

DIOCESE OF SHREWSBURY

DIOCESAN EDUCATION SERVICE

...committed to encouraging 'fullness of life'



SECTION 48 INSPECTION REPORT:

THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

School:	St Ambrose Catholic Primary School
Address:	Rostrevor Road Adswood Stockport SK3 8LQ
Tel No:	0161 480 8466
URN:	106115
Headteacher:	Mrs H Hilton
Chair of Governors:	Mr A Martin
Date of Inspection:	8 February 2012
Inspectors:	Mrs S Lyonette Miss J Kenny

Vision Statement

We at St Ambrose School will grow in the love and service of Jesus and fulfil our potential within a community where everyone is valued.

Mission Statement

The Mission Statement is for all St Ambrose community young and old, and is the foundation of the school's purpose.

- St Ambrose school is here to provide a quality Catholic education.
- We embrace the parish of St Ambrose and work in close partnership with the community and home.
- Through high standards and expectations we help everyone to achieve their best in work and play regardless of gender, special needs, disability or race.
- We celebrate success and achievement in all things.
- We show respect and love to others.
- We forgive those who have hurt us.
- We welcome and support those in need and work to create a place where they feel safe and secure.
- We prepare for and share the Sacraments as a family.

FACTUAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school's context and, particularly, any significant changes in its circumstances since the last inspection

Pupils	FS		Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Total
	PT	FT							
Number on roll	26	27	23	30	27	21	15	20	189
Catholics on roll	10	9	10	7	13	7	13	10	78
Other Christian denomination	3	4	6	7	5	7	2	5	39
Other faith background	1	3	1	4	1	2	0	6	18
No stated religious affiliation	7	10	8	11	7	5	0	0	48
Number of learners from ethnic groups		8	5	7	4	6	5	4	39
Total on SEN Register	1	1	1	6	6	7	4	6	32
Total with Statements of SEN	1							1	2
FSM		9	6	13	6	6	5	6	51

Exclusions in last academic year	Permanent		Fixed term	1
Index of multiple deprivation	11			

PARISHES SERVED BY THE SCHOOL	
Name of Parish	No of Pupils
St Vincent's	0
St Ambrose	189

With reference to Year 6 – the Catholic schools to which your pupils transferred	
PUPILS TRANSFER	
Name of School	No of Pupils
St James	8

TEACHING TIME	FS		Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Total
	PT	FT							
Total teaching time (Hours)	15	23	23	23	25	25	25	25	

STAFFING	
Full-time teachers	7
Part-time teachers	3
Total full-time equivalent	
Support assistants	11
Percentage of Catholic teachers f.t.e.	71
How many teachers teach RE (P) f.t.e.	6
Number of teachers with CCRS or equivalent	5
Number of teachers currently undertaking CCRS	0

NAME OF SCHOOL	
Published admission number	210
Number of classes	7
Average class size KS1	26
Average class size KS2	21

FINANCIAL DATA

EXPENDITURE (£)	Last financial year 2010/11	Current financial year 2011/12	Next financial year 2012/13
RE	1357.57	1935.14	
English			
Mathematics			
Science			

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>St Ambrose Catholic Primary School provides a good Catholic education and has many outstanding qualities. The staff, governors and children work and learn in a community where everyone is valued, and where all have the opportunity to grow in love and service of Jesus. This is their vision, which is lived out daily through their mission to enable everyone in the school community to achieve their best in work and play, regardless of gender, special needs, disability or race.</p> <p>The atmosphere in the school reflects clearly the commitment and dedication of the senior leaders, staff and governors to providing an environment where all pupils are respected and learn to respect and accept differences of their peers. The response of the pupils to this commitment is outstanding and their respect for each other and the developing spirituality is a credit to the community at St Ambrose.</p> <p>What the school could do to improve further</p> <p>Following the recent introduction of The Way, The Truth and The Life scheme of work senior leaders should:</p> <p>Continue to develop assessment procedures as indicated in the school development plan so that senior leaders are confident that there is consistently accurate levelling across the whole school.</p> <p>Plan an audit of individual staff needs so that the school's good and outstanding teaching is consistent across all age groups.</p> <p>Involve governors and staff in the strategic planning of Religious Education as an on-going feature of the school plan to ensure the continued successful development of the Religious Education curriculum.</p> <p>Continue to develop the Collective Worship, which is a strength in the school, by ensuring that there are high quality opportunities for reflection and informal prayer in the classroom setting.</p>	

