

**DENOMINATIONAL INSPECTION
REPORT (Section 48)**

on

**THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL
AND
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

School: St. Mary's Catholic Primary School

Address: London Street
Fleetwood
Lancashire
FY7 6EU

Telephone Number: 01253 878445

Email address: head@st-mary's-fleetwood.lancs.sch.uk

School URN: 119623

Headteacher: Mr Mark Rogan

Chair of Governors: Ms Therese Donnelly

Section 48 Inspector: Mrs Angela Pye

Date of Inspection: 5th March 2012

The inspection report is produced for the Rt. Reverend Michael Campbell O.S.A., the Bishop of Lancaster (c.f. Code Canon Law, 804, 806), and for the Governing Body of the school (Education Act 2005, Section 48). The inspection reviews, evaluates and plans further improvements in the school's witness to the Catholic faith and Curriculum Religious Education. This process begins with the school's own self-evaluation.

The inspection schedule follows criteria set by the National Board of Advisers and Inspectors.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Mary's is a smaller than average sized primary school serving an economically disadvantaged area in north Fleetwood. It is a Catholic school with 49% Catholic pupils and 33% from other Christian denominations. The remaining 18% of pupils are from other world faiths or have no religious affiliation. The school was built in the mid 1990's and refurbished last year. There are 163 pupils on roll. The percentage of pupils in receipt of free school meals is slightly above the national average. The school has a smaller than average number of ethnic minority pupils and a small percentage whose first language is not English. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities equates to the national average. The school scores 'D' on the index of multiple deprivation. With respect to Special Educational Needs (SEN), 2% of pupils have statements and 18% are on the SEN register. Attendance rates are slightly below national averages. The school holds a number of awards. The school population is fairly stable but pupil mobility is becoming more commonplace. There was one permanent exclusion last year and four fixed term exclusions (all the same pupil).

Last year one pupil leaving the school in Y6 transferred to Baines High School, Poulton-le-Fylde, all other pupils transferred to Cardinal Allen Catholic High School.

FACTUAL INFORMATION

Pupil Catchment:

Number of pupils on roll:	163
Planned Admission Number of Pupils:	25
Percentage of pupils baptised Catholics	49%
Percentage of pupils from other Christian denominations:	32%
Percentage of pupils from other faith backgrounds:	9%
Percentage of pupils with no religious affiliation:	10%
Percentage of pupils from ethnic groups:	9%
Percentage of pupils with special needs:	2%

Staffing

Full-time teachers:	5
Part-time teachers:	3
Percentage of Catholic teachers:	80%
Percentage of teachers with CCRS:	40%

Percentage of learning time given to RE:

R	10%	Yr 4	10%
Yr 1	10%	Yr 5	10%
Yr 2	10%	Yr 6	10%
Yr 3	10%		

Parish served by the school:

St. Mary's Parish, Fleetwood

Overall Effectiveness

3

Capacity for sustained improvement

3

MAIN FINDINGS

Saint Mary's Catholic Primary School is characterised by its warm welcoming atmosphere and careful attention to the well being of its pupils. There is a purposeful, well ordered working atmosphere in the school where children are valued and their contributions appreciated. The development of the whole child is a priority.

Pupils' attainment is variable across and between key stages. Leaders and managers are aware of this and are taking steps to ensure greater consistency in teaching and learning and pupils' progress.

The quality of leadership and management are sound. The Governing Body understands its role in promoting the Catholic vision of the school. Senior leaders show commitment to enhancing the Catholic life of the school. They have a good grasp of the strengths and areas for development in Curriculum RE and an effective plan to bring about improvement which is already beginning to show results. The school works well with a range of outside agencies which enhance the educational provision within.

The quality of provision is satisfactory. Monitoring and evaluation of the curriculum is now more robust and the school knows what it needs to do to improve. Collective Worship enhances the Catholic life of the school. It provides a range of opportunities to develop pupils' spiritual growth.

Capacity for sustained improvement

The school's capacity for sustained improvement is satisfactory. Leaders and managers have a clear vision for the school. Self evaluation is accurate and thorough. The governors are extremely committed to supporting catholic education. There is a good understanding of the contributory factors in recent successes and an accurate identification of areas for further development. The school has made substantial improvements this academic year in provision for curriculum RE; as these recent improvements become more embedded in practice, attainment will rise and pupils' progress will be enhanced. The school is well placed to bring about further improvements.

What the school needs to do to improve further

Improve the quality of learning in Curriculum RE in order to raise standards of attainment and progress by:

- Improving the attainment of boys in Key Stage 2;
- Improving the quality of teaching from satisfactory to good;
- Continuing to develop greater accuracy in the levelling and moderating of pupils' work;
- Improving outcomes for all pupils in RE, including the more able, in Key Stage 2.

