



ARCHDIOCESE OF LIVERPOOL

INSPECTION REPORT

BLESSED SACRAMENT CATHOLIC INFANT SCHOOL

LIVERPOOL

Inspection Date Tuesday 19 October 2010

Inspectors Mrs. Denise Hegarty Mrs. Pat Cooney
Mr. Andy Cocker

Unique Reference Number 104669

Inspection carried out under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005

Type of School Catholic Infants

Age range of pupils 3 - 7

Number on roll 284

Chair of Governors Mrs. Joan Mulvoy

Head teacher Mrs. C. Dolley

School address Hunslet Road
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Date of last inspection 27th November 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

Blessed Sacrament is a significantly larger than average Catholic Infant School with four classes in each year group plus Nursery provision. It is situated in Walton, within the Liverpool district of the Archdiocese and serves the parish of Blessed Sacrament. On roll are 284 children and 84 children in the Nursery. From reception to Year 2, there are 274 children baptised Catholic; 4 come from other Christian denominations and 6 are from another faith or religious tradition. There are 16 teachers at the school of whom 14 teach Religious Education; 9 are Catholic and 9 teachers have a suitable qualification in Religious Education. Both the headteacher and subject leader have been in post since the last inspection.

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:-

Blessed Sacrament is an outstanding Catholic Infant School. There is a shared vision for Catholic Education which is embraced by the whole school community and reinforced in the school's Mission Statement and motto – 'Love one another as I have loved you'. Its values and ethos are visibly reflected in the exemplary attitudes and relationships between all members of the school community. Children thrive in the supportive, caring, nurturing atmosphere the school provides and they become confident, learners with positive attitudes to school and towards others. Since the last inspection, the school has securely maintained and continued to build on its previously outstanding performance. All new initiatives have been embraced and addressed as the school is continuously striving to improve standards and provision. Self evaluation is comprehensive, 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 as work is consistently differentiated to meet the needs of all. Pupils have a positive attitude to learning, are very happy and keen to learn. Progress is outstanding.

Teaching and learning in Religious Education is outstanding. The Religious Education curriculum is inclusive and is adapted very well to meet the needs of pupils to enable them to meet their full potential in Religious Education. Staff members are excellent role models for the pupils and offer a range of opportunities for reflection, celebration, prayer and worship. The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school is very good.

The school is extremely 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 to outcomes and provision. Staff are encouraged and supported in their ongoing development. The dedicated head teacher and school leaders have total commitment to the ethos and mission of the school and promote the highest of expectations of all pupils spiritually, morally and in all aspects of learning. They are well supported by all members of staff who, through their vocation, actively endorse and promote the aims and values of the school community. Governors are justly proud of their school, promote it well and are loyal to it. Parents are very supportive and appreciate all the school does. They are entirely happy with the values and attitudes that the school teaches.

Given the dedication and commitment shown by the leadership of the school and its rigorous self-evaluation leading to appropriate priorities and challenging targets, there is an outstanding capacity for sustained improvement.

What the school needs to do to improve further

- Monitor with rigour by:
 - observing teaching and learning and giving written and oral feedback to staff that celebrates outstanding practice and supports any areas for improvement.
- Level work more accurately by:
 - moderating levels across the school to ensure all Year Groups are consistent in approach and children are confident and secure at the level given;
 - liaising and moderating work with similar schools and / or with KS2;
 - generating sufficient evidence in the anthologies to support levels awarded.
- Continue to implement the targets set out in the school's Self-Evaluation Document. That includes:
 - developing further links with the Parish;
 - developing the tracking of progress and attainment to make year on year comparisons.

How good outcomes are for individuals and groups of pupils

Pupils' achievements in Religious Education are outstanding. They make outstanding progress in relation to their starting points and capabilities. Pupils' attainment in Religious Education is high. Analyses of assessments undertaken to date and scrutiny of their work provide evidence of pupils generally attaining appropriate levels for their age and stage of development and many are achieving at a higher level. There is no difference in performance between pupils of different gender. Outcomes for pupils with additional or special needs are outstanding. They are supported well through a number of intervention strategies e.g. the 'Nurture' group. Underachievement is challenged and tasks given are consistently well differentiated to meet the needs of all pupils. Pupils are becoming increasingly more religiously literate as they become familiar with the key words from the topics and can relate their own life experiences to the Christian understanding of the topics. Their knowledge, understanding and skills are appropriate to their age or capacity and many exceed expectations. Children work well independently and collaboratively showing avid interest and enthusiasm. They respond to challenges given in a variety of ways e.g. through dance, role play, art and music. They thoroughly enjoy their work and learning and are developing useful skills and positive attitudes.

