

DIOCESE OF LANCASTER EDUCATION SERVICE

INSPECTION REPORT ON THE PROVISION OF DENOMINATIONAL EDUCATION

School name:	St. Kentigern's Catholic Primary School
Address:	Newton Drive, Blackpool, FY3 8BT
Unique Reference Number:	119599
Name of Headteacher:	Mrs F Wygladala
Date of Inspection:	23 April 2010
Name of Inspector:	Mrs B Gardner
Type of school:	Catholic Primary
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Number on roll:	213
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Chair of Governors:	Rev Fr JC Foulkes
Religious Education Co-ordinator:	Mrs F Wygladala
Date of previous inspection:	January 2007

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	
Religious Education - Achievement and standards	2	
Religious Education - Quality of provision	2	
Religious Education - Pupils' needs and interest	2	
Religious Education – Curriculum leadership and management	1	
Community Cohesion	2	
<i>The following pages provide reasons to support these judgements</i>		

Information about the school:

St Kentigern's is a Voluntary Aided Catholic primary school that serves the parish of St Kentigern's in Blackpool. It is an average sized primary school with 213 pupils currently on roll of whom 189 pupils are registered as baptised Catholics whilst 8 are from other Christian denominations. A very small number are from other World Faiths or no faith background. The pupils are drawn from a wide area, which includes a variety of socio economic groups with many families registering very low on the multiple deprivation indexes. The attainment of the children when they start school is below average. At the end of the last Academic Year 28 pupils transferred to St Mary's Catholic College. Just over half of the teaching staff are Catholics.

Overall Effectiveness of the school

St Kentigern's is a **good** self evaluating Catholic school.

There is a wealth of evidence of the school's commitment to its mission and its role as a Catholic community and pupils have a clear understanding of its distinctive Catholic nature. They are taught the values and beliefs of the Catholic Church and these are central to their experiences in school. The staff act as good role models and pupils' spiritual and moral development is excellent. The faith background of each pupil is respected.

Pupils thoroughly enjoy their religious education because teaching is varied and interesting. Most pupils make very good progress and achieve high standards given their starting point. Rigorous monitoring and evaluating procedures together with effective development planning continue to improve progress.

The governing body are well informed and they both support and challenge the school in its aim to raise standards.

The school is well regarded by parents, the wider community and the parish with which it has excellent links.

Improvement since the last inspection

The school has made **good** progress since the last inspection.

Issue 1

Monitor and evaluate the quality and quantity of work produced in pupils' exercise books and encourage positive work marking by staff to challenge children to deepen their understanding of a topic and to raise their standards of attainment in RE.

There is a good quantity of high quality work in the pupils' books and staff training on the use of effective marking strategies is helping to raise standards. Regular monitoring and shared moderation also impact on the quantity and standard of work in the books.

Issue 2

Continue to develop children's independence and skills in preparing and leading Collective Worship sessions.

During inspection Collective Worships, discussion with pupils and evidence of the children's planning confirmed that all pupils are involved in the planning and leading of Collective Worship and their worships are of a high standard.

Capacity to improve

The school's capacity to improve is **very good**. Their ability to self evaluate is a strength. The headteacher has a clear, shared vision for the school and is well supported by her senior leadership team. In her role as RE subject leader she is very effective and she gives very good support to other members of staff. She is clear about the priorities for development and she has a clear action plan to achieve them. The school is led by a very committed governing body who work hard to maintain the Catholic ethos.

What the school should do to improve further:

- Develop teaching and learning by using a variety of tasks and activities which match the learning needs and abilities of pupils more closely.
- Continue to develop the involvement of the pupils in assessment so that they understand the next steps that they need to take towards achieving their individual targets in RE.
- Continue to explore and develop pupils' understanding and links with wider national and global communities.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

Inspection confirms the school's judgment of the leadership and management of the Catholic Life of the school as **outstanding**.

Leadership is outstanding at all levels. The Headteacher has a clear vision, which is shared with all members of the school community. Everyone has a clear understanding of her expectations of them. The senior management team and governors work closely with her and share her commitment to the Catholic Life of the school. The school's mission statement is at the heart of all that the school does.

Regular opportunities are provided at staff meetings for staff to reflect and discuss the school's ethos and their role in promoting it. The impact can be seen in the welcoming atmosphere and the quality of relationships at all levels throughout the school. All staff are valued, as is shown by the leadership team's commitment to CPD and by their support of teachers who are not Catholic.

Pupils live out the Gospel values in their relationships with each other and with the adults in the school, in their behaviour and in their positive attitude to learning. The impact on the pupils of the Catholic ethos is monitored through discussions with staff, pupils and parents: through the use of pupils' attitude questionnaires, feedback from school council and comments from visitors to the school. This school is proud to be a Catholic school and all members of its community share in this pride.

