



## **INSPECTION REPORT**

**School: St Augustine of Canterbury RC Primary**  
**Address: Lowerhouse Lane,**  
**Burnley, Lancashire BB12 6HZ.**  
**Telephone: 01282 426 938**  
**URN: 119491**

**Headteacher: Mrs Katie Tomlinson**  
**Chair of Governors: Mr Ian Taylor**

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**Canonical Inspection under Canon 806 on behalf of the Diocese of  
Salford  
and inspection of Denominational Education under Section 48 of the  
Education Act 2005**

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**Date of inspection: 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> March 2011**  
**Date of previous inspection: December 2007**  
**Reporting Inspector: Mrs Sandra Slack**

## **St Augustine's R.C. primary school**

### **Information about the school.**

St Augustine's is a Roman Catholic school, situated in a mixed social area, mainly serving families whose social circumstances are less favoured than national average. Free school meals are 24%, above national average. Attainment on entry is broadly average. The admissions number is 30 and there are currently 174 pupils on roll, aged 3-11 years. 66% of the children are baptised Catholics, and 19.6% are on the special needs register. There are seven full-time teachers and one part-time. Four of the teachers are Catholics. There are thirteen support staff, five of whom are Catholics. Four members of staff have the Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies or its equivalent.

### **Overall effectiveness**

### **Grade 1**

St Augustine's is an outstanding school, with Jesus Christ at its centre. The leadership of the head teacher is excellent and she is totally committed to the development of the whole child, spiritual, moral, social and intellectual, and the staff also strives to provide the best possible Catholic education for all pupils. This vision is shared by all, the parish priest, governors and parents, who strongly support the work of the head teacher and staff, and they are justifiably proud of their school. The pupils enjoy coming to school, where they feel secure, safe and valued. They are well behaved and polite, with good attitudes to schoolwork and learning. There are excellent relationships between staff, pupils and parents.

The children have the opportunity to celebrate Mass in the church and in classes. They take an active part in preparing the liturgy, and have opportunities to be reflective in prayer and worship.

Provision for Religious Education is excellent and is well monitored and reviewed by the coordinator, who is also the deputy head teacher. Standards are high, and all ability ranges are catered for in every class. The school's Moodle website has a designated religious section in which prayers are published, as well as bible stories.

### **Capacity for sustained development.**

### **Grade 1**

The head teacher, management team and staff are committed to the provision of the faith life of the school, and have a clear vision for sustained improvement of standards and attainment in religious education, as outlined in the school's Mission Statement.

The deputy head (religious coordinator), with the help of the head teacher and all members of staff, have worked to develop policies and good practices, supported by the governors. The school's self-evaluation is objective and realistic. There is a real awareness of the roles each member of staff plays in the continued development of this successful school.

The enthusiasm of the hardworking staff has ensured that good practice is built on, and further improvement will continue.

What the school needs to do to improve further

To re-introduce religious class assemblies so children have the same opportunities to demonstrate their involvement in the liturgy as they do in preparing class masses.

## **Pupils**

### **How good outcomes are for pupils, taking into particular account of variations between different groups**

#### **Grade 1**

St Augustine's is an outstanding school. On entry to the school, attainment is broadly average, but results and work in books indicate that pupils make very good progress. The school has very good liaison with the high school, and this is being further developed with the new head teacher.

Year 6 pupils are "Gardeners" who look after the reception children, called "seeds," helping them to feel safe and happy. For example, they sit with them in school assemblies. The school has a Parliament, which meets regularly. It instigated fruit for the Key Stage 2 children and a talent show filmed on the school broadcast.

Pupils are well behaved around the school and in the classroom. They are well mannered and friendly. When problems arise, they are quickly addressed by the teachers and T.A's in a quiet way. The generous staffing level of teaching assistants certainly contribute to the calm atmosphere of the school, as children who require additional attention are given it.

The Sacramental programme is well organised by the Year 3 teacher. Throughout the year, Masses and celebrations take place in church, some with feeder schools. The parish priest is a regular visitor to the school, and there are whole school and class masses planned throughout the year. The Year 5/6 class mass was very well prepared. The children took an active part in planning, choosing hymns, writing bidding prayers and making a story powerpoint with images. The mass was attended by parents and parishioners. The staff are excellent role models. The assemblies are taken by the senior management team. Power points of assemblies and bible stories are stored in the computer shared area and I.C.T. is used in a creative way.

Children are aware of the needs of others and generously raised money for charity organisations such as Caritas and the relief effort after the tsunami in Japan. The year 6 children raised money for Cafod for a well. They write to soldiers in Afghanistan and have received letters back.