Pupils, from an early age, participate willingly and benefit greatly from an impressive range of activities and take on roles of responsibility which contribute to the Catholic life of the school. Members of Year 2 look after the younger pupils at lunch time and act as buddies to vulnerable children. All classes have representation on the School Council and the Eco Team.

Pupils show a good understanding of what is right and wrong, follow their class rules and behave outstandingly. They are actively involved in outreach work locally, nationally and globally e.g. in fund raising for the sick and needy, carol singing for local old peoples' homes and collecting baby clothes for the parish

Amber Project. Pupils and members of the community benefit from and enjoy learning outside the classroom in experiences given through the Extended Schools Services and extra curricular clubs. Through this initiative, they have recently grown fruit and vegetables, the profits of which are given to the homeless. During their Awe and Wonder Week, children responded with delight and produced excellent work that has been collated into wonderful anthologies so they can remember their experiences and share them with others.

Pupils respond to, enjoy and participate very well in Collective Worship. They are reverent, prayerful and respectful. Their knowledge of prayer and liturgy is increasing and they are becoming familiar with a variety of prayer styles. Pupils' liturgical formation and capacity to reflect are developing well. They join in community prayers appropriately. No-one is expected to act in a manner contrary to their beliefs. Pupils are beginning to acquire a range of skills which enables them to prepare and lead celebrations as appropriate to their age and stage of development.

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 	1
<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	2

How effective the provision is for Catholic Education

The quality of teaching is consistently very effective in ensuring that pupils are interested and engaged in their work and make outstanding progress. Topic Days and other In-service provision are regularly attended and this enables staff to have an up to date knowledge and understanding of current developments. The Catholic Teachers Certificate in Religious Studies is promoted and new staff members are supported and encouraged to enrol. Teachers plan together in detail to provide opportunities for pupils to work in a variety of ways, both independently and collaboratively. Planning is monitored regularly by the co-ordinator and general findings are shared collectively with staff. Work is consistently differentiated very well to enable children to succeed at their task, to challenge them and to stretch their knowledge, understanding and skills. Teachers and other adults use a variety of strategies to motivate and inspire pupils e.g. in their use of assessment for learning strategies. Effort and achievement are recognised and celebrated. Expectations are high. Pupils are affirmed and know how well they are doing. They are shown what to do to improve further. Effective use is made of time and resources are very well-deployed. Behaviour is well managed across the school with effective and consistent use of praise and rewards.

The assessment of pupils' work in Religious Education is good with many outstanding features. Teachers are aware of how to use assessment to identify

and tackle underachievement and use the information gleaned in future planning to ensure that given tasks are pitched at correct levels. Formal assessment tasks are undertaken and recorded appropriately. Work is moderated within year groups, but this should be extended to across and beyond the school as more evidence is needed to support levels currently awarded. Assessment information is collated by the subject leadership team and shared with the governors and parents. Annual reports on progress and achievement in Religious Education are excellent and inform parents what their children have undertaken in the subject and about their progress and achievement.

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 the different year groups. 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. Home / School link sheets are provided for parents and carers and these inform them of what is being taught in Religious Education, and how they can support their children's learning. Their views and opinions are frequently sought and valued. The school implements new curriculum developments as appropriate, and adapts its curriculum appropriately to meet the varying needs of the pupils. Enrichment activities such as the 'Awe and Wonder' Week and 'Come Think with Me' sessions have a positive impact on the curriculum. The Religious Education curriculum provides outstanding opportunities for pupils' spiritual and moral development. This is enriched by *Seal* and *Circle time* activities and by visitors to the school e.g. a Eucharistic Minister from the parish. A 'Celebration' assembly takes place weekly to reward good work and behaviour. Children are offered many rich opportunities to benefit from and contribute to the Catholic life of the school, all of which have a positive impact on their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school provides an annual award for contribution to the school community. A 'Rainbows' group focuses on children who are suffering from distress caused by loss or bereavement and enables them to find comfort and support.

The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school is very good. Teachers plan well and the subject leader ensures through the monitoring process that provision for collective worship has a high profile. Resources, including the use of ICT, are provided to enhance worship and are kept up to date. Collective Worship reflects the Catholic character of the school and takes into account the variety of backgrounds among the pupils. Staff members have been trained in 'Signalong' and use their skills to engage the children with speech and language difficulties. Collective Worship plays a key part in meeting the spiritual needs of the pupils. Children are enabled to pray formally and informally. The school provides opportunities and in-service for staff to develop their skills in planning and leading Collective Worship. Parents and carers are invited to join in celebrations in class every half term and at key times in the Church's year e.g. Holy Week, harvest time and Christmas. Children are being encouraged and enabled to take a more active role in preparing and leading worship in an age appropriate manner. The school boasts a Chapel which is used well by adults and children alike.

