



## ARCHDIOCESE OF LIVERPOOL

INSPECTION REPORT

MUCH WOOLTON CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

LIVERPOOL

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Tuesday 27 January 2009

Inspectors            Rev. D. Melly    Mrs. S. Banister    Mr. P. Cronin

URN                    104636

Inspection carried out under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005

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Type of School	Catholic Primary
Age range of pupils	4 -11
Number on roll	408
Chair of Governors	Miss C. Chapman
School address	Watergate Lane, Woolton, Liverpool, L25 8QH.
Telephone number	0151 428 6114
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E-mail address	Muchwoolton-ht@muchwoolton.liverpool.sch.uk
Date of last inspection	18 October 2005
Headteacher	Mr. J. Keogh

## 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

Much Woolton School is a larger than average primary school. It is situated in Woolton Village. Fifty percent of the learners are from the parish of St. Mary's, Woolton. The remainder come from other surrounding parishes. The school is part of the Liverpool Local Authority. The majority of learners come from relatively advantaged backgrounds. There are 408 learners on role of whom 396 are baptised Catholics, 3 come from other Christian denominations and 9 from *Other Faith* traditions. The number of learners eligible for free school meals is below average, as is the number with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. There are 16 members of staff 12 of whom are Catholic. Fourteen teachers teach Religious Education, 13 of who 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**

Much Woolton is a good Catholic school with outstanding features. It is a loving and Christ centred community where all are enabled to achieve their potential, working in partnership with the homes and the parish. A strong Catholic ethos is certainly evident in the caring and secure learning environment, which has been created for work. Good relationships have obviously been established by working closely with home, parish and the local and global community. All are valued, respected, cared for and affirmed. Standards are good. Learners achieve well and make good progress. Teaching is good. Assessment is in place and is being developed. The curriculum planning is good overall and results in a good delivery of the *Here / Am* programme. Learners' behaviour is outstanding. The Religious Education programme, Collective Worship and the Catholic life of the school make a good contribution to the learners' spiritual and moral development. The school is good in promoting community cohesion. The headteacher and senior management team have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and a vision of how to meet development needs.

**Grade: 2**

### **Improvement since the last inspection**

Following the last Section 23 Inspection in October 2005 the school has taken effective steps to address the issue highlighted in the last report. All staff are now attending Archdiocesan courses. Monitoring of teaching has been introduced. The Mission Statement has been revised and aims and objectives are being considered.

**Grade: 2**

### **Capacity to improve**

The school's self-evaluation is accurate and fairly comprehensive. The priorities for both the improvement of Religious Education and the Catholic life of the school stem from the self-evaluation and the school development plan. The leadership has a clear understanding of what needs to be developed and is committed to improvement. There is a good capacity for further improvement.

**Grade: 2**

## **What the school should do to improve further**

- Share good practice throughout the school with an emphasis on a creative use of the Religious Education programme;
- Develop planning and assessment further;
- Continue to implement the targets set out in the school self-evaluation document.

## **Achievement and standards**

Learners' attainment on entry to the school is about that expected of children for their age. Learners make good progress in the school and by Year 6 meet the expectations of the *Here I Am* programme while some exceed. Standards in Religious Education overall are good. There are no significant differences in performance by learners of different gender. Learners with special needs make good progress in Religious Education with the provision of differing tasks and the help provided by the teachers and learning support assistants. The school checks on the progress made by all through assessment. The development of this work is a priority for the school. Learners' work is always marked with some constructive and challenging comments that affirm and support the learning process and highlight strengths and ways to further improve. Learners are very confident and articulate in discussion and are not afraid to ask questions. They ask good questions which show good knowledge and understanding of Religious Education. Learners are given opportunities to record their knowledge and understanding and express their own thoughts and feelings in a variety of styles.

Catholic beliefs and values are at the heart of learners' spiritual development. The school celebrates achievements in lessons and assemblies. Children throughout the school are confident and obviously enjoy work. They have a good understanding of the life and teaching of Jesus and his Church and are able to apply this to their own lives and experiences. Learners' behaviour is outstanding. They all have a very good sense of right and wrong and a love of justice, particularly the school council. The Gospel values of love, respect, tolerance and forgiveness underpin the provision for learners' moral development enabling learners to make an outstanding contribution to the school community. Teachers and learners show genuine care, concern and respect for each other. All are polite and helpful.

**Grade: 2**

## **Quality of Provision for Religious Education**

### **Teaching and learning**

The quality of teaching is good overall. Most of the teachers are secure in their knowledge and understanding of the *Here I Am* programme and this is