PUPILS	1
<p>How good outcomes are for pupils, taking account of variations between different groups.</p> <p>Pupils enjoy their Religious Education lessons and by the time they leave for secondary school, they make good progress, relative to their starting points, in their knowledge and understanding of the teachings of Jesus and how they can be relevant for them in everyday life. There are many good and outstanding opportunities provided for pupils' learning in St Ambrose. A number of the lessons observed were outstanding and all lessons had good features. In all lessons pupils' behaviour was exemplary; they worked with enthusiasm and no inappropriate behaviour was observed throughout the day. Pupils expressed their appreciation for the care and support offered to them by all the staff working in school. They spoke confidently about the way the staff supported them in their work and were able to tell us about their favourite miracles and parables. One Y2 child told us that parables are stories with a deeper meaning. Pupils spoke enthusiastically about the charities they support and the variety of ways in which they raise funds.</p> <p>The whole school Collective Worship was led by Year 1 and the behaviour and responses from pupils, staff and parents indicated that the class-led Collective Worship times are prayerful and joyful, and are relevant to the pupils' own experiences. This is a very special part of the Catholic life at St Ambrose.</p> <p>Pupils engage positively with the learning activities planned for them by their teachers, and they enjoy their learning in a happy and secure environment. The learning and progress of all pupils, including those with particular learning difficulties, is good, because of the pupils' response to the quality of relationships within the school and the opportunities offered to them in their Religious Education lessons. The effective assessment strategies used in Foundation 2 are a particular strength in ensuring that pupils' needs are met.</p>	

PROVISION	2
<p>How effective the provision is for Catholic Education</p> <p>The lessons observed supported the findings of the headteacher's own observations. Some of the lessons observed during the inspection were outstanding. Staff are committed to developing their own subject knowledge and have responded with commitment to the recent introduction of the new Religious Education scheme, The Way, The Truth and The Life. Senior leaders should continue to provide support for those teachers who are less confident about the new subject knowledge and the development of pupils' spirituality. Marking and feedback to pupils is consistently of a very high quality, and when this is more established, it will be instrumental in improving the standards in Religious Education.</p> <p>Assessment has been developed since the last inspection and teachers have gained in confidence when assessing pupils' understanding and knowledge. The recent introduction of The Way, The Truth and The Life has necessitated new strategies for assessment, and all staff are working hard to use these effectively. Opportunities for evaluating the impact of assessments are highlighted in the school development plan. These include moderating pupils' work to ensure that expectations are consistent in all age groups.</p> <p>The quality of whole school Collective Worship is outstanding and is given a high profile in the school. Parents respond well to the many occasions for parents and governors to attend Masses and assemblies. Senior leaders now need to help teachers develop more meaningful opportunities for personal prayer and reflection in class. The Parish Priest is a regular visitor and school and class Masses are a particular feature of the school's spiritual development. These are well attended and enjoyed by the parents and governors.</p>	