The governing body is very supportive and governors also challenge the school to develop and maintain its Catholic life. They are well aware of its strengths and weaknesses and they feel that they are a valued part of this community. Many are regular visitors to the school and they are represented, alongside teachers and support staff, on the RE working party which meets termly to review the improvement plan. RE is given priority in the School Improvement Plan and this demonstrates the status held by the subject.

There are excellent links with the parish not only through the work of the Parish Priest but also in links such as a shared newsletter, the school's involvement in the Sacramental Programme and the involvement of a parish catechist in the prayer life of the school.

Parents are welcome in the school and the headteacher has developed very effective links with parents and carers.

THE QUALITY OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

The school judges the quality of Collective Worship to be good but inspection finds it to be **outstanding**.

Prayer is central to the life of the school and is valued by all members of the school community. Staff start the day with a shared prayer or reflection.

Worship for the pupils provides them with a variety of experiences and their response during discussions and in the shared worship, which took place during inspection, demonstrated their enjoyment of and their involvement in worship. Pupils speak about prayer as both talking and listening to God. They speak enthusiastically of the resources in the prayer spaces in their classrooms and about their use for planning for their own acts of worship. Pupils' planning sheets support this in that there is clear progression from reception class, where children choose their artefacts and record their choices on a simple sheet, through to Year 6, where pupils plan with their Gaplain (a Gap year student who has chosen to work in this role in the school). Evidence of the effectiveness of this support was observed during inspection when pupils from Year 6 were seen preparing a Collective Worship with him. Their discussions were productive, thoughtful and mature.

During inspection Foundation Stage, Year 1 and Year 2 led a Collective Worship for the whole school. They took the theme of St George and used drama, music and prayer. They also used pictures of the children at work to share their preparation for their assembly. In Year 2 pupils led a class worship that created a prayerful atmosphere through their use of appropriate artifacts and prayers that they had written and chosen themselves. They could explain that they had chosen a theme of animals because “they are God’s creatures”.

There are many and varied opportunities for prayer from the liturgy in the “Secret Garden” (a part of the church grounds that the school has adopted) to a novena or reflections on the Stations of the Cross provided at lunchtime by a parish catechist.

Members of the parish are invited to be involved as prayer partners with the pupils involved in the Sacramental preparation programme.

There was clear evidence from discussions with the pupils and in their behaviour during inspection that their spiritual and moral development is enhanced by prayer.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION - ACHIEVEMENT AND STANDARDS

Inspection confirms the school’s judgment of achievement and standards as **good**.

During inspection discussions with pupils, scrutiny of their books, evidence from the school’s portfolio and lesson observations confirm that the pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of attainment target 1 (AT1) learning about religion, and attainment target 2 (AT2) learning from religion.

There is a significant amount of evidence of pupils’ attainment in AT2 from all areas of school life and from the commitment of the staff to give the pupils as many opportunities as possible to experience the wonders of God’s world. The poetry and art that pupils produced as part of a project with other schools called ‘The Art of War’ showed a real depth of spirituality, and the whole school uses their ‘Secret Garden’ to develop awe and wonder of creation. There is also evidence of the impact of religion in the respect that pupils show for others and the support they give to each other.

Statutory baseline assessment indicates that pupil attainment on entry is below age related expectations. However the school has a robust and effective tracking system, which shows that the progress pupils make is very good given this starting point. This year the school has introduced baseline assessment for RE based on the diocesan model and this is being used effectively with other information to inform the systems already in place.

Most pupils, including those with learning difficulties, make good progress. Assessment is used to inform planning and the senior management team are working with staff to develop different ways of differentiating the tasks given to pupils and to ensure that information from assessment is used effectively to support teaching and learning. Teachers talk about the use of extension questions to challenge pupils to achieve their full potential. Children are asked to make a comment on their progress which is included in their reports to their parents. However, the school should now develop the pupils’ role in sharing in the assessment of their own work on a more regular basis.

Children in the foundation stage make very good progress. Evidence from baseline assessment indicates that their knowledge and understanding of RE on entry is below average. However, discussions with children showed that after just two terms they had a good knowledge of the Easter story and were being encouraged to talk about the feelings of Mary Magdalene when she returned to the tomb. By the end of the Foundation Stage they have made good progress. Most pupils continue to make good progress and by the end of Key Stage 1 standards are broadly in line with national expectations.

