



ARCHDIOCESE OF LIVERPOOL

INSPECTION REPORT

OUR LADY IMMACULATE CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

BRYN

Inspection Date Tuesday 18th May 2010
Inspectors Mrs. Denise Hegarty, Ms. Julie Mosinski
Unique Reference Number 106489

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 113
Chair of Governors Mr. Terry Pigott
Headteacher Mr. Damian Winstanley
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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

Our Lady Immaculate Catholic Primary School is a smaller than average sized school serving the parish of Our Lady Immaculate, Bryn in the Wigan District of the Archdiocese, but also admitting children from surrounding parishes and the neighbouring Local Authority. The school is situated in an area of mixed housing. There are currently 113 children on roll of whom 101 are baptised Catholic and 12 come from other Christian denominations. There are no children from other faith traditions. Pupils are predominantly of White British heritage. Children come in to school with levels of attainment that are broadly in line with national expectations. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is average. There are average numbers of pupils who have an entitlement to free school meals. Of the 9 teachers at the school, 7 are Catholic and 5 have a qualification in Religious Education. Three further teachers are currently studying for or enrolled on the Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies. The current headteacher and all but one member of staff have been appointed to the school since the last inspection.

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

Our Lady Immaculate is a good Catholic school that serves the community well. It is a calm, happy, welcoming school where children enjoy learning in a safe and friendly environment. The Mission of the school, underpinned by the Gospel values of love and respect for God and for each other, is evidently lived in all aspects of school life. Excellent relationships exist within the school community thus promoting and strengthening the Catholic ethos that exists. These positive relationships between all members of the school community lead to good attitudes towards learning and positive behaviour within lessons. The curriculum is good. Both the Religious Education programme and Collective Worship make a good contribution to the learners' spiritual and moral development. Standards are good, learners achieve well, enjoy their lessons and work hard to make good progress. Overall, teaching is good. There are good methods of assessment undertaken and these should now provide clear guidance on learning. The governors, the headteacher, the Religious Education co-ordinator and members of staff work very effectively together as a team to raise achievement and support learners in Religious Education. They are supported well by the Parish Priest and parish community. The subject co-ordinator provides good leadership, guidance and support to staff in order to raise achievement and support learners in Religious Education. There is good leadership in developing the Catholic life of the school through the school's Mission Statement. Leadership at all levels has an awareness of the school's strengths and a vision for future development and this is clearly identified in the useful self-evaluation document. The quality of Collective Worship is good. The school promotes community cohesion well. The governors are very supportive and discharge their duties and responsibilities well. The school has an outstanding capacity to improve.

Grade: 2

Improvement since the last inspection

Following the last Inspection good steps have been taken to address the areas found for development and to keep abreast of new initiatives that have been introduced after that time. Both the headteacher and the subject co-ordinator have joined the school since the last inspection, as have all but one member of staff. Assessment procedures are embedding and moderation meetings are ensuring that standards are becoming familiar and consistent across the school. Regular newsletters are sent out to parents and they are invited into assemblies, celebrations and Masses. New resources have been purchased for prayer and worship. Staff members make good use of the opportunity for continuing professional development provided by the Christian Education Team and the Archdiocese. The school building has undergone refurbishment and now provides a high quality learning environment for the pupils.

Grade: 2

Capacity to improve

The school's self-evaluation document is very good and gives a clear insight into the work of the school. It is an accurate, comprehensive document that has been written as part of the school's recent self-review process. It is modest in gradings, but otherwise provides a very true, clear picture of the schools strengths and areas for development. Leaders know their school very well and are striving to improve provision and standards. Staff members are committed and live by their motto, 'Opportunity to Love and Serve'. This is clearly evident throughout the school. Excellent links have been established with the parish. Parents are well supported by the school in developing and enhancing their children's Religious Education, through termly leaflets and invitations to weekly Masses and assemblies. Given the commitment shown by the headteacher, his enthusiastic co-ordinator, governors, parish priest and all staff members, there is an outstanding capacity for further improvement.

Grade: 1

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure planning is thorough, identifies groups of learners and shows how work is differentiated to meet individual needs. This will include having higher expectations of the more able pupils and providing them with more challenging tasks. To enable standards to rise, teachers should consistently make use of the language of the levels of attainment and the 'driver words' derived from them in their planning to ensure that tasks given are sharply focussed at the correct level for each child;
- Ensure assessments undertaken provide clear guidance on learning by informing future planning;
- Ensure rigorous monitoring and evaluation systems are fully in place and the information gleaned is used to inform planning and evaluation processes.