LEADERS AND MANAGERS	2
<p>How effective leaders and managers are in developing the Catholic Life of the school</p> <p>The leaders and managers carry out their roles within the spirit of the school Mission and relationships in the school are built on respect and trust. These values permeate through the day to day life in school because of the enthusiastic dedication of the headteacher, and the support and dedication of the staff and Governors. The provision for pupils' spiritual and moral development is good. The headteacher, who is also the Religious Education leader, senior leaders and staff are excellent role models for the pupils. Senior leaders have planned further developments in the monitoring and evaluation of Religious Education and by including an audit of staff strengths and areas for improvement these developments should assist senior leaders in ensuring that teaching standards and assessments are accurate and consistently applied throughout the school.</p> <p>The Governing Body is highly supportive of the headteacher and school staff. They are well informed about school life and make an effective contribution to the Catholic life of the school. Governors are confident that there are opportunities to discuss the Religious Education curriculum, staff training needs and attainment and progress of pupils. More opportunities for evaluating the impact of the school's strategic plans would further enhance their effective contribution to the Catholic dimension of St Ambrose.</p> <p>The questionnaires returned by parents indicate overwhelming support for the staff and the education they provide for the children. The pupils' questionnaires indicate clearly that they feel valued and safe, and know that there is always someone to go to if they are worried. Pupils told us that they don't just get on with their special friends; they get on with everyone and help and forgive each other.</p> <p>The headteacher and senior leaders have created many varied and high quality opportunities to develop good partnerships with groups and organisations in the community, including the Parent Partnership, community workers, St Aquinas 6th Form College and Catholic Youth Service. Pupils also visit the local nursing home to sing carols at Christmas and take part in the ecumenical carol service at St George's as well as the Beechwood Tree of Light Service at St Ambrose church. Pupils have enjoyed raising a significant amount of money for charities such as CAFOD and Well Spring.</p> <p>The senior leaders, staff and governors are clearly committed to the promotion of community cohesion and make time to take part in, and contribute to, projects and experiences that deepen the pupils' appreciation of the importance of community and their acceptance of differences within that community. St Ambrose is a Catholic school built on the gospel values of trust, forgiveness and respect for all.</p>	

INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Key to judgements: Grade 1 = 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	1
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	1
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> 	3
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

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	2

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	2
How effectively leaders and managers promote community cohesion	2

YEAR 2 PUPIL QUESTIONNAIRES

Number of Pupils: 27

		PERCENTAGES		
		YES	SOMETIMES	NO
1	I like being at this school.	89	11	0
2	I learn new things in Here I Am lessons.	81	19	0
3	I enjoy learning about Jesus and how to live as His friend.	55	15	0
4	I have to work hard.	100	0	0
5	My teacher helps me when I get stuck so I can make my work better.	81	19	0
6	My teacher listens to me.	56	44	0
7	When I am unhappy there is always an adult I can talk to.	60	40	0
8	I get praise when I do my best.	74	22	4
9	Other children are kind and behave well	41	55	4
10	I am happy on the playground.	67	29	4
11	I am allowed to help in class and around school.	37	55	8
12	I enjoy the times we say our prayers, talk to God and sing songs about Jesus.	92	0	8

YEAR 6 QUESTIONNAIRES

Number of Pupils: 26

		PERCENTAGES			
		Yes	Mostly	Sometimes	No
1	Do you like being at this school?	73	23	8	0
2	Do you find out new things in Religious Education lessons?	62	42	0	0
3	Are your Religious Education lessons interesting?	42	50	8	0
4	Do you get help when you are stuck?	96	0	4	0
5	Do you have to work hard?	100	0	0	0
6	Do teachers show you how to make your work better?	85	15	0	0
7	Do other children behave well?	92	8	0	0
8	Are teachers fair to you?	84	8	0	0
9	Do teachers listen to your ideas?	84	8	8	0
10	Are you given responsibility?	88	12	0	0
11	Do you enjoy your times of prayer together?	58	30	12	0

PARENTS' QUESTIONNAIRE

44 RETURNED

		PERCENTAGES			
		Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
1	My child enjoys school	68	32	0	0
2	I am happy with the values and attitudes that the school teaches	55	45	0	0
3	I am made to feel welcome in school	61	39	0	0
4	The school seeks the views of parents/carers and takes account of their suggestions and concerns	41	50	2	0
5	The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught in Religious Education	37	52	2	0
6	The school enables my child/ren to achieve a good standard of work in Religious Education	43	43	4	2
7	The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress in Religious Education	23	64	4	2