



ARCHDIOCESE OF LIVERPOOL

INSPECTION REPORT

HOLY FAMILY CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

CRONTON

Inspection Date 16 November 2011
Inspectors Mrs Marie Connolly Mrs Sheila Callaghan
Unique Reference Number 104454

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 211
Chair of Governors Mrs Maria Raymond
Head teacher Mrs Janette Cook-Hannah
School address Hall Lane
Cronton,
Widnes,
WA8 5BW.
Telephone number 0151 424 3926
E-mail address holyfamilycronton@knowsley.gov.uk
Date of last inspection 18 September 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

Holy Family is an average sized Catholic Primary School situated in Cronton, serving the parishes of Holy Family and St. Pius X. There are 211 children on roll of whom 199 are baptised Catholic, 12 come from other Christian denominations. There are no children from other faith or religious traditions. There are 11 teachers 8 of whom teach Religious Education. Eight are Catholic. Eight teachers have a suitable qualification in Religious Education. Since the last inspection a new Chair of governors has been appointed. The same headteacher and Religious Education co-ordinator have remained in post. The Deputy headteacher has been seconded to another local school and an internal acting deputy is in post.

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:-

This is a truly outstanding school in providing Catholic Education. There is a clear vision for Catholic Education which is embraced by the whole school community. This ensures that its distinctive Catholic nature permeates every aspect of school life and every child feels valued, cared for and respected. The pursuit of excellence has ensured the school has maintained and built on previously good and outstanding performance. This is reflected throughout all the displays all around the school, workbooks and conversations with staff and children. Self evaluation is honest and broadly matches the judgements made in this report. 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 excellent. This is largely due to the care and encouragement shown by all staff to their individual needs and the differentiation of work to meet same. The school is successfully addressing the areas it has identified for improvement. The leadership and coordinator are deeply motivated and communicate high expectations to staff and Governors in order to secure improvement. Staff are affirmed and are provided with regular In-service to support their ongoing development. Realistic and challenging plans stem from the analysis obtained through monitoring and assessment. These and the findings of this inspection will continue to be used to ensure outcomes are maintained and further built on. There is enthusiasm and openness to embracing new initiatives and challenges.

Overall the school has outstanding capacity for sustained improvement.

What the school needs to do to improve further

- Implement any ongoing areas for development outlined in the schools development plan including:
 - tracking and analysis to be reported back to relevant bodies including governors;
 - further develop opportunities for children's self-assessment;
 - moderation of children's work and assessments to ensure consistency;
 - continue providing opportunities for children to plan and deliver Collective Worship;
 - continue developing links with parish in light of Family Catechesis.

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 high and improving and children make outstanding progress in relation to their starting points and capabilities. Analysis of assessments undertaken has begun to provide evidence of pupils' generally attaining the appropriate level or above for their age and stage of development in each key stage. There is no significant difference in performance between pupils of different gender. Outcomes for pupils with additional or special needs are excellent. 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 starting to become more aware of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life. The detailed analysis of assessment outcomes ensures information is available to target any underachievement. Pupils are encouraged to work independently and collaboratively. Pupils showed enthusiasm for and some great enjoyment of their learning in Religious Education. Pupils' behaviour overall is outstanding. Children have a real sense of belonging to the school community and value and respect others. The Mission Statement is clearly lived out on a daily basis and owned by the children. Pupils are encouraged to take on roles of responsibility in the school for example school council. They are quick to praise each other. Positive attitudes in pupils are fostered in numerous ways and many initiatives help support this e.g. the 'show off' board. Pupils show consideration and care for others both in school and the wider community and take an increasing responsibility for themselves and their actions. This is evident in their many charitable fundraising events and also their work with other local schools e.g. the Ecumenical Village Service and Cronton Gala.

