



## ARCHDIOCESE OF LIVERPOOL

### INSPECTION REPORT

### ST. FRANCIS de SALES CATHOLIC JUNIOR SCHOOL

### LIVERPOOL

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Tuesday 13 November 2007

Inspectors      Rev. D. Melly    Mrs. A. McNally    Rev. D. Seddon

URN              104650

Inspection carried out under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005

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|-------------------------|---|
| Type of School          | Catholic Junior                                     |
| Age range of pupils     | 7 -11   |
| Number on roll          | 391   |
| Chair of governors      | Rev. J. B.Thompson.                                 |
| School address          | Hale Road,<br>Liverpool,<br>L13 7EA.                |
| Telephone number        | 0151 525 7602                                       |
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| E-mail address          | desalesj-ao-@st-francisdesales-jun.liverpool.sch.uk |
| Date of last inspection | 21 May 2002   |
| Headteacher             | Mrs. E. Seymour                                     |

## **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. Francis de Sales Junior School is a larger than average junior school. It is situated in a well-established area of Liverpool and mainly serves the parish of St. Francis de Sales. It is part of the Liverpool Local Authority. The school serves a stable community in a catchment area that consists mainly of owner-occupied or rented terraces or semi-detached property. There are 391 learners on role all of whom are baptised Catholics. The number of learners eligible for free school meals is above average as is the number with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. There are 18 members of staff 16 of whom are Catholic.

## **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. Francis de Sales is a good Catholic school with outstanding features. 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. Outstanding relationships have been established by working closely with home, parish and the local and global community. All are obviously valued, respected and cared for. Standards are good overall. Learners achieve well and make good progress. Teaching is good overall. Assessment is in place. The curriculum planning needs further development so that it is more closely aligned to the requirements of the Curriculum Directory of the Bishops of England and Wales. Learners' behaviour is outstanding. Religious Education, 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.

**Grade: 2**

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

Following the last Section 23 Inspection in October 2002 the school has taken effective steps to increase learners' knowledge and understanding of the liturgical year, extended the range of outside experts used to include other faiths, offered opportunities for staff professional development, improved differentiation and marking, strengthened the concept of being part of a global church, formed an effective school council to give children a voice in the school, invested in quality resources and improved the learning environment beyond recognition.

**Grade: 2**

### **Capacity to improve**

The school's self-evaluation is comprehensive. 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 its own understanding of what needs to be developed and is committed to improvement. There is very good capacity and eagerness for further improvement.

**Grade: 2**

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

- Involve children and parents in the next review the Mission Statement with special reference to objectives which show how the aims are to be achieved;
- Facilitate whole school in-service for the *Here I Am* programme.

## **Achievement and standards**

Learners make good progress in the school. Standards in Religious Education overall are good. There are no significant differences in performance by learners of different gender or ethnic background. Learners with special needs make 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. Because of this learners are very confident and articulate in discussion. They ask good questions that show good knowledge and understanding of Religious Education presented. Learners are given opportunities to record their knowledge and understanding and express their own thoughts and feelings in a variety of styles. Closer adherence to the requirements of the Curriculum Directory would help to further raise standards.

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. Children are encouraged to value and respect each other at all times. 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, concern and respect for each other.

**Grade: 2**

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

### **Teaching and learning**

Teaching is overall good. The teachers are confident in their teaching styles, which help engage the learners to work well independently and collaboratively. There is good structure to all lessons with good pace resulting in good production of work. Good questioning techniques elicited excellent ideas from learners' own experiences. Good use is made of affirmation and praise empowering children to be confident learners. All teachers are enthusiastic and energetic and show creativity and imagination in delivering lessons and learners respond enthusiastically. Teachers set exciting, differing tasks and provide attractive resources. Learners work well together and independently and are cooperative throughout lessons. Some very good use was made of information communication technology for example with the recording of newsbytes and a number of presentations. Very effective use is made of learning assistants throughout lessons. The learning objective is shared at the beginning of the lessons and is revisited at the end. This helps

maintain the sharp focus of the lesson. Learners' work is assessed and records are kept. The planning of the lessons observed and the planning submitted for the inspection does not fully meet the requirements of the Curriculum Directory.

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 giving the names of the Religious Education topics to be covered. This information could be further developed to provide comprehensive information for the parents. The school also reports on progress in Religious Education.

## **Grade: 2**

### **Curriculum**

The school is satisfactory in meeting the Religious Education curriculum needs and interests of learners. The school needs to be more consistent in using the *Here I Am* programme recommended by the Archdiocese as at present the requirements of the Curriculum Directory for Religious Education are not being fully met. To ensure the complete Religious Education entitlement for each child and to meet national and diocesan requirements the school needs to consistently follow the *Here I Am* programme. Of the total curriculum time 10% is allocated to Religious Education. This fulfils the requirements of the Bishops of England and Wales. 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: 3**

## **Leadership and Management**

### **Religious Education**

The leadership and management in Religious Education are satisfactory. There are very positive relationships throughout the school. The headteacher supports the staff in the delivery of Religious Education. There is a Religious Education handbook to guide and direct staff which could profitably be developed. Monitoring through scrutiny of lessons has begun. The monitoring of teaching and learning and the scrutiny of planning and workbooks needs to be developed further. A process of assessment is also in place. Five of the sixteen staff teaching Religious Education have a suitable qualification and a further three are in the process of obtaining the *Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies*. Teachers are always encouraged to follow the course leading to the *Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies*. Teaching assistants are very effectively deployed. The school needs to ensure continued attendance at Archdiocesan in-service so that priorities for the subject are clearly identified and targets set. Religious Education is well funded and money has obviously been well spent. The headteacher keeps

governors informed on matters relating to Religious Education. Governors discharge their responsibilities appropriately.

**Grade: 3**

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

There is outstanding leadership and management in developing the Catholic life of the school. St. Francis de Sales is a school in which the Gospel spirit of love and respect permeates every aspect of its life and work. Teachers and learners alike are obviously loved and respected. A good Mission Statement, which expresses the philosophy of education in this Catholic school, is in place. This could be better known and understood by the children. Objectives showing how the aims are to be achieved could profitably be produced.

**Grade: 1**

### **Collective Worship**

The quality of Collective Worship is good with some outstanding features. The school provides Collective Worship in a variety of ways for each child daily, in class or year groups. This fulfils government and Archdiocesan guidance. A very brief description of Collective Worship is contained within the Religious Education handbook. Acts of worship are creative and well led; they include quiet music to create an atmosphere, lighted candles, a focal point, prayer, and some time for personal reflection, which is very well used. Scripture is also well used. Learners respond enthusiastically. A very good community spirit was created where shared values were almost tangible. Learners took plenty away with them to contemplate and live out in their lives. There are focus tables in classrooms, which are relevant to the current topic. These enhance delivery of the curriculum and Collective Worship. A more detailed policy and guidelines to help the planning, delivery and nurturing of Collective Worship could profitably be produced. Collective Worship makes an outstanding contribution to the spiritual and moral development of the children.

**Grade: 2**

### **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 life of the school. Collective Worship celebrates, reflects and respects the diversity of belief within the school. The Religious Education programme supports community cohesion. Learners have explored the beliefs and values of Judaism and Hinduism. They show a concern for the well-being of those less

fortunate than themselves in their support of The Lifeboat Appeal, Poppy Appeal, Comic Relief, Water Aid, Guide Dog Appeal, support for a number of other charities including work in Ghana. The school has been awarded International School Status for its work overseas. This is a real strength of the school.

**Grade: 1**