



## ARCHDIOCESE OF LIVERPOOL

### INSPECTION REPORT

## ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

### RAINHILL

---

Date of Inspection                      Tuesday 1 May 2012

Inspectors                                      Mrs. Denise Hegarty  
Miss Julie Mosinski, Mrs Pat Cooney

Unique Reference Number              104815

Inspection carried out under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005

---

Type of School                              Catholic Primary

Age range of pupils                      4 – 11 years

Number on roll                              318

Chair of Governors                      Dr. John O'Donnell

Executive Head teacher                Mrs. Honoria Arnold

School address                              School Lane  
Rainhill  
Prescot  
L35 6NN.

Telephone number                      01744678550

E-mail address                              stbartholomes@sthelens.org.uk

Date of last inspection                    Tuesday 25 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

St Bartholomew's is a larger than average sized Catholic Primary School situated in Rainhill in the St. Helens district of the Archdiocese and serves the parish of St Bartholomew's, Rainhill. A minority of children attend the school from other local parishes. There are 318 children on roll of whom 268 are baptised Catholic, 2 children come from other Christian denominations and 4 are from other faith or religious traditions. Forty four pupils have no specified religious affiliation. There are 17 teachers at the school 13 of whom teach Religious Education. Fifteen teachers are Catholic and 14 have a suitable qualification in Religious Education. Since the last inspection the headteacher has retired and the school currently has an executive headteacher.

There is an on-site breakfast and after school club managed by the governing body with capacity for up to 60 children. The school has gained a number of awards including Investors in People status, Information and Communication Technology quality mark and Healthy Schools status.

### Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

---

© 2012 copyright – Archdiocese of Liverpool. This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

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:-**

St. Bartholomew's Primary School provides outstanding Catholic education. There is a shared vision which is embraced by the whole school community and reinforced in the school's Mission Statement and motto. Its values and ethos are visibly reflected in the exemplary attitudes and relationships between all members of the school community. This is a real 'loving family' where children thrive in the caring atmosphere the school provides and become confident, learners with positive attitudes towards each other.

Since the last inspection, the school has securely maintained and continued to build on its previously outstanding performance. All new initiatives have been embraced and addressed as the school strives to improve standards and provision. Self evaluation is rigorous, comprehensive and accurate.

Achievement is good and attainment is above average. There is no significant difference in performance between groups of pupils. Pupils are very happy in school, are keen to learn and make good progress. They make an outstanding contribution to the Catholic life of the school and respond outstandingly to Collective Worship.

Teaching and learning in Religious Education is good with some outstanding elements. Assessment of Religious Education is also good. The Religious Education curriculum is inclusive and is adapted very well to meet the needs of all pupils and enable them to meet their full potential in Religious Education. The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school is outstanding.

The school is extremely successful in addressing the areas it has identified for improvement. Leadership over time has been deeply motivated and worked hard to secure improvement to outcomes and provision. School leaders are committed to the ethos and mission of the school and promote high expectations of all pupils spiritually, morally and in all aspects of learning. Staff are encouraged and supported in their ongoing development. Governors are justly proud of their school, promote it very well and are loyal to it. They carry out their duties in an outstanding manner. Parents are very supportive and appreciate all the school does. They are entirely happy with the values and attitudes taught. The excellent support given by the parish priest to the school is particularly tangible through his frequent visits.

There is an outstanding capacity for sustained improvement. This is evident in the dedication, enthusiasm and commitment shown by governors, school leaders and all staff members. The school's rigorous self-evaluation systems have led to appropriate priorities and targets being set and reviewed. Monitoring and evaluation systems have become well-embedded and realistic and challenging

plans are made to improve outcomes. There is full commitment to the continuing professional development of the staff.

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

- Further raise standards of attainment in Religious Education by:
  - using the driver words from the levels of attainment consistently throughout the school in planning, questioning and the giving of tasks to groups and individuals;
  - moderating work across the school to ensure consistent levelling.
- Continue to implement the targets set out in the school's Self-Evaluation Document. That includes:
  - continuing to track pupil achievement across the school;
  - ensuring a more secure knowledge of standards in Religious Education to be able to report more accurately to stakeholders;
  - continuing to involve pupils in preparing and leading Collective Worship in an age appropriate manner;
  - involving children more consistently in the self-evaluation of their work.

## **How good outcomes are for individuals and groups of pupils**

Pupils' achievements in Religious Education are good and they make very good progress in relation to their starting points and capabilities throughout the school. On the whole, pupils' attainment in Religious Education is above average. Analyses of all assessments undertaken to date and scrutiny of work provide evidence of pupils generally attaining appropriate levels for their age and stage of development in each key stage, with many also achieving at a higher level. There is no difference in performance between pupils of different gender. Outcomes for pupils with additional or special needs are also good. They are supported well by differentiated tasks and effective additional support. Children are becoming increasingly more religiously literate as they become familiar with the key words from the topics and can clearly relate their own life experiences to the Christian understanding of the topics. They spoke at length, on the day of inspection, about how their Religious Education affects their lives and makes demands on them. Their knowledge, understanding and skills are appropriate to their age or capacity and many exceed expectations. Children work well independently and collaboratively showing interest, excitement and enthusiasm. They thoroughly enjoy their work and learning, behave extremely well and are developing mature, positive attitudes and useful skills. They are encouraged to record work with a creative and artistic approach.

