



ARCHDIOCESE OF LIVERPOOL

INSPECTION REPORT

ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

EUXTON

Tuesday 16 October 2007

Inspectors Rev. Desmond Seddon Mr. David O'Brien

URN 119676

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	210
Chair of governors	Mrs. Jane Conley
School address	Wigan Road Euxton, Chorley, PR7 6JW.
Telephone number	01257 262049
E-mail address	head@euxton-st-marys.lancs.sch.uk
Date of last inspection	1 April 2003
Head teacher	Mrs. Barbara Coulton

Introduction

This inspection was carried out under Section 48 of the Education Act 2006.

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. Mary's is an average sized Catholic primary school served by the Lancashire Local Authority situated in the village of Euxton. It is an area of above average social and economic background according to all the indicators. The number of children receiving free school meals is 3%, which is well below the national average. Nearly 70% of the children are drawn from the parish of St. Mary's, Euxton. There are currently 210 children on roll of whom 176 are baptised Catholics. There are 27 children attending the school from other Christian denominations and 4 from *Other Faith* traditions. The majority of children come from a white British background. Attainment on entry on roll is broadly that expected. There are 7 teachers teaching Religious Education. There are 8 teachers who are Catholics in the school, 6 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. Mary's is an outstanding Catholic school. It is an inclusive community, underpinned by a strong Catholic family ethos, which establishes a positive climate for work. This is a school where the uniqueness of every child is celebrated. The gospel values evidently underpin every aspect of school life. Excellent relationships exist at every level. All are made welcome and made to feel that they matter. The school works closely with home, the parish, and the wider community. Standards are good. Learners achieve well consistently and make good progress throughout the school. Overall, teaching is good. Assessment provides clear guidance on learning. The curriculum is well planned. Learners' behaviour is outstanding. Collective Worship is good. The provision for learners' spiritual and moral development is outstanding. Both curriculum Religious Education and Collective Worship make a significant contribution to this development. The headteacher and subject leader are exceptional in the manner in which they direct and guide the school. They understand the outstanding nature of the school but are realistic in appreciating the hard work and effort that enables this to be maintained and developed further.

Grade: 1

Improvement since the last inspection

Following the last Section 23 Inspection in April 2003 effective steps have been taken to address any minor areas for development. The development of the school council has been tremendously successful as it provides an additional voice for the children. Monitoring and assessment procedures have also been introduced. These will continue to develop and further raise standards. Portfolios of work and photographic evidence bears witness to the outstanding Catholic life and work of this school community.

Grade: 1

Capacity to improve

The school's self-evaluation is excellent. The judgements made in this document are slightly modest in some areas compared with the judgements made in this report. The updating of the school's self-evaluation is undertaken regularly and informs the Religious Education development plan. This plan could be incorporated into the self-evaluation document. The minor areas for development identified in this report should now be included. The leadership has a clear understanding of what needs to be developed, and openness to change. There is outstanding capacity for further improvement as shown by the shared commitment to Religious Education and related whole school issues by all.

Grade: 1

What the school should do to improve further

- Continue to implement the areas for development identified in the self-evaluation document.

Achievement and standards

Learners' attainment on entry to the school is broadly average or slightly above. Learners make good progress in the school. Standards in Religious Education overall are good, with the majority of learners meeting the learning objectives and outcomes set, according to their age and stage of development. 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 excellent teaching assistants and differentiation of tasks to meet their needs. This needs developing further across the school. The school checks on the progress made by all through assessment and positive marking. In all key stages learners show confidence in discussion and feedback, showing a real knowledge and understanding of the subject and its relevance in their lives. All children show joy and enthusiasm in their work. Standards will continue to rise and further progress be made by the ongoing use of the information gathered through the monitoring of planning, teaching and learning and scrutiny of the formal assessments made each term.

Catholic beliefs and values are at the heart of learners' spiritual and moral development. Children have a very good understanding of the life and teaching of Jesus. Many strategies are used to enable them apply this teaching to their own lives and experiences. The work undertaken on *Other Faiths* has helped the children understand how others make sense of the world in which we live. There are good links with the parish. The behaviour of children throughout the school is outstanding. Children have an excellent sense of right and wrong. The school provides outstanding opportunities for their spiritual and moral development. The children make an outstanding contribution to the school and wider community. Their parents are understandably proud of them and the school.

Grade: 2

Quality of Provision for Religious Education

Teaching and learning

Overall, the quality of Religious Education teaching is good with three lessons observed being outstanding. The learning needs of all children are addressed through the use of some creative and imaginative teaching and learning strategies, some differentiation of tasks and by additional support. Sharing outstanding practice through the monitoring process enabling teachers to shadow where this has been identified will enable the ongoing development of all. Teaching is enthusiastic and helps learners engage with the material presented and thoroughly enjoy their lessons. Some use is being made of information communications technology. Well-prepared resources enhanced

the delivery of lessons. Teachers and support assistants provide an appropriate environment which supports and challenges learners. Teachers make use of very good teaching assistants to support those learners with additional learning needs.