The learning environment is positive, vibrant and exciting. Great care is taken to provide excellent facilities and resources for pupils of all ages and abilities. Support staff are planned for exceptionally well, given good training, carry out their duties diligently and feed back to teachers at the end of sessions on how the children have made progress.

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	2

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 an excellent understanding of and commitment to, the Mission of the Church. This is reflected in the school's own motto and Mission Statement, 'Love one another as I have loved you,' and in its very distinct Catholic ethos. Opportunities are provided to celebrate the gifts and talents of each individual. All those who form part of the school community were involved in the development and review of their Mission Statement. Its aims and practical objectives direct and guide every aspect of school life. An artist was engaged to provide the children with the means to depict a visual representation of the Mission Statement and this is proudly displayed in the entrance to the school. Opportunities are provided for the staff and pupils to play an active part in Catholic life and Mission of the school e.g. in outreach, charity work and in raising awareness of the sick and the needy etc. There is deep commitment and drive for improvement demonstrated by the headteacher and leadership team. Ongoing self evaluation ensures that continuous improvements are made in all aspects of the Catholic life of the school. The Self Evaluation Document provides evidence of the schools monitoring, analysis and self challenge. It is comprehensive and accurate. This analysis provides a basis to celebrate the schools strengths and outlines areas for development. Timescales and clear lines of accountability are included thus ensuring the school's priorities are clear. The school provides excellent induction for new teachers to enable them to understand the Church's Mission in Education and how to play their unique part in it. Newly Qualified Teachers are encouraged to attend in-service provided by the Archdiocese. A range of opportunities for Spiritual and Moral development are provided for all staff including collective acts of worship led by the subject leader.

Leaders and managers are becoming skilled in the way they use monitoring data to evaluate the schools performance, celebrate, and plan future improvements. The co-ordinator has begun a monitoring programme for this year and has already monitored planning, work and assessments. She fulfils her role in an outstanding manner with enthusiasm and great commitment. New initiatives are introduced when appropriate and excellent documentation

guides and directs all staff in their delivery of the subject. This is updated as necessary.

Governors are well-informed and discharge their responsibilities outstandingly. They have effectively helped to shape the direction of the school by, for example, promoting the school's Catholic identity, by setting challenging targets and by striving to improve and update the learning environment. They are involved in improvement planning and are committed to the Catholic life of the school. The school tracks pupil achievement in Religious Education, and governors have the data to understand the school's performance in the subject and to monitor what needs to be done to further raise standards. All governors are active members of Blessed Sacrament parish and visit the school regularly. Members of the Governing Body have attended training sessions to enable them to fully develop their roles effectively and to maintain their outstanding status.

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 community. There are positive relationships at every level leading to a welcoming, nurturing learning environment for staff and pupils. Leaders and managers facilitate pupils' involvement in service to the immediate neighbourhood served by the school and the wider community. Dialogue and collaboration is encouraged with people who hold different beliefs and values as far as possible given the age and capacity of the children. 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 Judaism and look at the culture of many other parts of the world including Africa, Spain and India in the school's annual Arts Festival. Links have been set up with schools in Spain with which the children have been corresponding via blogs and letters, in Africa and in the Palestinian Territories. These experiences have helped the children understand how others make sense of the world in which we live. This helps to promote tolerance and respect for those who think differently. Other links have been set up with schools in a rural part of Scotland and a multicultural area of Salford.

The pupils are developing an understanding of the common good and an awareness of global responsibilities. The school community shows a concern for the well-being of those less fortunate than themselves both by becoming better informed and by raising funds and resources for local, national and global charities e.g. in their donations to the Good Shepherd fund for Nugent Care, Leukaemia, Sue Ryder and CAFOD. The school has links with the parish as members of staff are involved in the children's liturgy and are catechists in the parish. A buddy system is in place with the Junior School to facilitate the transition of pupils. There are also good community links with the local Secondary School and Year 7 pupils have recently been into school to work with members of Year 2.

The school is the hub for the north of the city for Family Learning Services and facilitates a variety of classes for parents. The school offers extended services for all children and provides wrap around care and guidance. Parents are involved in their children's learning in a variety of ways. During Advent, children take home knitted nativity figures to encourage families to make Mary and Joseph feel welcome in their homes.

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