Children are outstanding in responding to and participating in the schools Collective Worship. They are developing their understanding of the religious seasons and feasts. They show a readiness to reflect on and celebrate their lived experiences through music and drama, participating at liturgical events. They are keen to participate in acts of worship for example by reading, or using objects symbolically. They sing joyfully, act with reverence and join in traditional and community prayers appropriately. All show respect. Pupils' knowledge of prayer and liturgy is increasing. They are becoming more familiar with a variety of prayer styles. They are learning to appreciate and are open to the Word of God in the scriptures using some creative ways to explore it and recognising its relevance today.

Children have been encouraged to become more confident in preparing and leading worship. This will continue to be developed from their earliest years. Teachers guide children when they plan acts of worship to ensure opportunities are given for personal reflection and stillness and the full active participation of all.

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	1

How effective the provision is for Catholic Education

The quality of teaching overall is outstanding in ensuring that pupils are interested and engaged and make outstanding progress. Teachers overall enthusiasm for the delivery of the subject is inspirational. Teachers have begun to take into account pupils' prior learning. Differentiated tasks are employed and indicated when planning. It also takes into consideration the 'driver words'. Teachers ensure the work planned consolidates, builds and extends on pupils knowledge and understanding. Pupils are made aware of the learning objectives and outcomes. The cover page in their workbooks indicates clearly what they will learn throughout the topic. These are re-visited helping pupils evaluate their learning. Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to work independently and collaboratively. Some highly creative and imaginative teaching and learning strategies are employed e.g. role play, hot seating use of technology to research and visually record work, inviting visitors and excellent cross curricular links. When this happens children show a real enthusiasm for and enjoyment of their work. Monitoring of teaching, planning and workbooks indicates where this happens and this good practice should be shared to ensure even greater consistency in teaching, and use of these creative strategies throughout the school. Time management is effective. The school is well resourced. Teachers ensure that resources are used efficiently to challenge and stimulate learning e.g. use of Power Point presentations. Excellent use is being made of ICT in classrooms. Sharing this further enhances teaching throughout the school. Teachers and others use a variety of strategies to sustain and motivate pupils e.g. marking, rewards and positively affirming pupils throughout lessons. Personalised and challenging marking is applied consistently. Using photographs taken during the topic to record work in workbooks is excellent. Teaching assistants provide outstanding support and have excellent relationships with those children who need their support most.

The assessment of pupils work in Religious Education is outstanding. The school is excellent at implementing assessment strategies. Assessment information is recorded fully and accurately on the attainment record of all pupils. Teachers are able to identify how well pupils are achieving and use this information to differentiate appropriately and tackle any underachievement and further challenge those of higher ability. Teachers are providing pupils with some opportunities to evaluate their own work and this has been identified as an area for ongoing development. The Remember booklets that are passed up through the school provide an excellent record of what the children learn in Religious Education. The work undertaken is passed on at the end of each year to the next teacher through technology. This is a most useful initiative. Assessment

information is collated by the subject leader and school leadership and will be shared with all concerned e.g. teachers, governors and parents. Achievement and effort are celebrated regularly.

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. The school is innovative in the manner in which it presents the curriculum. It makes children's learning relevant and exciting most successfully. Teachers ensure full coverage of the Religious Education programme when planning to meet the learning outcomes. Some highly creative and imaginative and well planned strategies capitalise on expertise within and beyond the school enriching pupils learning e.g. Astronaut Bob visiting early years linked their literacy work to the topic Visitors in a highly creative and memorable manner. Use of the Church to enhance learning continues to be developed. Use of the interactive whiteboard, links to other subjects e.g. art, music, drama etc is excellent. Parents are informed of the Religious Education topics to be covered each term and are consulted depending on the topic being covered. Weekly newsletters include matters relating to Religious Education. The school makes creative links with home through initiatives such as the 'Posada'. The school implements new curriculum developments with enthusiasm. The Religious Education curriculum provides many opportunities for nurturing pupils' spiritual and moral development. Teachers handle sensitive issues with great compassion and care for the children. They enable children to deepen their own understanding and explore differences in belief and practice to their own. This work is promoting respect in school and beyond.

