



DIOCESE OF
SHREWSBURY

SECTION 48 INSPECTION REPORT:

**THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL
AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

School:	Holy Cross Catholic Primary School
Address:	Gautby Road Birkenhead CH41 7DU
Tel No:	0151 652 8454
URN:	105087
Headteacher:	Miss J Bradley
Chair of Governors:	Rev P McGovern
Date of Inspection:	3 December 2012
Inspectors:	Mr K Toms Mrs P Blake

Mission Statement

Love God and Love one another.

Our school as part of the parish of Holy Cross provides a living experience of our Catholic faith through the teachings of the Gospel and the Sacraments.

It is our mission to create opportunities which enable each person to recognise a sense of their own worth and that of others.

The curriculum enriches the experiences of the children and promotes spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Everyone involved in the life of the school is valued for the contribution they make, ensuring that God is a powerful living influence in all aspects of school life.

FACTUAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Pupils	FS		Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Total
	PT	FT							
Number on roll	27	20	28	28	20	23	22	22	190
Catholics on roll	17	5	17	21	7	19	19	20	125
Other Christian denomination	10	14	10	6	12	3	4	2	61
Other faith background	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
No stated religious affiliation	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	3
Number of learners from ethnic groups	2	1	3	2	2	1	0	0	11
Total on SEN Register	0	3	6	4	5	6	8	11	43
Total with Statements of SEN	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
FSM	/	12	22	24	13	13	15	12	111

Exclusions in last academic year	Permanent	0	Fixed term	3
Index of multiple deprivation	0.67			

PARISHES SERVED BY THE SCHOOL	
Name of Parish	No of Pupils
Our Lady, Holy Cross and St. Paul	190

With reference to Year 6 – the Catholic schools to which your pupils transferred	
PUPILS TRANSFER	
Name of School	No of Pupils
St. Mary's College	20
St. John Plessington	3
St. Anselm's College	1
Non Catholic High Schools	4
Total	28

RE TEACHING TIME	FS		Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Total
	PT	FT							
Total RE teaching time (Hours)	1	2	2	2	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	17

STAFFING	
Full-time teachers	10
Part-time teachers	0
Total full-time equivalent	10
Support assistants	12
Percentage of Catholic teachers f.t.e.	60
How many teachers teach RE (P) f.t.e.	8
Number of teachers with CCRS or equivalent	6
Number of teachers currently undertaking CCRS	0

NAME OF SCHOOL	
Published admission number	30
Number of classes	8
Average class size KS1	28
Average class size KS2	22

FINANCIAL DATA

EXPENDITURE (£)	Last financial year 2011/12 (actual)	Current financial year 2012/13 (budget)	Next financial year 2013/14 (budget)
RE	5155.79	3500	3000
English	4309.70	2500	2000
Mathematics	2392.60	2500	2000
Science	1542.12	1000	1000

Key to judgements: Grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory and grade 4 inadequate	Judgement
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OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL	2
<p>How effective the school is in providing Catholic Education</p> <p>Holy Cross Catholic Primary School is providing a good Catholic Education with a number of outstanding features.</p> <p>Pupils make good overall progress through each Key Stage so that by the time the children leave at the end of Key Stage 2 the majority of children achieve expected levels in their Religious Education. They are keen and enthusiastic learners and their behaviour is outstanding. The pupils are actively involved in the faith life of the school and are outstanding in their responses to Acts of Worship.</p> <p>Provision at Holy Cross is good overall with purposeful teaching and learning observed throughout the school. Good programmes of assessment and monitoring have been established and this will support further progress in raising standards of attainment. The quality of Collective Acts of Worship is outstanding.</p> <p>Leaders and managers are deeply committed to the Catholic Mission of the school and work hard to ensure all within the Holy Cross community are supported in their faith journey. The mission statement to “love one another” is lived out to the full and underpins the Catholic life of Holy Cross School.</p> <p><u>What the school could do to improve further</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to embed the assessment and monitoring strategies to raise standards of attainment in Religious Education. • Continue to develop staff expertise in delivering the new scheme of work and supplementary material so that they can help children achieve the higher levels of attainment. 	