To develop pupils' active participation in Collective Worship by:

- Ensuring that pupils are given frequent opportunities to lead acts of worship;
- Encouraging pupils to be actively involved from the outset when a new worship topic is introduced.

PUPILS

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

3

Pupils enter Saint Mary's with attainment below national expectations in Religious Education (RE). From a measured baseline that clearly indicates low attainment on entry, the pupils make good progress through Foundation Stage and enter Key Stage 1 with knowledge and skills in line with national averages. This good progress continues throughout Key Stage 1 and attainment at the end of this key stage is in line with national expectations. Whilst there is no difference in attainment between Catholic pupils and those of other faiths, there is a significant attainment gap emerging between the girls and the boys at higher levels. Progress slows over Key Stage 2 and by the end attainment is below expected standards and is unsatisfactory (2009/10 and 2010/11). The stronger attainment of the girls identified in Key Stage 1 continued in Key Stage 2 in 2011; this is a reversal of the attainment pattern in Key Stage 2 in 2010 when boys' attainment was better than that of girls, but still remained below expectations. In-year monitoring (2011/12) shows that attainment and progress in Key Stage 2 are improving but, as yet, remain below nationally expected levels. To improve attainment and progress in Key Stage 2 is a priority. During inspection a group of more able, older pupils clearly demonstrated the use of higher order thinking skills. These pupils are certainly capable of attaining at higher levels and should be challenged to do this. The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. During inspection an RE lesson was observed in upper Key Stage 2. The work set was clearly

differentiated to benefit pupils with learning needs and they were well supported by a teaching assistant resulting in successful learning outcomes.

The majority of pupils contribute to the Catholic life of the school and benefit greatly from it. Pupils respond well to opportunities to live out their faith by supporting the needs of people beyond the school. Year 4 pupils were justifiably proud of a member of their class who chose to raise monies for Brian House Children's Charity by baking and selling cakes. They were able to recognise that this was Christianity in action in their school and described his actions as 'inspiring'. During pupil interviews they showed themselves to be secure in their beliefs and eager to discuss their views. They have an age appropriate understanding of global issues through the wider curriculum, school links and their charitable work. They show concern for the environment and have earned an Eco Schools Award.

Prayer is clearly central to the life of the school. A range of opportunities for pupils' prayer is presented, ranging from the formal to the informal. Pupils response to, and participation in, Collective Worship are judged to be good by the school but inspection found it to be satisfactory. Pupils have a good understanding of what worship is and are respectful and reverent when praying with their school community. During inspection one act of worship was observed in Key Stage 1 and one in Key Stage 2. As a new weekly topic was being introduced in both classes the worship was led by the class teachers. Pupils listened well but were not sufficiently involved during the two sessions. They enjoy planning their own acts of worship and are keen to do this; to make provision for them to be active participants from the beginning of a new theme would increase enjoyment and further develop their skills. They understand that there are different types of prayer and know some traditional prayers appropriate to their age. Collective Worship has a positive impact on the spiritual and moral development of pupils.

LEADERS AND MANAGERS

How effective leaders and managers are in developing the Catholic life of the School

3

The school's leadership and management promote the Catholic life of the school well. RE and the Catholic life of the school are priorities in the School Development Plan. Evaluating pupils' progress and well being and the quality of teaching and learning are an on-going focus. Staff training is a priority. The subject leader regularly attends Diocesan in-service training and all staff show good commitment to, and awareness and understanding of, the school's Catholic mission. The governors are an effective team; they have a good understanding of the challenges that the school faces and the strategies put in place to bring about improvement.

Monitoring and evaluation of the provision for Religious Education is developing. The school uses a range of monitoring activities to identify strengths and development areas in teaching and learning. Recent improvements in assessing and moderating pupils' work are beginning to show improvements. By using both formative and summative assessments each term teachers'

knowledge of the attainment and progress of pupils is becoming sharper and more focussed. Pupils' use of 'I can' targets is helping to bring about clearly targeted learning. The subject leader is effective in tracking the attainment of pupils. She is well supported by the headteacher, keeps staff well informed and demonstrates confident and knowledgeable leadership.

Governors provide effective challenge and support regarding the Catholic life of the school. They are extremely committed, have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development and put the well-being and development of the whole child at the centre of their work. They fulfil their statutory and canonical duties fully. They are actively involved in the school community and have positive relationships with staff and pupils. The governing body receive regular reports from the school's subject leaders which gives them a good understanding of present strengths and next steps needed. They challenge the leadership team of the school (e.g. budget planning and staff absences) and provide good support (e.g. participating in residential holidays and being linked to and keeping in contact with a particular class). Through their involvement in the 'Parents Forum' the governors are well placed to ensure that parental views and opinions are heeded.