Pupils, from an early age, participate willingly and benefit greatly from a range of activities on offer. They take on roles of responsibility which contribute considerably to the Catholic life of the school. Children are actively involved in developing and evaluating the Catholic character of the school through 'pupil voice' and through the school council. Pupils have a great sense of belonging to the school community and value and respect others. They are real ambassadors for the school and are very loyal to it. They show an excellent understanding of what is right and wrong, follow their class rules and behave outstandingly during lesson times. Pupils are actively involved in outreach work locally; nationally and

globally e.g. in fund raising for charity, collecting shoe boxes for Samaritan's Purse, sponsored walking for Willowbrook Hospice and by donating Harvest Festival contributions to the Salvation Army. They are considerate and caring of others both in school and the wider community. Education for Personal Relationships, the use of SEAL and circle time have all fostered very positive attitudes in pupils who take an increasing responsibility for themselves and their actions. They praise and acknowledge the contribution of others, rejoicing in each others' successes. They show a readiness to embrace and celebrate their lived experiences.

Pupils respond to, and participate outstandingly in Collective Worship. They are reverent, prayerful and show the utmost respect. Their knowledge of prayer and liturgy is increasing and they are familiar with a variety of prayer styles. Pupils' liturgical formation is developing very well. No-one is expected to act in a manner contrary to their beliefs. Pupils are acquiring a range of skills which is enabling them to prepare and lead celebrations in an age and stage appropriate manner. The children sing joyfully, reflect purposefully and join in community prayers confidently. They show reverence for and an appreciation of the Word of God in the Scriptures.

<b>How good outcomes are for individuals and groups of pupils</b>	
How well pupils achieve in Religious Education	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• pupils' standards of attainment in Religious Education</li> </ul>	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the quality of pupils' learning and their progress in Religious Education</li> </ul>	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 is consistently very effective in ensuring that pupils are motivated and engaged in their work and consequently, they make good progress. Teachers take into account pupils' prior learning and endeavour to meet learners' needs. Work given consolidates, builds and extends the children's knowledge and understanding. Teachers plan to provide opportunities for pupils to work both independently and collaboratively. Effort and achievement are recognised, rewarded and celebrated. Pupils are affirmed and know how well they are doing. Outstanding teachers use developmental marking and indicate what pupils have to do to improve further. Effective use is made of time and resources are well-deployed. Behaviour is managed positively during lessons with good use of praise and encouragement. Teachers are enthusiastic in their delivery of the subject and are excellent role models for the children to emulate. The school is committed to the continuing development of staff and consequently, provides opportunities for regular in-service to enable all staff members to have an up to date knowledge and understanding of current developments. The Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies is promoted well and new staff members are expected to enrol and supported throughout.

The assessment of pupils' work in Religious Education is good. There are good assessment strategies that provide information on the achievement of all pupils. Teachers use the information gleaned to ensure work is differentiated across the levels of ability. Formal assessment tasks are undertaken and recorded appropriately. Work is moderated across the school and evidence is kept. This practice should continue to ensure the consistency of levels across the school. Assessment information is collated by the subject leader and shared with the staff and governors. Annual reports to parents on Religious Education could be tailored more closely to indicate individual progress and achievement made.

The curriculum meets pupils' needs outstandingly. Staff and leaders see Religious Education as the core subject and the heart of the curriculum. 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 the different year and mixed aged groups. 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. Planning ensures full coverage of the Religious Education programme. Imaginative and well planned strategies are deployed to enrich pupils' learning. Termly Religious Education letters and regular school newsletters provide information about what is being taught in Religious Education, and indicate how parents and carers can support their children's learning at home. Parents' and pupils' views and opinions are regularly sought and valued. The school implements new curriculum developments as appropriate, and adapts its curriculum aptly to meet the varying needs of the pupils. The Religious Education curriculum provides excellent opportunities for pupils' spiritual and moral development. This is further enriched by Seal activities and Circle Time. A rewards assembly takes place each weekly to reward good work and behaviour. Children are offered many opportunities to benefit from and contribute to the Catholic life of the school, all of which have a positive impact on their spiritual, moral and social development.

The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school is outstanding. It reflects the Catholic character of the school and takes into account the variety of backgrounds among the pupils. Teachers plan consistently well and use appropriate resources, including the use of ICT, to enhance worship. An excellent policy is in place and appropriate planners are used consistently. The subject leader ensures that Collective Worship has a high profile in the school and is effectively monitored. Staff members use their skills well to engage the children and provide joyful celebrations. Collective Worship plays a key part in meeting the spiritual needs of the pupils. Opportunities are provided to enable full, active and conscious participation of the whole school community. Children are enabled to pray formally and informally. The school provides opportunities for children to develop their skills in planning and leading Collective Worship in an age appropriate way and has identified the need to develop this further. Parents and carers are often invited to join in celebrations of the *'Here I Am'* programme and the Church's liturgical year. The parish priest is a regular visitor and encourages the children to be actively involved in the planning of liturgies and to participate in them as fully as possible.

