

**SALFORD DIOCESE
INSPECTION REPORT**



**HOLY FAMILY
ROMAN CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL
Lime Green Road Limehurst Village Oldham OL8 3NG**

Inspection date May 2008
 Reporting Inspector Mrs. J. Schofield
 Inspection carried out in accordance with Section 48 of the Education Act 2005

Type of School Catholic Primary
 URN 105724
 Age range of pupils 3-11
 Number on roll 173
 Appropriate authority The governing body
 Chair of Governors Rev. Fr. B. J. Lomax
 Headteacher Mrs. C. Gill
 Religious Education Co-ordinator Mrs. K. Handrick
 Date of previous inspection November 2004

The Inspection judgements are:	Grade	Explanation of the Grades 1 = Outstanding 2 = Good 3 = Satisfactory 4 = Inadequate
Overall effectiveness of the school	2	
Leadership and management of the Catholic life of the school	1	
The quality of Collective Worship	2	
Achievement and standards in Religious Education	2	
The quality of teaching and learning in Religious Education	2	
The quality of the Religious Education curriculum	2	
Leadership and management of curriculum Religious Education	1	
<i>The following pages provide reasons to support these judgements</i>		

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school is a voluntary aided Roman Catholic primary school serving the parish of Holy Family, Limeside. The surrounding area is one of high social and economic deprivation. Consequently many pupils enter the Nursery with attainment significantly below the national average and with very low levels of social and basic language skills. The age range of pupils is from 3 to 11 years. The school's admission number is 30. There are currently 173 pupils on roll of whom 83 are baptised Catholics. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is 50%. The school has identified 35 pupils as having special educational needs. 1 pupil has a statutory statement of special need. There are 8 full time teaching staff all of whom (100%) are of the Catholic faith.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL

Holy Family school is a good Catholic school with some outstanding features. The school's Mission Statement is displayed in the main areas of the building. The caring, inclusive ethos forms a strong foundation for a happy environment in which the community of staff, pupils and parents are valued and nurtured. Good relationships between staff and pupils are a strength. The school works hard to extend these relationships into the home through consultations and information. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of learners is good. Planning, monitoring and the resources supporting the Religious Education curriculum are good. High quality assemblies and classroom worship give good support to the curriculum. Pupils are well motivated and behaviour is very good. From Foundation Stage to the end of Key Stage 2 pupils make good progress. The headteacher has assessed the leadership and management of the Catholic life of the school and the leadership and management of curriculum Religious Education to be good. However inspection evidence gathered indicates these to be of outstanding quality.

Improvement since the last inspection.

Since the last inspection one member of the staff has retired. The school is currently funding a temporary teacher and plans to employ an additional newly qualified teacher in the Nursery in the next academic year. Important improvements have been completed to the fabric of the buildings and the outside playing areas. The key issues raised in the last Section 23 Inspection have been addressed. However, systems for the observation of teaching and learning are presently only at an informal stage. Assessment opportunities and activities linked with the diocesan assessment materials are continuing to develop. A strong leadership team supports the headteacher in the management of the school and makes a positive impact on the strength of support for their colleagues. Governors and parents are well-informed regarding curriculum provision and the progress of pupils.

Capacity to improve

The school's self-evaluation is comprehensive. The governors, headteacher and deputy have a shared vision for the future development of the school. Under the strong leadership of the enthusiastic headteacher they are committed to continuing the development of all aspects of the Catholicity of the school. All staff are committed to their own personal development in their study and delivery of the curriculum. There is good evidence in the current monitoring of the curriculum and prayer and worship that every member of the school community is fully aware of the goals the school is aiming to achieve. The school has good capacity for further improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Further develop the process of moderation of pupils' assessment tasks so as to create an agreed standard of the levels at which pupils are working in Religious Education
- Establish a system to monitor the quality of teaching and pupils' learning in Religious Education.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

The leadership and management of the Catholic life of the school are outstanding. All aspects of the daily life and work of the school are a true reflection of its Mission Statement. A positive ethos in which staff, governors and parents work together, enables pupils to develop to their full potential in a Christian environment where everyone is valued. Learners are encouraged to accept responsibilities as school councillors, prefects and monitors. The parish priest who is the link governor is a welcome visitor in the school playing an important role in the religious life of the pupils. The supportive governors provide challenge and encouragement to the leadership of the school. They are well informed on aspects of Religious Education and the liturgical life of the school through visits to the school and headteacher reports. Their commitment to the development of the Catholic life of the school is reflected in their appointments of Catholic teachers and the funding for ongoing staff training. Partnership with parents who appreciate the care taken of their children is further encouraged through newsletters, parent evenings and good information and reporting regarding the progress of their children. Parents are invited to share in school Masses, assemblies and liturgical celebrations. The school staff play a leading role in the Parish Sacramental Programme. The school shows a strong sense of commitment to the local community and works to extend links with the wider community through its generous support of various local and world wide charities.