The quality of planning is appropriate and the coordinator reminds teachers to include all elements and this enables consistent rigour in planning throughout the school. The lessons observed had good pace and timing, which maintained the interest and concentration of learners and kept them on task and focussed. Work is provided that enables learners to work independently and collaboratively. Teachers ensure that learners understand the purpose of the lesson by sharing the learning objective. This is then re-visited during the plenary session. Learners' religious literacy is being enhanced by use of the key words for each topic. Assessment is good and teachers select pieces of children's own work for assessment purposes that show clearly which targets have been met in order to inform future planning. This is contained in excellent portfolios each academic year.

Parents and carers are enabled to become involved in their children's Religious Education by the provision of regular newsletters and curriculum meetings informing them of what is to be covered.

Grade: 2

Curriculum

The Religious Education curriculum is outstanding in meeting the needs and interests of learners. 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 diocesan requirements. Of the total curriculum time 10% is allocated to Religious Education. This fulfils the requirements of the Bishops of England and Wales. The leadership of the school ensures suitable positioning of Religious Education on timetables. Curriculum outlines are provided for parents. Effective links are made with home and the parish. The school and governors are continually thinking of ways to further improve links with both home and the parish. Overall the Religious Education curriculum makes an outstanding contribution to learners' spiritual and moral development. The overwhelming enthusiasm and energy of teachers in caring for the children and each other is a powerful example to the children of 'living and learning together in faith'. They make the curriculum relevant. The parish priest is very supportive and appreciative of the school's work.

Grade: 1

Leadership and Management

Religious Education

Leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners in Religious Education are outstanding. There is a clear vision for the subject within the mission of the school with a focus on raising standards even further. The subject coordinator supported by the headteacher provides effective and efficient support to staff. She is outstanding in the area of school religious leadership, showing enthusiasm, flair and commitment. Excellent documentation guides and directs all staff in their delivery of the subject. There is an excellent subject leader's file. Coordinators' meetings have been attended regularly and information is disseminated to all staff during staff meetings or in-service time. Regular in-service is provided for all staff in Religious Education. Performance in Religious Education is monitored. The ongoing scrutiny of planning, workbooks and teaching and learning and effective use of the findings will enable even greater consistency and raise standards further. Self-assessment is undertaken for each topic by staff and learners. St. Mary's is socially inclusive by providing equality of access and of opportunity for all learners to make progress. Priorities for the subject are identified and targets set. Funding for Religious Education is good. Very good resources have been purchased or created by members of staff and are deployed to achieve good standards. The school is making good use of interactive white boards. The subject coordinator and headteacher keep the governors informed on matters relating to Religious Education. Governors discharge their responsibilities very effectively, and are most supportive in the life and work of the school. There is a nominated Religious Education governor. Governors are frequent visitors to the school.

Grade: 1

Catholic Life of the School

The leadership and management in developing the Catholic life of the school through the Mission Statement are outstanding. This is a credit to the headteacher. St. Mary's is a place in which the gospel spirit of love, consideration, care and respect permeates every aspect of its life and work and promotes the development of each child. Relationships at every level are excellent. An atmosphere of joy and happiness permeates the school. The school has a clear sense of its mission in reaching out to those less fortunate than itself. Learners support a variety of local, national and international charities both by becoming better informed and by raising funds and resources e.g. the work undertaken for CAFOD and recently exploring the millennium goals. The Mission Statement is displayed around the school. Its aims and objectives direct and guide every aspect of school life. The school community recognises the importance of regularly reviewing the Mission Statement. The school is open to a review of the practical objectives as the community changes. This serves to ensure ownership and also affirm the enormous contribution made by all.

Grade: 1

Collective Worship

The quality of Collective Worship is good and contains all the appropriate elements. 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 learners. This fulfils government and Archdiocesan guidance. A good policy that states the nature and purpose of Collective Worship has been produced. Principles that support the planning and delivery of Collective Worship wherever and whenever it takes place are included in this policy. Collective Worship stimulates reflection on spiritual and moral issues and on personal beliefs. The school should monitor the planning and delivery of Collective Worship to enable good practice to be shared.

A focus for worship is provided in each classroom using suitable religious objects and artefacts. A suitable focus for worship is set up in the school hall when children gather there for worship. This helps children reflect more readily on the concept being covered. Learners are encouraged to participate in a meaningful manner both in class and larger gatherings. This enriches their experience. Teachers ensure time is given to individual reflection and are helping them develop skills which enhance this e.g. power-point presentations. Creativity is used to support learners' ongoing spiritual and moral development during acts of Collective Worship e.g. use of different types of prayer, music and symbol. Parents, governors and friends of the school community are invited to a variety of assemblies and services. This is greatly appreciated.

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 based on family values. Parents and carers are involved in decision-making and life of the school. This is particularly seen with parents of other world faiths. Collective Worship celebrates, reflects and respects the diversity of belief within the school. The use of the Religious Education programme *Here I Am* supports very well community cohesion. Learners have explored the beliefs and values of two other faiths each year. They show a concern for the well being of those less fortunate than themselves in their support of CAFOD. The school council gives the children an appropriate voice within the school.

Grade: 1