Pupils continue to achieve 2 levels progress so that by the end of Key stage 2 standards are in line with national expectations. The school's internal data, however, suggests that pupils who have used the Way the Truth and the Life since Key stage 1 are achieving standards above those they achieve in other core subjects.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION - QUALITY OF PROVISION

Inspection confirms the school's judgment that the quality of provision for RE is **good**.

The senior leadership team has high expectations of teaching and learning and ensure that teaching throughout the school is well planned. Teachers use a variety of teaching styles and make provision for the different needs of pupils.

Assessment and tracking systems are rigorous and effective and are used to ensure that all pupils are planned for and supported. Provision mapping is carried out by the SENCO and staff to ensure that the needs of all pupils including those with special needs and the more able are met. Teaching assistants are used effectively both in and out of class to support teaching and learning. Observations during inspection showed that planning includes clear differentiated lesson objectives, but that this is not always as evident in the tasks that are set for the pupils.

Scrutiny of work shows that good quality marking is beginning to be used to move the pupils on in their learning.

The introduction of individual learning logs has increased the children's involvement in their own learning as well as making a valuable link with parents. All the evidence provided supports the school's commitment to develop, support and challenge all pupils to reach their full potential.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION - PUPILS' NEEDS AND INTEREST

Inspection confirms the schools judgment that the school's provision for pupils' needs and interests is **good**.

Pupils are proud of their work and happy to talk about their learning. Reception children were anxious to show off their work that they had started during an observed lesson. Talking to pupils and work scrutiny shows that pupils are encouraged to explore their faith in a secure environment. Reception children talked about the Easter story whilst Year 6 pupils designed an advert for a good disciple, which involved them in thinking how being a follower of Jesus impacted on people's lifestyle. Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is used very effectively to support teaching and learning in RE.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION – CURRICULUM LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The school judges the leadership and management of RE to be good but inspection raises this judgement to **outstanding**.

The headteacher has taken over the subject leadership of RE since the previous subject leader left at the start of last term. She has a very good knowledge and understanding of both the subject and the role. This allows her to give clear leadership and direction to the staff as well as to provide support in a variety of ways such as through staff meetings, informal and formal discussions and high quality professional development which is provided both in house and by the diocese.

Evidence gathered during inspection through discussions with different members of the school community confirms that the curriculum leader gives highly effective support to other members of staff and that she has high expectations of both teaching and learning.

The school has adopted the RE scheme 'The Way, the Truth and the Life' and the subject leader believes that it continues to have a very positive impact on teaching and learning.

There is a rigorous system of monitoring and evaluation which has a positive impact on the standards of progress achieved by the pupils. Staff talk about the outcomes of work scrutiny and the plans that are put in place to address areas for development.

The RE governor, who is also the parish priest, speaks of the effective links between himself and the subject leader. The subject leader also reports termly to the whole governing body on developments and standards in RE.

The schools portfolio, discussions with pupils and staff and work scrutiny support the school's view that almost all pupils make good progress and that there is a steady improvement in attainment.

The curriculum is fully inclusive and meets the requirements of the Bishops' conference for RE.

COMMUNITY COHESION

Inspection confirms the school's view that community cohesion is **good**.

There is evidence in all areas of school life that the mission statement is at the heart of this welcoming school which is an integral part of the parish. The parish priest, governors and senior staff ensure that everyone working in the school, parents and members of the parish, share their values and vision. Pupils are respected as individuals and evidence from inspection shows that relationships at all levels are excellent. Members of staff are totally committed to all children being happy and achieving their full potential.

The school works hard to build relationships with parents and the introduction of learning logs for each pupil has strengthened parental involvement in the children's learning in all subjects including RE. The positive parental questionnaires are evidence of the school's success.

Before developing links further afield the school ensures that the pupils know and understand their own community and culture. They have very strong links with other local schools both Catholic and non-Catholic and they have been involved in community projects.

The school plans theme days, visits and visitors to the school in order to develop the pupils' understanding of different cultures. The annual South African drumming workshops are a useful and enjoyable experience that helps the children to develop understanding of one particular culture. There are clear plans in place for each class to make links with schools in different parts of this country and exchange visits are already planned. The upper Key Stage 2 pupils are also developing links with schools in Egypt and France.

Pupils choose local, national and international charities through the school council to benefit from fund raising and, having chosen them they research the background and the way of life of the people who are to benefit from the funds. Younger children have raised money for sick children locally whilst the older children have sponsored children in Watamu, Kenya. An informative display showed evidence of the process that the pupils had gone through to learn about the community and the ways in which their money can be used to improve the life of the community of Watamu. The whole school raised funds to support the work of CAFOD in Nigeria where the chaplain who works in school had recently spent six weeks.