<b>How effective the provision is for Catholic Education</b>	
The quality of teaching and purposeful learning in Religious Education	2
The effectiveness of assessment in Religious Education	2
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 promote and develop the Catholic life of the school outstandingly and show an excellent understanding of and commitment to the mission of the Church. This is reflected in the school's own Mission Statement which gives a common sense of purpose, directs and guides every aspect of school life. It is lived out by the whole community including parents, parish priest, governors and children who were all involved in its development. Catholic ethos underpins everything that happens within the school. Opportunities are provided for the staff and pupils to play an active part in Catholic life and Mission of the school e.g. through their community involvement in the 24hours of Music.

Leaders and managers ensure that a rich, broad and balanced curriculum is provided with pupils' spiritual and moral development at its heart. There is deep commitment and drive for improvement demonstrated by the former headteacher, the current executive headteacher and the subject leader. They have the support and respect of staff members who all work hard to ensure the children's social, emotional and learning needs are provided for. Ongoing self evaluation and the prioritising of areas found for development ensure that continuous improvements are made in all aspects of the Catholic life of the school. The Self Evaluation Document provides evidence of the school's monitoring, searching analysis and self challenge. It is a rigorous, working document that provides a basis to celebrate the school's strengths and outlines areas for development. It is appropriately prioritised with suitable targets and lines of accountability.

Leaders and managers are skilled in the way they use monitoring data to evaluate the schools performance, celebrate, and plan future improvements. Findings from monitoring processes are used to set targets and inform planning for improvement. Feedback to staff is informative and effective. The subject leader is very effective in the way she leads, manages and guides Religious Education throughout the school. She shows real commitment and enthusiasm and introduces new initiatives when appropriate. Excellent documentation directs and supports all staff in the delivery of the subject. This is updated as required.

Governors have a clear understanding of their role and fulfil their responsibilities outstandingly. They are actively involved in the life of the school, support its Catholic identity and are loyal to and very proud of it. They are effectively helping to shape the direction of the school, are regular visitors and are kept informed of developments in Religious Education and the Catholic life by the subject leader and executive headteacher. They have assured the appointment of a Learning Mentor to support the most vulnerable pupils and their families.

Parents and carers are kept well-informed about the Catholic life of the school through regular newsletters. They are made welcome at the school and are very happy with the Catholic Life and Religious Education provided for their children. They are consulted regularly and involved in a variety of ways in the life of the school. The parish provides the 'Wednesday Word' for families to share together at home.

The school provides very good induction and in-service training to enable staff to further understand the Church's Mission in Education and to play their unique part in it. Governors expect all teaching staff to obtain the Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies and this makes clear the emphasis and importance that is placed on the subject. A range of opportunities for Spiritual and Moral developments are provided for staff and pupils such as the use of the 'Before You Begin' sessions at the start of each topic. These enable staff members to have personal insight into the topic and to reflect on their own understanding.

Leaders and managers work very closely and effectively with the parish priest in promoting the Catholic life of the school. He is also a governor at the school, visits frequently and is very active within the school, supporting the work done there. The executive headteacher, is developing closer links with the parish and this is extending and uniting the school family. The school works well with the parish on the sacramental preparation programme and supports various Church activities. They were very much involved in the **Annual 24hours of Music**.

Leadership at all levels respects difference, values diversity and ensures equal opportunities for all. There are positive relationships at every level within the school. Prayer, worship and the liturgical life of the school reflects and respects the religious diversity within the school. Leaders and managers facilitate pupils' involvement in ecumenism through the Seedlings Trust, and the school also shares some facilities with the local Church of England. Pupils give service to the immediate neighbourhood through, for example, their support of the local hospice and their harvest contributions to the Salvation Army hostel. The wider community is served through their appeals for Nugent Care and CAFOD. The school is particularly proud of its involvement, over a number of years, in fundraising for St. Jacob's School, Campalung, Romania where a previous head teacher has helped to build and now runs a school soup kitchen. The school promotes a culture of respect for individual's similarities and differences. This is undertaken especially during excellent Personal, Social and Health Education lessons and through work on anti-bullying which raises awareness of and addresses many difficult issues.

Dialogue and collaboration is encouraged with people who hold different beliefs and values. The use of the '*Here I am*' programme promotes community cohesion outstandingly. Children have explored the beliefs and values of Islam, Hinduism and Judaism. Year 2 pupils spoke enthusiastically about their recent visit to a Synagogue. There have been visitors of other faiths and religions who have come into school to share experiences of their faith and culture. This all helps to promote tolerance and respect for those who think differently.

St. Bartholomew's is a welcoming, generous and inclusive, school community where all are encouraged to behave as a loving family depicting the values of Christ.



<b>How effective leaders and managers are in developing the Catholic Life of the School</b>	
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