Achievement and standards

Learners' attainment on entry to the school is about that expected with average numbers of learners having additional needs. Learners make good progress in the school. Achievement and standards in Religious Education overall are good, with pupils, for the most part, meeting the learning objectives and outcomes set, according to their age and stage of development. Work needs to be more clearly differentiated to ensure that all needs, including those of the higher achievers, are fully met. There is no significant difference in performance by learners of different gender. Learners with special needs make good progress in Religious Education with the help provided by additional adult support. Learners are given opportunities to record their

knowledge and understanding and express their own thoughts and ideas in a variety of different ways. The school checks on the progress made by pupils through their assessment procedures. Scrutiny and moderation of the formal assessments made is ensuring that teachers are gaining a good understanding and awareness of the levels of attainment in Religious Education. This should enable them to focus tasks more accurately to raise standards. Learners' work is frequently marked with positive, affirming comments and 'Assessment for Learning' strategies are becoming more consistently used to good effect in raising standards. In all key stages learners were very confident in discussion and demonstrated sound knowledge and understanding of the subject. They felt able to express their thoughts and opinions freely. All children show enjoyment of and enthusiasm for their work and behave well. They work together collaboratively and co-operatively treating one another with courtesy and respect and looking out for each other's welfare, thus following the school's code for respecting others and acting with care and consideration. Children make a good contribution to the school community. Teachers encourage them to be responsible for themselves and, where appropriate, for others. This is exemplified by the older children, who take responsibility for areas of school life such as playground buddies where they play an important role in assisting younger pupils to play games, in looking out for the vulnerable and in helping to promote positive behaviour at playtimes. Pupils undertake work to support charity and those in need by fund raising and taking part in a variety of sponsored events. The school council and eco-school committee play key roles in promoting children's views, dealing with their concerns and developing their awareness of environmental issues. Some school council members were part of the panel that interviewed new members of staff.

Grade: 2

Quality of Provision for Religious Education

Teaching and learning

Overall the quality of provision for Religious Education is good. The subject co-ordinator is developing a clearer view of learning and teaching through monitoring processes. Formal lesson observations have recently been undertaken as has less formal monitoring of pupils work. Planning of the topics is generally limited and does not cater for the full range of ability in the class. It is recommended that planning is monitored formally by the co-ordinator on a regular basis and good practice shared among staff members. The learning needs of all children are addressed through the use of good teaching and learning strategies, and by support from additional adults. Work needs to be consistently differentiated to enable the needs of all the children to be fully met. Teachers should have higher expectations of the more able pupils and plan to give them more challenging tasks. In lessons, children are given opportunities to work both independently and collaboratively. Good use is made of praise and affirmation for good work, attitude and behaviour. This leads to a happy, positive learning environment where success is often acknowledged and celebrated. In their interview on the day of inspection, children talked confidently and enthusiastically about all

the topics covered this year and were able to relate the relevance of their own life experience to the Christian understanding of the topics. Assessment of learners' work is good. Records are kept and this information should now be used to inform future planning more consistently. Parents and carers are enabled to become involved in their children's Religious Education by the provision of school newsletters and annual reports sent home. The provision of a termly Religious Education newsletter also gives parents a good understanding of what their children are learning in the subject and helps them to fulfil a supporting role.

Grade: 2

Curriculum

The Religious Education curriculum meets the needs and interests of learners well. 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 thus building on prior learning. This ensures complete Religious Education entitlement for each child and meets national and diocesan requirements. Of the total curriculum time 10% is allocated to Religious Education. This is good and fulfils the requirements of the Bishops of England and Wales. The leadership of the school ensures suitable positioning of Religious Education on timetables thus enabling quality time to be devoted to the subject across the school. Overall the Religious Education curriculum makes a good contribution to learners' spiritual and moral development as the Gospel values of love, respect and caring for others underpin the provision. Some opportunities are taken for reflection on what has been learned in the plenary sessions at the end of lessons.

Grade: 2

Leadership and Management

Religious Education

Leadership and management are good at raising achievement and supporting all learners in Religious Education. There is a clear vision for the subject as laid out in the school's self evaluation document. It truly reflects the school's mission in developing the Catholic life and Religious Education. Priorities for the subject are clearly identified and realistic targets set. The co-ordinator provides good, enthusiastic leadership and commitment to the subject. Excellent, up to date, documentation guides and directs all members of staff in their delivery of the subject. Archdiocesan briefings and meetings are well attended and information etc. is shared with staff members at designated staff meetings. This has ensured that they are kept up to date of any new information, resources, initiatives etc. Performance in Religious Education has been monitored well by the co-ordinator. Self-assessment is undertaken for each topic by staff and learners. Of the 9 members of staff teaching Religious Education, 5 have a suitable qualification in the subject and a