The prayer life of the school is excellent. There are altars and focus worship tables in each class and also a well - being display. All lessons observed during the inspection were good and some were excellent. In the year 6 class, the children were contemporary eye witness reporters and spoke confidently about their feelings, as if they had been present at the events of Palm Sunday. Reception class children made Easter gardens to share with their families, and role play was used by year 2 children, to express their feelings about Jesus dying on the cross. The liturgical year was well

presented in all classes and Religious Education lessons. Religious displays throughout the school were excellent. Children often wrote prayers and thoughts to be placed on the altars and focus tables in the classrooms and around the school. There are live, daily broadcast recordings for all classes throughout the school. Quiet religious music is played to mark the start and end of every school session, which created a very peaceful atmosphere everywhere.

### **How effective the provision is for Catholic Education**

### **Grade 1**

Provision for Catholic Education at St Augustine's is very good. The children make very good progress and the books are well marked with questions for further thought and discussions. The children take an active part in their lessons. Many use role play, news reporting, and time is given for meditation and reflection. The Religious Education books are a credit to the children who are obviously proud of their work. Displays are of a very high standard, particularly for focus worship, and are changed frequently to reflect the seasons in the liturgical year. For example, vine leaves and scrolls were displayed with Easter and Lenten prayers written on them.

Children with special needs, of whom there are quite a few in some classes, are very well provided for, assisted by the large number of support staff, and mentor for social needs. The mentor plays a significant role in supporting families and children who need extra encouragement to engage in their education. Attainment in Religious Education is very good, the head teacher and deputy (Religious Education coordinator), have high expectations and plan for the improvement of each child. The school is fully focused on developing the whole child, and make excellent provision for this in extra- curricular activities, but also in the classroom where the lessons are delivered in a very thoughtful and creative way. Questioning techniques are very good, and the children are confident to express their thoughts and feelings in their answers, prayers and schoolwork.

In accordance with diocesan guidelines, 10% of curriculum time is allocated to Religious Education. The school uses ReVision 2000, supplemented with other materials and will start to introduce the new scheme in September. There are excellent resources for Religious Education Artefacts, books are kept in a central area, and are well used by staff in classrooms.

Excellent use is made of technology. The head teacher is ICT coordinator. She leads training sessions for the LEA and hosts ICT "Walk throughs". This expertise, knowledge and enthusiasm for ICT, has encouraged staff to use technology in Religious Education in a very effective, thoughtful and exciting way, which enhances the enjoyment of learning. There is a daily broadcast, led by pupils, where prayers are said, and notices and letters received e.g. from soldiers in Afghanistan are displayed. Storyboards of images, with accompanying music, are made by the children, who are confident and eager to share their ideas. Children worked well in pairs or groups, and relationships were very good. Lessons are well planned and delivered. The reception class made a group garden. Although a third of children are not baptised Catholics, they are successfully integrated into the life of the school.

### **Leaders and managers**

## **How effective leaders and managers are in developing the Catholic life of the school**

### **Grade 1**

The leadership and management of the school is outstanding. The head teacher is dedicated and is ably supported in her work by her excellent deputy, who is also the Religious Education coordinator. They have a clear vision of their role. The governing body is extremely supportive and proud of the school and provides the challenge required to ensure the Catholic life of the school flourishes. Many of them have, or have had, children of their own in the school, and have a long association with the school and the parish. This makes the school a real community. The parish priest makes a significant contribution to the religious life of the pupils, through the celebration of school and class masses, and he is a welcomed regular visitor to the school. The deputy head teacher monitors progress, by means of half termly book scrutiny, tracking and assessment of pupils, annotating and levelling for all key stages. There is excellent communication between school, parish, parents and governors and there are live daily school broadcasts, which include prayer and information, planned by Year 5/6 children for all classes.

There is a colourful weekly newsletter as well as a Religious Education newspaper, *'Wednesday Word'* which keeps the parents and community well informed about the gospels. Questionnaires of children's opinions are used to evaluate the school's work and give suggestions for further development. All this information is shared with the community.

The head teacher reports to governors on the religious life of the school. Governors' meetings, committee meetings and the School Improvement Plan, are all shared with staff. The link Religious Education governor is the school's business manager and a past parent who is very active in her various roles. Jesus Christ is central to all the school does and there is a genuine sense of helping the vulnerable and disadvantaged to strive for equality of opportunity for all. The staff are excellent role models, who ensure that Religious Education and the Catholic life of the school are major priorities in this very welcoming and successful school.