Leaders effectively develop partnerships with other providers and organisations. The former parish priest was a welcome visitor into school who contributed much to cementing the school/parish relationship. The new parish administrator has also been well received in school. The school engages in a range of partnership activities with local Catholic schools, the Diocese and other local organisations to provide opportunities which enable pupils and staff to enjoy, achieve and develop well.

Leaders and managers promote community cohesion extremely well. The school works hard to engender a common vision and sense of belonging. Equality of opportunity is a priority at St. Mary's. The pupils know that everyone is valued equally; one Year 6 pupil said, "It [the school] acts as one big family". The pupils showed age appropriate knowledge of other world faiths. Links with a school in India and exchange visits by staff have further helped to promote an understanding of a faith and culture outside the experience of the majority of pupils. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are promoted through RE, Collective Worship and the wider curriculum. Parents are kept well informed about what their children are taught. Responses to parents' questionnaires clearly stated that parents are well satisfied with the quality of education and care that the school provides and the information that they receive about their child's progress and attainment.

PROVISION

How effective the provision is for Catholic Education

3

Teaching and learning in RE are satisfactory overall. Pupils' attainment and progress would be enhanced if the quality of teaching and learning were consistently good across the school. Pupils enjoy RE and could give examples of previous learning that they found memorable. Pupils' RE work demonstrated the use of a range of different learning styles to engage the concentration,

motivation and application of pupils. In the lesson observed during inspection the majority of pupils were interested, attentive and settled well to task. Tasks were planned appropriately to meet the needs of all learners. The quality of written marking in pupils' books was informative; it acknowledged learning and progress and often gave clear improvement prompts.

Regular assessment of pupils' work provides a clear picture of how well pupils are achieving. Pupils know how well they are doing and what the next steps in their learning should be. Termly internal moderation of pupils' work is helping to develop consistency of standards across the school and improve class teachers' expertise. Evidence from the school's samples of pupils' work from previous years revealed some inconsistencies in judging standards. Recently introduced internal moderating meetings are resulting in more accurate assessments of attainment and standards and should be continued.

The RE curriculum provided by the school meets the needs of pupils and is in line with the Bishops' Conference requirements. It is guided by the Curriculum Directory and assessed by the Levels of Attainment approved by the Bishops' Conference. The curriculum is designed and modified to meet the needs of learners generally and target groups of pupils as necessary. The pupils are taught the knowledge and skills that they need in preparation for the next stage in learning. During inspection pupils were able to demonstrate clear social and moral development and could relate how their own actions are sometimes governed by what they have been taught in RE. For example, a Year 2 pupil was able to draw an age appropriate parallel between the story of the Good Samaritan and how he had helped someone who fell over in the playground.

The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school is satisfactory. The liturgical year is carefully planned in order to provide a good variety of prayer and liturgies to enhance pupils' experiences. Older children have particularly enjoyed preparing a Mass with the new parish priest. Staff and pupils pray together often: prayer is central to the life of the school. Pupils enjoy Collective Worship and are keen to lead such prayer opportunities in class. During inspection pupils showed proper reverence and respect during worship. There is an appropriate focus for prayer in each classroom. A recently created 'Quiet Room' is now available for prayer and reflection; it is a very spiritual place and will enhance current provision.

SUMMARY OF INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Key for inspection grades:

Grade 1 **Outstanding** Grade 2 **Good** Grade 3 **Satisfactory** Grade 4 **Unsatisfactory**

Overall effectiveness	3
The school's capacity for sustained improvement	3
PUPILS How good outcomes are for pupils, taking particular account of variations between different groups	3
• how well do pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education?	3
❖ the quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
❖ the quality of learning for pupils with particular learning needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
❖ pupils' attainment in RE	3
• to what extent do pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life of the school?	2
• how well do pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship?	3
LEADERS AND MANAGERS How effective are leaders and managers in developing the Catholic life of the School?	3
• how well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic life of the school and plan improvement to outcomes for pupils?	3
• how well leaders and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for RE and plan for improvement to outcomes for pupils?	3
• the extent to which the governing body provides effective challenge and support for the Catholic dimension of the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory and canonical responsibilities met?	3
• how well leaders and managers develop partnerships with other providers, organisations and services in order to promote Catholic learning and well being?	3
• how effectively leaders and managers promote Community Cohesion?	2
PROVISION How effective is the provision for Catholic Education?	3
• the quality of teaching and purposeful learning in?	3
• the effectiveness of assessment and academic guidance in Religious Education?	3
• the extent to which Religious Education curriculum meets pupils' needs?	3
• the quality of Collective Worship provided by the school?	3