PUPILS	2
<p>How good outcomes are for pupils, taking account of variations between different groups.</p> <p>Outcomes for all pupils in Religious Education are good with some pupils making exceptional progress. The children are keen to learn and clearly enjoy their lessons. They responded well to this term’s themes taking the children into Advent and showed a very good understanding of their prior work.</p> <p>Although written responses did not reflect expected levels of attainment and their understanding, the children’s oral responses certainly did. This was well-demonstrated during interviews when pupils from Key Stage 1 spoke about God choosing Abraham.</p> <p>In lessons observed in the Foundation stage and Key Stage 1, pupils were able to talk about the Advent wreaths they were making and the concept of the circle as God’s never-ending love. They all understood the importance of preparation for babies and visitors and the links with Christmas. They talked about waiting, using language appropriate to the topic.</p> <p>Children at the end of Key Stage 2 were able to re-cap prior work on people from the Old Testament chosen by God and how Mary was also chosen by God to be the Mother of Jesus. They were beginning to understand the religious use of the word “mystery” and relate it to the Annunciation story. Children continued to make good progress though Key Stage 2.</p> <p>In Year 3 children undertook activities to further their comprehension of what is a sin, reconciliation, and the need to repair relationships, while in Year 4 the children showed a good understanding of the need to make good choices and the concept of having a “conscience”. They knew that we all need to seek forgiveness at some time. Year 5 children had successfully explored the Ten Commandments and how important it is to have this guidance in our daily lives. The Year 6 children were able to relate to key figures who have fought for justice. The children thoroughly enjoyed the freeze-frame drama exploring a “pipes of peace” video clip, and showed a good understanding of the need for us all to work for peace and justice.</p>	

In pupil interviews all the children appreciated belonging to this Christian family and related this well to their mission statement to “love one another”. They felt safe and cared for at school and the older children spoke well of the need to tolerate, understand and respect people of other faiths and cultures. They felt that all would be made welcome at Holy Cross school. Their behaviour throughout the inspection was outstanding and a credit to all within the Holy Cross Community.

During the inspection two Acts of Worship were observed and the children were tremendously reflective and prayerful. They were actively involved in preparing and leading their own liturgies. This too was outstanding.

PROVISION	2
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How effective the provision is for Catholic Education

All teaching in Religious Education was good through the school and there were some outstanding elements. Planning was detailed with learning objectives identified and clearly focused on raising standards of attainment. All staff are using “I can statements” and the sub-levels to identify next steps of learning. Lessons observed were well structured and of a good pace. Teaching strategies were focused on learning objectives and these, where appropriate, were shared with the children. The quality of differentiation was variable throughout the school, however in some classes there were some outstanding examples. In classes, where teachers demonstrated expertise in this area, they were highly effective in supporting all the different abilities in the class and had a positive impact on the quality of learning. Support from teaching assistants was very good and was successfully directed in order to help children achieve the lesson objectives.

Much work has been done on marking and this should be developed further to support next steps to learning. All monitoring and assessment procedures reflect Diocesan guidelines and further monitoring of lessons is planned for the spring term. However monitoring should be more sharply focused on raising the standard of attainment. Assessment of the new scheme of work is ongoing and is being used effectively to reflect on, and evaluate, children’s learning. Good use was made of resources, including IT, to support learning; a variety of learning activities, especially the use of drama, helped the children to consolidate their understanding of the work they were doing.

Display and prayer focus areas were of a very high standard and were used to good effect to provide prayerful gathering spaces. The quality and variety of Acts of Worship provided, and the involvement of the children, is outstanding and reflects the community’s commitment to its Catholic mission.

LEADERS AND MANAGERS	2
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How effective leaders and managers are in developing the Catholic Life of the school

Leaders and managers are deeply committed to developing the Catholic life of the school. This area was good overall, and in addition, they were seen to be developing some outstanding practices to support the community at Holy Cross.

The Senior Management Team, ably lead by the Headteacher and RE coordinator, has successfully introduced the new scheme, *The Way The Truth and The Life* and they have established good monitoring and assessment systems to develop this and to raise the standard of attainment in Religious Education. A newly-appointed member of the Senior Management Team has taken on specific responsibilities for monitoring and assessment and is enthusiastic wanting to develop staff skills still further. There is a good range of in-service training to support staff and a member of the Governing Body also acts as a mentor for staff new to the teaching of Religious Education.

The Governing Body is actively involved in raising the standards of attainment in Religious Education. A number of Governors visit school regularly, meeting the senior managers and regularly reviewing the school’s provision for Religious Education. They are very supportive of the school and are increasing their own skills of acting as critical friends. Together with the Parish Priest, who is the Chair of Governors, they work closely with parents and the wider parish community in helping them in their own faith development.

