

**SALFORD DIOCESE
INSPECTION REPORT**



**HOLY FAMILY
ROMAN CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL
Great Gates Road Kirkholt Rochdale OL11 2DA**

Inspection date June 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 105830
 Age range of pupils 3-11
 Number on roll 206
 Appropriate authority The governing body
 Chair of Governors Mrs. Doreen Boardman
 Headteacher Mrs. Mary Roberts
 Religious Education Co-ordinator Sister Leonie Rowan
 Date of previous inspection May 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	1	
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

Holy Family is a voluntary aided Roman Catholic primary school situated in the Kirkholt district of Rochdale and serving the parish of Holy Family. Pupils are drawn from an area parts of which have the highest deprivation nationally. It is a small school with 206 pupils on roll including 26 part time nursery pupils. The age range of pupils is from 3 to 11 years. The school's admission number is 30. There are currently 140 pupils on roll who are baptised Catholics. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is 45%. The school has identified 50 pupils as having special educational needs and 3 pupils have a statutory statement of special educational need. There are currently 9 full time teaching staff 7 of whom (78%) are of the Catholic faith.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL

Holy Family is a good Catholic school with some outstanding features. The school's Mission Statement is prominently displayed in areas around the building. The school's inclusive nature supports an established ethos and strong foundation for a happy environment where everyone feels valued and respected. Good relationships between staff and pupils are strengths of the school and its extended community. The spiritual, moral, and social development of learners is good. The planning, monitoring and the resources supporting the Religious Education curriculum are good. High quality assemblies and classroom worship give additional support to the curriculum. Learners are well motivated and behaviour is 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 quality of collective worship to be good. Inspection evidence gathered however indicates the leadership and management of the Catholic life of the school and the quality of collective worship to be outstanding.

Improvement since the last inspection.

Since the last inspection the school has facilitated good staff training for the newly appointed and newly qualified staff. Although the Key Issue raised in the last Section 23 Inspection has not yet been fully addressed the policy and resources to implement the "World Religions and People of other Faiths" are in place. Systems for the observation of teaching and learning are also in place. Assessment procedures are well developed and the levelling of pupils' work is closely linked with diocesan assessment materials. There is a strong leadership team supporting the headteacher in the leadership and management of the school. This team make 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 and headteacher have a shared vision for the future development of the school. The headteacher and deputy, supported by a strong leadership team, are committed to continuing the development of all aspects of the Catholicity of the school. There is good evidence in the effective monitoring of the curriculum and prayer and worship that every member of the school community is 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 work of whole staff moderation of assessments in Religious Education to determine a common understanding of the level at which a pupil is working.
- Introduce the study of World Religions in Key Stage 2

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

The leadership and management of the Catholic life of the school are outstanding. The Mission Statement is displayed in classrooms and prominent places around the school. The leadership team promote a positive ethos in which staff, governors and parents work together to ensure pupils develop to their full potential in a Christian environment where everyone is valued. The parish priest is a regular and welcome visitor in the school playing an important role in the spiritual life of the pupils. The governing body are well informed on aspects of Religious Education and the Catholic life of the school through headteacher reports and their attendance at assemblies and religious celebrations. The chair of governors has weekly meetings with the headteacher and is keenly involved in all aspects of school life. The good relationships that currently exist between the home, school and parish family are a growing strength. Partnership with parents 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 demonstrates a strong commitment to the local community and works hard to extend links with the wider community through its support of various local and world-wide charities.

THE QUALITY OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

The provision for collective worship in the school is outstanding. Opportunities for prayer and worship are carefully planned to reflect the Religious Curriculum, the liturgical year, the Sacramental Programme and special feasts and festivals. Drama and dance are frequently used to enhance these well organised and celebrated occasions. The opportunities for worship that were observed in which pupils prayed with reverence and respect are a regular part of the pupils' prayer life. Each classroom has a focus area for prayer and worship and pupils' work is displayed reflecting the topics they have studied. The simple prayers in the pupils' workbooks together with the use of quiet meditation and reflection in classroom worship *are* evidence of a growing awareness of the importance of prayer in their daily lives. An outstanding example of classroom worship was observed in Year 4. It was based on the theme of how precious we are in the eyes of God. Gathered on the carpet to quiet music the teacher shared with the class the watch she had brought and spoke of why it was so precious to her. Several pupils who had brought their own precious objects explained the reason why they were precious to them. Reflecting on the words of the prophet Isaiah, "I will never forget you. I have carved you name in the palm of my hand", the learners understood how precious each person is to God. Following prepared bidding prayers and several spontaneous prayers the pupils sang beautifully the hymn "My heart, my mind". Pupils were reminded of their mission when the teacher encouraged each one to share God's love through their lives and actions. Each person then received a bookmark to keep as a reminder of the words of Isaiah or to pass on to someone they feel is precious to them.

