



ARCHDIOCESE OF LIVERPOOL

INSPECTION REPORT

ST. MALACHY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

LIVERPOOL

Tuesday 3 February 2009
Inspectors Rev. D. Melly Mrs. D. Martin
URN 104653

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	150
Chair of Governors	Mr. P. Sherry
School address	Park Street, Liverpool, L8 6XL.
Telephone number	0151 709 3682
E-mail address	malachys-ht@st-malachys.liverpool.sch.uk
Date of last inspection	6 June 2006
Headteacher	Mr. J. P. Welsh

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. Malachy's School is a smaller than average primary school. It is situated in the South End of Liverpool. It is part of the Liverpool Local Authority. The catchment area is one where there is a high level of social deprivation. There are 150 learners on role of whom 131 are baptised Catholics, 4 come from other Christian denominations and 5 from *Other Faith* traditions. The number of learners eligible for free school meals is well above average as is the number with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. There are 9 members of staff all of whom are Catholic. Seven teachers teach Religious Education six of whom have a Religious Education qualification.

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. Malachy's is an outstanding Catholic school. It is a welcoming Christian community where the gospel is alive and where all are enabled to achieve their potential, working in partnership with the homes and the parish. A very strong Catholic ethos is certainly evident in the bright, stimulating, caring and secure learning environment, which has been created for work. Outstanding relationships have obviously been established by working closely with home, parish and the local and global community. All are valued, respected, cared for and affirmed. Standards are good. Learners achieve well and make outstanding progress. Teaching is good overall. Assessment is in place and is being well developed. The curriculum planning is good and results in an 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: 2

Improvement since the last inspection

Following the last Section 23 Inspection in June 2006 the school has taken effective steps to address the issue highlighted in the last report. Monitoring of teaching to share good practice is now an annual occurrence. There is now greater use of information communication technology in Religious Education

Grade: 1

Capacity to improve

The school's self-evaluation is accurate and comprehensive though at times modest. 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 well below that expected of children of their age. Learners make good progress in the school and by Year 6 meet the expectations of the *Here I Am* programme. Standards in Religious Education overall are good. There are no significant differences in performance by learners of different gender. 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 and this is good. The development of this work is a priority for the school. Learners' work is always marked with constructive comments that affirm and support the learning process. Some teachers highlight strengths and ways to further improve. Learners are very confident and articulate in discussion and are not afraid to ask questions. 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. This was very impressive.

The school celebrates achievements in lessons and assemblies. Children throughout the school are confident and obviously 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, tolerance 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. All are extremely polite and helpful.

Grade: 2

Quality of Provision for Religious Education

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching is good overall with two examples of outstanding teaching being observed. The good lessons also had outstanding features. All teachers are secure in their knowledge and understanding of the *Here I Am* programme and this is reflected in their thorough planning and confident delivery of the topics. *Here I Am* is very well used. Some teaching is extremely enthusiastic and energetic showing creativity and imagination. This challenges the learners and enables them to respond enthusiastically and to work well both independently and collaboratively. Some good use is made of information communication technology and especially the interactive white board. The development of this is a priority for the school. Question and answer techniques are very good and recall previous learning well. There is creative use of story from the *Here I Am* programme. There was also excellent use of teachers' personal stories, which fascinated the learners. Talking partners were used to great effect. Most learners are challenged and

respond positively. Children's behaviour and relationships are outstanding in most lessons. Learners are obviously valued in class. They are listened to and treated with respect not just by the teachers and support staff but also by their peers. Praise affirmation is used to great effect. This has resulted in high levels of learners' self-confidence and self-esteem which impacts on their learning. Most of the tasks observed on the day were creative, challenging, interesting and differentiated, catering well for the wide spectrum of learning abilities in the school. Because of this approach the children are able to learn and make outstanding progress. There is very good structure to most lessons, which, together with the diligence of the teachers and other adults, helps learners stay focussed. Monitoring of teaching and learning through observation of planning and learners' workbooks is in place and is good. Very effective use is made of teaching assistants and other adults to support learning and inclusion. The learning objective is shared at the beginning of most lessons. This ensures that the sharp focus of the lesson is adhered to and the work recommended in the *Here I Am* programme is covered. Learners' work is always marked with comments that are affirming and encouraging. Some teachers highlight strengths and ways to further improve. The work is formally assessed once a term, following the directions of the Department for Christian Education. This is good.