THE QUALITY OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

The provision for collective worship in the school is good. Daily acts of worship occur in a variety of settings. All are carefully planned, organised and celebrated and are a regular and integral part of the pupils' prayer life. Each classroom has a focal area for prayer and worship where pupils' work is displayed reflecting the topic they are studying. A whole school assembly in preparation for the feast of Corpus Christi was attended by many of the parents. The pupils gathered to a welcoming hymn as the bible was carried to a central stand. Through readings and delightful solo singing of appropriate hymns the Year 6 pupils told the story of Jesus' command to the apostles to love one another and His promise to his friends to be with them always. We were reminded of the solemnity of the Last Supper, the Ascension and the coming of the Holy Spirit. The assembly continued with a reading from a letter of St. Paul. His message was that as we receive Communion we share in the body and blood of Christ which help to keep us strong in our love for one another. In all the occasions of worship observed during the inspection even the very young pupils prayed with great reverence showing an awareness of the growing importance of prayer in their lives. Acts of collective worship were enhanced by the pupils' joyful singing which made them a spiritually uplifting experience for those present. The opportunities for the pupils to lead collective worship within the school and parish make a significant contribution in promoting a living Christian faith within the community.

ACHIEVEMENT AND STANDARDS IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Achievement and standards in Religious Education are good. The level of attainment when pupils enter the Nursery is below average in social and communication skills. Progress and achievement in Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 is good. By the end Key Stage 2 progress is very good. In the lessons observed, learners were given opportunities to build on their prior knowledge and attainment. Learners were always attentive listeners, confident in both their response to questioning and when working in small groups. They enjoyed their lessons showing an eagerness to learn. Teachers set activities according to pupil's age and ability and used the support staff well to help learners achieve at an appropriate level. In both key stages opportunities were observed for learners to discuss, question, and reflect on issues and appreciate wonder and love. Younger learners understand they are special, that God loves them and gives them many gifts. They are beginning to write short sentences of independent work retelling stories and writing prayers. In Key Stage 2 pupils discuss their work confidently showing good knowledge and using appropriate vocabulary. As they move through Key Stage 2 learners have a growing awareness of the beliefs and values of their faith and are able to relate them to their own life experiences. At all time pupils are encouraged to develop Christian values and respect for themselves and others.

THE QUALITY OF TEACHING AND LEARNING IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The quality of teaching and learning in Religious Education is good overall with some outstanding features in Key Stage 2. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils. Using a range of techniques and resources, along with praise and encouragement, teachers demonstrate good classroom management skills. Pupils respond with enthusiasm and so achieve well. The effective use of support staff both in the classroom and in small withdrawal groups has a positive impact on the behaviour and progress of pupils. Good use of white boards and information communication technology create further interest and enjoyment in the classroom. Lesson plans identify learning objectives and teaching strategies but many do not include any evaluation of their own teaching or of pupils' achievement. Assessment tasks from the new diocesan materials are used each half term. The school is encouraged to develop moderation of these assessments so as to determine more accurately the levels at which pupils are working. A good example of teaching occurred in Year 2. The pupils listened attentively to the story of Jesus teaching the apostles how they should pray the God. They understood it was important to pray and the different kinds of prayer. They discussed prayers used during the school day and how to begin a prayer of thanks that they were going to write. They suggested many examples of reasons in their lives why they should give thanks to God. In the activity some learners wrote independently while others were well supported by the teacher and assistant teacher. All pupils produced thoughtful prayers which they were eager to share with the class.

THE QUALITY OF THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CURRICULUM

The curriculum for Religious Education is good. Time allocated to religious lessons is in line with national and diocesan requirements. Priorities for the future development of the Religious Education curriculum and prayer and worship have already been identified. Teachers display sound knowledge of the curriculum and are confident in the consistency of their delivery of *REvision 2000*. Timetabling of lessons ensures that quality time is allowed to enable pupils to produce work of good standard. Teaching assistants play a collaborative role supporting both teachers and pupils within the classroom and in withdrawal groups. Resources have been updated and together with information communication technology they give valuable support to the delivery of the curriculum. School Masses celebrated in the church, together with assemblies and liturgical celebrations, have a positive impact in supporting, enriching and extending the Religious Education curriculum at the school. In line with diocesan guidelines the provision for the study of World Religions is developing as resources are improving thus making a contribution to social cohesion.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF CURRICULUM RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The leadership and management of Religious Education are outstanding. Working closely with the deputy and with the strong support of the governing body, the on-going development of curriculum Religious Education has been a priority affecting the life and work of the school. The headteacher's reports to governors ensure they are well informed of Religious Education matters. The leadership team work hard to ensure that progress and the development of the curriculum are frequently reviewed. The current experienced co-ordinator for Religious Education has overseen the introduction into the school of many initiatives and supported staff development through her attendance at regular diocesan courses and in-service training. She assesses staff needs and is fully aware of future development needs. Aiming to support the staff and further raise standards the scrutiny of planning and learners' workbooks, are part of the monitoring procedure. There is now a need to establish a system to monitor the quality of teaching and pupils' learning. Assessment procedures are in place and with further development will help to give a clearer indication of pupils' knowledge and understanding. In-service training encourages all staff to challenge their own practice and be adventurous and creative in their delivery of the curriculum. Governors are encouraged to visit the school for occasions of prayer and worship. The parish priest is a welcome visitor in school and plays an active role in the religious life of the school community.