Each Friday Mass is celebrated after school, and this allows new parents and older parishioners (and indeed past pupils) to come together as a worshipping community. The very effective Baptismal and First Sacraments programme helps parents to support their children more fully in the Catholic life of the school.

Parents are very supportive of the school and recognize the importance of belonging to this faith community. They are well supported by a number of initiatives established by the school with other agencies. This includes the Catholic Children's Society, the Seasons for Growth initiative and planned workshops for parents by the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator. The school benefits from its cooperation with St Mary's Catholic High School and an after school young sports link has been established. All of this will have the effect of transforming already good provision into provision which is outstanding.

Community cohesion is good and there are plans to enhance and extend links to the wider community both here and overseas.

PARENTS' QUESTIONNAIRE

Number of questionnaires distributed:

Number of questionnaires returned 69

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
1	My child enjoys school	44	25			
2	I am happy with the values and attitudes that the school teaches	52	16		1	
3	I am made to feel welcome in school	52	15	1		
4	The school seeks the views of parents/carers and takes account of their suggestions and concerns	44	24	1		
5	The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught in Religious Education	48	19	1		1
6	The school enables my child/ren to achieve a good standard of work in Religious Education	48	20			1
7	The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress in Religious Education	40	26	2		1

PUPILS' QUESTIONNAIRE (Y2)

	Yes	Sometimes	No
1 I like being at this school.	24	4	
2 I learn new things in Here I am lessons.	25	3	
3 I enjoy learning about Jesus and how to live as His friend	20	8	
4 I have to work hard	28		
5 My teacher helps me when I get stuck so I can make my work better.	28		
6 My teacher listens to me.	18	10	
7 When I am unhappy there is always an adult I can talk to.	23	5	
8 I get praise when I do my best	27	1	
9 Other children are kind and behave well	28		
10 I am happy on the playground.	21	7	
11 I am allowed to help in class and around school.	26	2	
12 I enjoy the times we say our prayers, talk to God and sing songs about Jesus	27	1	

PUPILS' QUESTIONNAIRE (Y6)

	Yes	Mostly	Sometimes	No
1 Do you like being at this school?	12	2	5	
2 Do you find out new things in Religious Education lessons?	17	2		
3 Are your Religious Education lessons interesting and fun?	12	7		
4 Do you get help when you are stuck?	15	2	2	
5 Do you have to work hard?	19			
6 Do teachers show you how to make your work better?	13	5	1	
7 Do other children behave well?	3	12	2	2
8 Are teachers fair to you?	11	4	4	
9 Do teachers listen to your ideas?	12	3	4	
10 Are you trusted to do things on your own?	18	1		
11 Do you enjoy your times of prayer together?	15	3	1	

INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Key to judgements: Grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory and grade 4 inadequate	Judgement
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OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL	
How effective the school is in providing Catholic Education	2
How good outcomes are for pupils, taking particular account of variations between different groups	2
How effective the provision is in promoting Catholic education	2
How effective leaders and managers are in developing the Catholic life of the school	2
The school's capacity for sustained improvement	2

PUPILS	
How good outcomes are for pupils, taking into account of variations between different groups	2
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>The quality of pupils' learning and their progress</i> 	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>The quality of learning for pupils with particular learning needs and/or disabilities</i> 	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Pupils standards of attainment in Religious Education</i> 	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life of the school	2
How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's collective worship	1

PROVISION	
How effective the provision is for Catholic Education	2
The quality of teaching and how purposeful learning is in Religious Education	2
The effectiveness of assessment and academic guidance in Religious Education	2
The extent to which the Religious Education curriculum meets pupils needs following Bishops Conference policy and Diocesan requirements	2
The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school	1

LEADERS AND MANAGERS	
How effective leaders and managers are in developing the Catholic life of the school	2
How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic life of the school and plan for improvement to outcomes for pupils.	2
How well leaders and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education and plan for improvement to outcomes for all pupils	2
The extent to which the governing body provides effective challenge and support for the Catholic dimension of the school so that areas for development are tackled decisively and statutory and canonical responsibilities are met	2
How well leaders and managers develop partnerships with parents / carers and other providers, organisations and services to promote Catholic learning and pupil well-being	12
How effectively leaders and managers promote community cohesion	2