reflected in their planning and delivery of the topics. Some planning needs to be more thorough to include dates, evaluation and differentiation. *Here I Am* is well used on the whole. Some good use is made of information communication technology and especially power-point. Question and answer techniques in most classes are good and recall previous learning well. There is some good use of *God's Story* and *The Church's Story*. Good use is also made of role-play, drama, talking partners and group discussion. Most learners are challenged and respond positively. Children's behaviour and relationships are outstanding in all lessons. Learners are obviously valued in class. They are listened to and treated with respect not just by the teachers and support staff but also by their peers. Affirmation is used to support children's learning. The tasks observed on the day were appropriate and in most classes differentiated tasks were provided to cater for the needs of all the children. Because of this approach the children are able to learn and make progress. All of the above good practice could profitably be shared throughout the school in order to ensure consistency in teaching. The Religious Education Curriculum would benefit also from training in a more creative approach to teaching and learning. There is very good structure to lessons, which, together with the diligence of the teachers and other adults, helps learners stay focussed. Monitoring of teaching and learning through observation of planning and learners' workbooks has been put in place since the last inspection and is good. Good use is made of teaching assistants and other adults to support learning and inclusion. The learning objective is shared at the beginning of most lessons and is sometimes revisited at the end. This ensures that the sharp focus of the lesson is adhered to and the work recommended in the *Here I Am* programme is covered. Learners' work is always marked, sometimes with comments that are affirming and encouraging giving details of how the learners can make further progress. The work is formally assessed once a term, following the directions of the Department for Christian Education. This is being developed

Parents and carers are enabled to become involved in their children's Religious Education in a variety of ways. Newsletters are sent to the homes each term outlining, among other things, the religious elements of the curriculum. These outlines are soon to be placed on the school's website. Parents are also invited to open evenings and to attend school Masses, assemblies and special celebrations. The school also reports on progress in Religious Education. Replies to the parents' questionnaire show that parents are appreciative of the work of the school.

## **Grade: 2**

### **Curriculum**

The school is effective in meeting the Religious Education curriculum needs and interests of learners. Through using the *Here I Am* programme recommended by the Archdiocese the school 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 approximately 10% is allocated to Religious Education, which is a requirement of the Bishops of England and Wales. The Religious Education curriculum makes a good impact on learners' spiritual and moral development.

**Grade: 2**

## **Leadership and Management**

### **Religious Education**

The leadership and management in Religious Education are good. There is a vision for the subject within the mission of the school, which is shared by all and is reflected in the very positive relationships throughout the school. The leadership team and the Religious Education coordinator are committed to the cause of Religious Education. They are making a good contribution in leading and supporting staff. A good handbook guides and directs all staff in their delivery of Religious Education. Monitoring through scrutiny of planning, teaching and workbooks is in place and is good. The process of assessment recommended by the Department for Christian Education has been put in place. The development of this is a priority for the school. Thirteen of the 14 staff teaching Religious Education have a suitable qualification. Teaching assistants are very effectively deployed. The coordinator attends coordinators' meetings and information is disseminated to all staff during staff meetings. Since the last inspection all staff are now given an opportunity to attend courses provided by the Department for Christian Education on a rolling programme. Priorities for the subject are clearly identified and targets set. Religious Education is well funded and money has obviously been well spent. The Religious Education coordinator keeps governors informed on matters relating to Religious Education. Governors are keen to discharge their responsibilities effectively. They are very involved in the life of the school and are both supportive and at times challenging.

**Grade: 2**

### **Catholic Life of the School**

There is outstanding leadership and management in developing the Catholic life of the school through the Mission Statement. Much Woolton is a happy, caring school in which the Gospel spirit of love, respect, and tolerance permeates every aspect of its life and work. The learners are obviously valued, affirmed and respected. This helps them to be confident and happy. The Mission Statement has been revised since the last inspection and now states; 'With Jesus, we love, learn and grow'. This is well known and understood by all, especially the learners. Aims, flowing from the Mission Statement with objectives showing how the aims are to be achieved, are now to be worked on.

**Grade: 1**

## **Collective Worship**

The quality of Collective Worship is good with some outstanding features. The school provides Collective Worship in a variety of ways for each child daily, in class, key stage or school gatherings. This fulfils government and Archdiocesan guidance. A very good policy and guidelines to support the planning, delivery and nurturing of Collective Worship is in place. Acts of worship included music and appropriate focus tables to create a prayerful atmosphere. There is prayer both formal and informal. Very good use is made of power-point to aid reflection. There was some enthusiastic singing. There was also a raising of experience of moral issues, particularly those associated with Holocaust Memorial Day. This led to a spiritual response from the learners. The learners present responded well to the warm and affirming worship experience. Focus tables and displays in each classroom are colourful, attractive and well presented, expressing well the topic of *Journeys*. This enhances the delivery of the curriculum and Collective Worship. Collective Worship makes a good contribution to the spiritual and moral development of the children.

**Grade: 2**

## **Community Cohesion**

The school's leadership and management in promoting community cohesion are outstanding. There is a shared vision and commitment to serve the common good. Leadership at all levels respects difference, values diversity and ensures equal opportunities for all. It is obvious that every person matters, particularly the disadvantaged. Collective Worship celebrates, reflects and respects the diversity of belief within the school. The use of the Religious Education programme, *Here I Am*, supports community cohesion. Learners have explored the beliefs and values of Judaism and Islam. All show a concern for the well being of those less fortunate than themselves in their support of Nugent Care, CAFOD, Shelter, Marie Curie, the British Legion, Buckets of Love and Operation Christmas Child. The development of community cohesion is a priority for the school as the school looks for ways to be more involved in the life of the local and global community.

**Grade 1**