



## **DIOCESE OF BRENTWOOD**



### **Inspection Report**

**Name of School: Our Lady Immaculate Catholic Primary School**

**Local Authority: Essex**

**Unique Reference Number: 115290**

**Inspection Date: 25<sup>th</sup> June 2013**

**Reporting Inspectors: Mr. Patrick Moloney & Mrs. Penny Rickard**

**This Inspection was carried out under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005.**

**Type of School: Primary  
School Category: Voluntary Aided  
Age range of pupils: 4-11  
Gender of pupils: Mixed  
Number on roll: 219  
Appropriate Authority: The Governing Body  
Date of previous Inspection: 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2008**

**School Address:  
New London Road  
Chelmsford Essex CM2 0RG**

**Tel. No. 01245 353755  
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Chair of Governors: Fr. Hugh Allan  
Acting Headteacher: Mr. Barry Owens**

## **Introduction:**

The Inspection was carried out under Section 48 of the Education (Schools) Act 2005 by two inspectors appointed by the Diocesan Bishop at the request of the Governing Body of the School.

The Inspectors acknowledge and are appreciative of the full support, co-operation and courtesy they enjoyed from the Governors, Acting Headteacher, Staff and Pupils of the School both before and during the Inspection. The Inspectors wish to express their gratitude to all concerned.

## **The focus of the Section 48 Inspection was:**

- Classroom Religious Education
- The Catholic nature of the School through:
  1. Worship
  2. Links with the Catholic and wider community
- Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development

## **The Section 48 Report**

**Acting Head Teacher: Mr. Barry Owens**

**Date of Inspection: 25<sup>th</sup> June 2013**

## **Description of the School:**

Our Lady Immaculate Primary School is a voluntary aided Catholic school situated in the County of Essex and under the Trusteeship of the Diocese of Brentwood. It is an average sized school located on the edge of the County town of Chelmsford. The school was founded by Father Charles King in 1845. The school serves the parishes of Our Lady Immaculate and Holy Name. Most pupils at the school are white British. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups and those who speak English as an additional language is low. Our Lady Immaculate became an Academy school in May 2012.

## **Record of Evidence Base:**

Two Inspectors were in the School for the equivalent of two inspection days.

- The study of pre-inspection documentation including the Self-Evaluation Form/ Denominational Provision (SEF/DP).
- The observation of 6 lessons.
- Scrutiny of pupils' work.
- Meetings with the acting Head Teacher, the Religious Education Subject Leader, the Chair of Governors, a Foundation Governor and the School Council.
- Participation in an Assembly.
- Observations of R.E. Displays in the Classrooms and around the school.

### **What the School does well:**

Our Lady Immaculate Primary is a good Catholic School and displays many outstanding features. The school lives out its Mission Statement, gives pastoral care a high priority and pupils are taught by teachers who try to ensure that all are given opportunities to develop their talents and skills. The whole school community work together to create a safe and stimulating learning environment, which has a direct impact on the personal well-being and educational success of the pupils. The parents, whom inspectors met at the start of their visit, were overwhelmingly supportive in their praise for the school. The very good partnership with both home and parish nourishes provision and makes the school a supportive and inclusive community.

Religious Education (R.E.) is central to the mission of the school. The 'Come and See' R.E. Programme was introduced in September 2012 and is used throughout the school. The school recognise the need to have further training in order to improve the use of the 'Come and See' materials in the classrooms.

The overall quality of teaching and learning in Religious Education across the Key Stages ranges from good to outstanding. Teachers plan lessons carefully with clear objectives which are shared with pupils. In lessons that were good or very good pupils were on task, engaged and in most cases highly motivated and pupils enjoyed this subject. There is very good evidence of opportunities offered for pupils to write in R.E. There are high expectations of pupils both in the presentation of their work and in the volume of work. The pupils' written work is regularly marked with the best examples showing praise and guidance on how to make further progress. This needs to be developed to allow the pupils time to respond to teacher comments. Teaching Assistants are well used in lessons and make a strong contribution to R.E. teaching and learning.

Assessment in R.E. is a developing strength of the school. Pupil evaluation of topics are evident and the school is aware that further attention needs to be given to the tracking of individual pupil progress across the Key Stages.

The leadership and management of R.E. by the coordinator is outstanding. She has a clear vision for the school and is well supported by the Acting Headteacher and other staff. She monitors R.E. lessons and is

very supportive of all teachers and teaching assistants. The school needs to continue the very good practice of pupil self assessment.

School Masses are celebrated in the parish church once a week. There are excellent links between the school and the parish. The pupils and staff take an active part in Masses. The Parish Priest and coordinator are willing to develop this further by encouraging class teachers to take the lead in preparing liturgies/Masses. The staff and pupils highly appreciate the support, availability and valued commitment of their current Parish Priest, who is also Chair of Governors.

The children are offered many opportunities to become responsible citizens. This is evident in their concern for each other and for those less fortunate than themselves. It is particularly evident through the School Council, numerous monitoring roles and governors fundraising for charities such as CAFOD. Many of the pupils are Altar Servers, they attend parish Beavers, Brownies, Scouts and Guide groups. The pupils love and care for their school and are much valued, guided, supported and empowered by all staff who are good role models.

Collective Worship, liturgical celebrations, the celebration of major Saints' feast days and the school's links with local parishes, such as Holy Name, are all strengths of Our Lady Immaculate. During the Autumn 2012 term pupils from Years 2 to 6 attended Masses at Holy Name Parish and took part in Parish Mission activities. There is an Assembly schedule in place. This includes weekly and Key Stage Assemblies linked to the class R.E. topics and seasonal themes. Great attention is given to planning, particularly details that create conditions conducive to worship. The Assembly attended on the day of the inspection was both devotional and reflective with full participation of pupils. Children sang very appropriate hymns also.

Classroom R.E. displays support the pupils' learning and enhance opportunities for prayer and reflection. Each classroom has a respectful focal point for prayer and reflection. The school's Mission Statement is evident around the school. Resources for the study of other World Faiths are also appropriate.

Relationships in the school are exceptionally positive and pupils are courteous, respectful and friendly towards adults and each other. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is a growing strength of the school. This was recognised by its recent Ofsted report this term.

Our Lady Immaculate School values its links with parents with every effort being made to improve communication with parents as their children progress through the school. The governors have recently set up a parents' forum to explore ways to continue to improve communication between school and home. The governors of the school are dedicated, hardworking and supportive of everything the school does. The leadership by the Chair of Governors is outstanding and a major strength of the school.

Provision for sex and relationship education is comprehensive and the school has implemented the Diocesan Sex Education programme 'Journey in Love'.

There are good links with the Catholic schools in the area and in particular St John Payne Secondary School.

Sacramental preparation for Reconciliation and the Holy Communion takes place in the parishes of Our Lady Immaculate and Holy Name and they are strongly supported by teachers, governors and Parish Priests. There is also an opportunity for the other Key Stage 2 pupils to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation during school term.

Prayer is central to the life of the school and many opportunities for prayer are offered throughout the day. Lessons in R.E. often include a time for prayerful reflection; teachers create a calm atmosphere for pupils to reflect on their learning.

The school meets both the national and diocesan requirements for the allocation of curriculum time for taught R.E.

Overall, Our Lady Immaculate Primary is a good Catholic School and displays many outstanding features and is firmly committed to achieving excellence at all levels.

**What needs to improve:**

- Encourage pupils to follow-up teacher comments in work books.
- Ensure staff have further in-service for the implementation of the 'Come & See' R.E. Programme.