadership team, governors and parents. Achievement and effort are celebrated. Pupils are affirmed, know how well they are doing and 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. Imaginative and well planned strategies are deployed to enrich pupils learning. Curriculum outlines and a regular R.E. newsletter are provided for parents who are consulted on different issues depending on the topic being covered. The school implements new curriculum developments as appropriate. An extensive range of lunch time and after school enrichment activities has a positive impact on the curriculum. The Religious Education curriculum provides outstanding 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 for both class and whole school worship are provided to enable full, active and conscious participation of the whole school community. Visual presentations, artefacts, music and time to reflect are used to great effect. Pupils are respectful during prayer and appreciated these experiences. Attractive prayer tables in each classroom and around the school include pupils' reflections and provide a positive focus for prayer. Children are enabled to pray formally and informally. The acts of Collective Worship observed on the day of inspection were inspirational and uplifting. Pupils' participation was a strength and the children responded

thoughtfully and prayerfully. Opportunities are provided for parents, carers the local and wider Faith communities to participate in a variety of celebrations of the 'Here I Am' programme and 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	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 a real passion for, understanding of, and commitment to the Mission of the Church. This is reflected in the School's own Mission Statement. All who form part of the school community including parents, priests, 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 evaluates its effectiveness. Opportunities are provided for the staff and pupils to play an active part in Catholic life and Mission of the school. The Self Evaluation Document provides evidence of the school's monitoring, searching analysis and self challenge. Their analysis provides a basis to celebrate the school's strengths and outlining areas for development. Leaders and managers have undertaken Safer Recruitment training and through their vigilant appointment procedures strive to ensure all staff have an understanding of and an empathy with the Catholic faith. Staff induction and continuous professional development ensure that all staff have the opportunity to keep abreast of new initiatives and to further develop their own understanding of the Church's Mission. A range of opportunities for Spiritual and Moral development are provided for staff and pupils.

Leaders and managers are outstanding in the way they use monitoring data to evaluate the school's performance, celebrate, and plan future improvements. Planning is thorough and appropriate in meeting the needs of all pupils. Effective monitoring systems are established and the recent introduction of dual observations is having a positive impact on outcomes for pupils. The leadership and management of the Religious Education team is outstanding. They demonstrate commitment, passion and enthusiasm. They have worked hard to ensure that good documentation guides and directs all staff in the delivery of the subject. They fully embrace professional development and encourage, challenge and support staff in developing their understanding of Here I Am

Governors are outstanding in fulfilling their responsibilities. They hold the school to account and act as a critical friend offering support and challenge. They have effectively helped to shape the direction of the school through establishing procedures that ensure the high profile of the Catholic character of the school. They are knowledgeable about the school's strengths and areas for development and are beginning to develop an understanding of how well all pupils are

achieving, including different groups within the school. The Religious Education Link governor is a welcome and regular visitor to the school and her expertise has a positive impact on school policy and self evaluation.

St. Benedict's has an inclusive ethos where respect for every individual is achieved. The school provides a wide range of opportunities for pupils to meet and share with others from different backgrounds. Strong links have been established with two other schools in adjoining authorities in addition to a school in Kenya. The children are involved in the Respecting Local Community initiative in which they work closely with the police and fire services. Regular WOW days are celebrated and a wide range of visits and visitors to school organised. 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 are consulted regularly and involved in a variety of ways in the life of the school e.g. through meetings, newsletters, parents' courses and attendance at assemblies and celebrations. Parents' responses to questionnaires demonstrate they value these opportunities. The use of the 'Here I Am' programme promotes community cohesion. Children have explored beliefs, values and traditions of other faiths and religions through the Here I Am programme, 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	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