ACHIEVEMENT AND STANDARDS IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Achievement and standards in Religious Education are good. The level of attainment when pupils enter the Nursery is often 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. At the end of both Key Stages standards are in line with those expected in the diocesan programme of work. In all lessons observed learners were able to build on their prior knowledge and attainment. They were always attentive listeners who responded well to questioning and lively class and group discussions. Staff set activities according to pupils' age and ability and used support staff well to help learners achieve at an appropriate level. By the end of Key Stage 1 learners are beginning to write short sentences of independent work. In Key Stage 2 oral work in discussions is good and independent writing continues to develop as pupils record their work in a variety of forms. However the presentation of work across Key Stage 2 varies and often lacks accuracy and a good style of handwriting. In Reception pupils demonstrated their appreciation and understanding of God's wonderful creation. 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. They are increasingly aware that following the example of Jesus can sometimes mean making difficult choices. They are also aware of the needs of others and give generously to a number of local and world-wide charities

THE QUALITY OF TEACHING AND LEARNING IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The quality of teaching and learning overall is good with some outstanding features in both key stages. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils who respond with enthusiasm. Good management strategies using praise and encouragement together with a variety of teaching techniques are strong features of lessons. Effective use of support staff ensures the needs of all learners are met and makes a positive impact on the behaviour of the pupils. Good use of white boards and information communication technology create interest and enjoyment in the classroom. Lesson plans identify clear learning objectives and teaching strategies but as yet not all teachers complete an evaluation of their teaching or pupils' achievement. Half termly assessment tasks from *REvision 2000* are completed. A portfolio of the levelled assessments has been compiled by the co-ordinator. The school is encouraged to develop further the work of whole staff moderation of these assessments to determine a common understanding of the level at which a pupil is working. All teaching areas are bright stimulating learning environments with colourful displays of pupils' work. A good example of teaching occurred in the Year 6 class. The teacher presented an example of many players in an orchestra. With talk partners pupils discussed the skills and talents needed from each player for the orchestra to function well. They suggested many ideas for imagery that conveyed the working of the Church and recognised the many ministries that work together to strengthen the Church community. In the Reception class the young learners showed wonder and awe at the beauty of God's creation and were able to express simple prayers of thanks.

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. The co-ordinator for Religious Education has identified areas for future development including the development of the study of World Religions. She has attended regular diocesan in-service training. Teachers are knowledgeable and confident in the consistency of their delivery of *REvision 2000*. Timetabling of lessons ensures quality time is allowed to enable pupils to produce work of good standard. Teaching assistants play an important role supporting both teachers and pupils within the classroom. Good resources including the use of information communication technology support the delivery of the curriculum. School Masses together with assemblies and liturgical celebrations have a positive impact in supporting, enriching and extending the Religious Education curriculum at the school. Supporting the parish catechists, several of whom are school governors, the school plays an important role in the preparation of pupils for the Sacramental Programme. The introduction of the study of World Faiths will help the school to promote social cohesion and encourage pupils to appreciate and respect the values of other faiths and cultures.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF CURRICULUM RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Inspection evidence gathered indicates the leadership and management of Religious Education to be of outstanding quality. Working as a close team the headteacher, deputy and governors share a vision for the ongoing development of curriculum Religious Education as a priority affecting the life and work of the school. The headteacher's reports to governors ensure that they are well informed of Religious Education matters. There is regular governor attendance at assemblies and school Masses. The experienced and highly effective co-ordinator for Religious Education has a comprehensive job description. She has overseen the introduction into the school of many initiatives and supported staff development through regular meetings and in-service training. Improvements in the delivery of prayer and worship are directly linked to her support through demonstrations, observations and feedback to the staff. The senior leadership team work hard to ensure that progress and the development of the curriculum are frequently reviewed. Aiming to support the staff and further raise standards, the monitoring of teaching and learning through observations is in place. Scrutiny of teachers' planning and learners' workbooks are also part of this monitoring procedure. Assessment procedures are well developed. In-service training encourages all staff to challenge their own practice and be adventurous and creative in their delivery of the curriculum. The parish priest is a welcome visitor in school and plays an active role in the religious life of the school community.