further 3 teachers are currently studying for the *Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies*. Senior managers ensure that all staff members are supported, through Inset opportunities. This outstanding practice should continue. The budget for Religious Education is good and this has enabled excellent resources to be purchased and deployed to raise standards and to enhance the school environment, teaching and Collective Worship. Good use is being made of Information and Communications Technology throughout the school by members of staff. The school is well-resourced with ICT facilities. It is recommended that the children make regular use of these facilities as part of their Religious Education curriculum. Teaching assistants and higher level teaching assistants are deployed very effectively to support learners. Although the learning needs of most children are well catered, it is felt that higher achievers need more challenging work to enable them to achieve their full potential in the subject. The coordinator acknowledges this and is putting steps in place to rectify the situation through target setting and tracking progress. The governors are kept informed and up to date on matters relating to Religious Education and the Catholic life of the school through the headteacher's termly reports. The chair of governors and the parish priest are regular visitors to school and work closely with the Religious Education coordinator and headteacher. Governors discharge their responsibilities well. New governors have been appointed recently and would all benefit from becoming involved in Archdiocesan training opportunities.

Grade: 2

Catholic Life of the School

The Headteacher, Religious Education coordinator and senior leaders develop the Catholic life of the school well and set a clear vision and direction for the school that is shared with all members of the community. Our Lady Immaculate School is a place in which the gospel spirit of loving and serving permeates its life and work. It is a happy, welcoming, Christian community committed to supporting and caring for every child. This is apparent in the excellent relationships that have been established within the school and especially in the warm and friendly way the children are treated by members of staff. Children are encouraged to develop and follow their own class codes of conduct and the school's code for respecting everybody. A good Mission Statement, which expresses the philosophy of education in this school, is in place as are clear aims which emanate from it. The sentiments are lived out by all members of the community. The statement should be displayed prominently throughout the school and continue to inform policies and other documentation. The Catholic life of the school is monitored well, but at the next review of the Mission Statement, all who form part of the school community should be involved in the process of renewal, to ensure that they know it and are able to play their part in living and promoting it. Parents are welcome into school and are invited to all Masses, celebrations and Liturgies. The school works closely with the parish in preparing children for the Sacraments.

Grade 2

Collective Worship

The quality of Collective Worship is good. The school provides Collective Worship in a variety of ways for each child daily. Throughout the year Collective Worship provides a variety of experiences for pupils. This fulfils government and Archdiocesan guidance. An excellent, up to date policy that states the nature and purpose of Collective Worship has been produced alongside guidelines that support its planning and delivery. Formal monitoring of Collective Worship should take place to enable good practice to be identified and shared. Children respond well, are prayerful and respectful during Collective Worship and confidently share their opinions and views. They should be enabled to engage in the planning and delivery of Collective Worship to enrich their experience as appropriate to their age and capacity. Teachers should be encouraged to ensure that all pupils are actively involved and fully participating in class acts of worship. Adults present in worship participate well and are good role models. Members of staff share the '*Before you Begin*' section at the start of each topic to reflect on it and deepen their understanding. There are regular '*Rejoice*' assemblies to which the parents are invited. Appropriate focal points are evident in all classrooms and other areas of the school and these enhance the prayerful environment. Children who will receive their First Holy Communion this year have the opportunity to attend Mass with the parish community on a regular basis. House masses are shared with children in Key Stage 2. Collective Worship makes a good contribution to spiritual and moral development.

Grade: 2

Community Cohesion

The school is good at promoting community cohesion. There is a shared vision and commitment to serve the common good. Leadership at all levels respects difference, values diversity and promotes equal opportunities for all. Collective Worship reflects and respects the diversity of belief within the community well. The use of the Religious Education Programme, *Here I Am*, provides outstanding support to community cohesion. Learners have had opportunity to explore the beliefs and values of other faiths: Judaism and Hinduism. There are plans to reintroduce visitors from the Hindu Faith to enrich the children's understanding of another religion. Links with the parish are growing, and this is much appreciated by all involved. All relevant Sacramental preparation is done through the parish by the parish catechist and the Year 3 teacher who is also a leader for Children's Liturgy in the parish. One parent commented that the way the preparation had been undertaken this year, was superb and had been a really worthwhile, enjoyable experience for both the children and their parents. The school building is used by the community in a number of ways e.g. for Yoga and Baby Gym, and there are extra curricular activities and enrichment opportunities available for pupils outside school hours e.g. art club. Visitors from the local community have come into school to share their knowledge, experience and expertise with the children e.g. a World War 2 evacuee, chess and basket ball coaches.

The school community shows a concern for the well being of those less fortunate than themselves in their support of local, national and global charities e.g. in compiling shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child and 'Buckets of Love' to send to needy children. The eco-school committee promote understanding of global and environmental issues. There are designated playground leaders who assist younger pupils with organising games. Transition procedures are in place to facilitate the admission of young pupils from nursery and home. The chaplain from the local secondary school visits the Year 6 to alleviate any worries they may have about their transfer to Key Stage 3. There are growing links with a school in Romania and with others in Australia through the school's own links with the local Rugby League Club.

Grade 2