The Collective Worship provided is outstanding in reflecting the Catholic character of the school. It takes into account the Faith backgrounds among the pupils. Collective Worship plays an important part in meeting the Spiritual needs of all staff and pupils. Key seasons of the Church's year are celebrated and other festivals and feasts. A prayerful atmosphere is created to ensure all gather respectfully. Creativity in presentation enables children engage with the theme, readings and prayers. Opportunities are provided by teachers to enable full, active and conscious participation of all those present. Children are enabled to pray formally and informally. The coordinator has provided inservice opportunities for Staff to develop their skills in planning and leading Collective Worship. This has been passed on to pupils. Opportunities are sometimes provided for parents, carers, parishioners and governors to participate in celebrations. This is greatly appreciated. Parents and grandparents assemblies have been a most warmly received.

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	1
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 understanding of and commitment to the Mission of the Church. This is reflected in the Schools own Mission Statement. All who form part of the school community including parents, governors and children were involved in the review and development of the Mission Statement. Its aims and motto direct and guide every aspect of school life. The mission in practice is displayed creatively and visually using many of the wonderful photographic images all around the school. Opportunities are provided for the staff and pupils to play an active part in Catholic life and Mission of the school for example the work undertaken on other faiths or Religions, community and charity work etc. They are constantly striving to improve. A range of opportunities for Spiritual and Moral development are provided for staff and pupils' such as staff use of *Before You Begin*, links with the parish and local community, staff and pupils celebrating together throughout each year etc. Pupils have a keen awareness of their need for outreach and support many local, national and international charities first hand and through fundraising. Parents and the Chair of Governors are fulsome in their praise of the schools commitment to its Catholic Mission.

Leaders and managers monitor the progress of all pupils and the quality of teaching and learning. They have begun to use data to evaluate the schools performance, celebrate, and plan future improvements and the school continues to improve. Targets, timescales and clear lines of accountability are clearly identified. Key areas for development are being and will continue to be tackled systematically. Excellent practice is shared through monitoring of teaching. The Religious Education Coordinator is well supported by the leadership of the school. She listens well to advice, welcomes future challenges and is willing to share her own ideas and expertise with others. Clear documentation is available to guide and direct all staff in the delivery of the subject. Governors are outstanding in fulfilling their responsibilities. The Chair of Governors and leadership team are effectively helping to shape the direction of the school through setting priorities for improvement, monitoring and evaluating the impact of outcomes. They are well organised and fully involved in evaluating the Catholic life of the school. With the help of and information provided by the coordinator they have some understanding of practise and achievement in Religious Education. This will improve when attainment tracking is shared with them fully. Their relationships with staff are constructive, challenging and supportive.

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 any religious diversity within the school. There are extremely positive and caring relationships at every level within the school. Concern, respect and hospitality are key strengths of the school. This is reflected beautifully in the 'aspirations tree as you enter the school. Leaders and managers facilitate pupils' involvement in service to the parish, local and wider communities, e.g. singing in the local nursing home. Outstanding links are fostered through the coordinator and leadership team who promote positive relationships between the school home and community by talking with governors, parish priest and others in the community. Parents are consulted regularly and involved in a variety of ways in the life of the school. Parents will soon be able to access information on line. 'Learning stories' have proved a most creative way of involving parents. The use of the 'Here I am' programme promotes community cohesion. Children have studied the work of CAFOD and use materials to support their work e.g. during Lent and Advent. Children have explored the beliefs and values of other faiths and religions. This helps to promote tolerance and respect for those who think differently. In the topic 'Judaism' a visiting speaker from the Jewish faith tradition was invited to support the children's work. One of the part time teachers supported the work on Islam sharing her personal knowledge and understanding. This was excellent. Children are encouraged to look at how others make sense of the world, deepen their understanding and explore differences in belief and practice to their own. When possible it would be good to visit some places of worship for other religious traditions to further enhance this work.

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