Parents and carers are enabled to become involved in their children's Religious Education in a variety of ways. Attractive newsletters are regularly sent to the homes. Special newsletters are sent out at the beginning of each term outlining the religious elements of the curriculum and advising on ways that the home can be part of the process. Parents are also invited to open evenings and to attend school Masses, assemblies and special celebrations. A text messaging system is also in place, where individuals or the whole group of parents and carers can be contacted. The school also reports comprehensively on progress in Religious Education. Replies to the parents' questionnaire show that parents are appreciative of the work of the school.

Grade: 2

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 at least 10% is allocated to Religious Education, which is a requirement of the Bishops of England and Wales. The Religious Education curriculum makes a good impact on learners' spiritual and moral development enabling them above all to be self-reflective.

Grade: 2

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, Religious Education coordinator and the senior management team are extremely committed to the cause of Religious Education and the Catholic life of the school. They are making an outstanding contribution in leading and supporting staff and they have a clear vision for the further development of the school. The Religious Education coordinator is obviously very enthusiastic and conscientious about her role and is a wonderful role model for the other members of staff. An excellent handbook guides and directs all staff in their delivery of Religious Education. Monitoring through scrutiny of planning, teaching and workbooks is in place and is good. The process of assessment recommended by the Department for Christian Education is in place and is being well developed. Six of the seven staff teaching Religious Education has a suitable qualification. The remaining teacher is in the process of obtaining the *Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies*. Teaching assistants are very effectively deployed. The coordinator attends coordinators' meetings and information is disseminated to all staff during staff meetings. All staff are now given an opportunity to attend courses provided by the Department for Christian Education. Priorities for the subject are clearly identified and targets set. Religious Education is well funded and money has obviously been well spent. The Religious Education coordinator keeps governors informed in writing on matters relating to Religious Education. In future this report will be delivered verbally. Governors are very keen to discharge their responsibilities effectively and avail of all training on offer. Consequently, they are well informed and so can be challenging, but in a very supportive manner. The governors are very involved in the life of the school.

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. St. Malachy's is a 'welcoming Christian community where the Gospel is alive' and permeates every aspect of its life and work. The learners are obviously valued, affirmed and respected. This helps them to be confident and happy. The Mission Statement is outstanding. The children have summed it up: 'You'll never walk alone with Jesus beside you'. Aims, flowing from the Mission Statement are also in place. Objectives showing how the Mission Statement is to be achieved are also in place but need to be articulated.

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, phase, or whole school gatherings. This fulfils government and Archdiocesan guidance. An excellent policy and guidelines to support the planning, delivery and nurturing of Collective Worship is in place. Acts of worship included music and appropriate focuses to create a prayerful atmosphere. Great use was made of candles to celebrate the feast of the presentation of Jesus in the Temple. There was good use of prayer both formal and informal: a prayerful atmosphere pervaded throughout. Excellent use was made of scripture stories told or read from *God's Story*. There was also time for personal reflection, which was well used with the aid of pebbles. There was a simple but stunning tableau of the Presentation. The learners present responded well to the warm and affirming worship experience. Focus tables and displays in each classroom are colourful, attractive and well presented, expressing well the topic of *Communion*. This enhances the 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's leadership and management in promoting community cohesion are outstanding. 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. It is obvious that every person matters in this school particularly the disadvantaged. 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, which in turn has been supported by the visitors invited into the school and the visits the children are taken on from the school. Learners have explored the beliefs and values of Judaism and Islam. The school is very involved in the life of the local schools' learning network. They are also involved in the life of the local community particularly 'Everyone on line', 'Heal8' and the dingle community. All show a concern for the well being of those less fortunate than themselves in their support of CAFOD, Nugent Care, Fairtrade, British Legion Poppy Appeal, Parkinson's Disease and Children with Cancer.

Grade 1