



ARCHDIOCESE OF LIVERPOOL

INSPECTION REPORT

ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

EUXTON

Inspection Date	Tuesday 1 May 2012
Inspectors	Mrs Marie Connolly Mr Andrew Cocker
Unique Reference Number	119676

Inspection carried out under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005

Type of School	Catholic Primary
Age range of pupils	4-11
Number on roll	222
Chair of Governors	Mr Simon Ambury
Head teacher	Mrs Barbara Coulton
School address	Wigan Road, Euxton, Chorley, Lancashire PR7 6JW
Telephone number	01257 262049
E-mail address	head@euxton-st-marys.lancs.sch.uk
Date of last inspection	16 October 2007

Introduction

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

The report of the inspection is produced for the Archbishop of Liverpool (Code of Canon Law 804 and 806) and for the governors of the school.

The inspectors are members of the Christian Education Department and their associates approved by the Archbishop of Liverpool for this purpose.

Information about the school

St. Mary's is an average sized Catholic Primary School situated in Euxton, Lancashire, serving the parish of the same name. There are 222 children on roll of whom 191 are baptised Catholic, 24 come from other Christian denominations. There are 2 children from other faith or religious traditions. Five children have no religious affiliation. There are 10 teachers 8 of whom teach Religious Education. Nine teachers are Catholic and six have a suitable qualification in Religious Education. Since the last inspection a new Chair of governors has been appointed. The same headteacher and Religious Education co-ordinator have remained in post.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

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Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school.

Inspection Judgements

Overall effectiveness:

How effective the school is in providing Catholic Education

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main Findings:-

This is an outstanding school in providing Catholic Education. There is a clear vision for Catholic Education which is embraced by the whole school community. This ensures that its truly distinctive Catholic nature permeates every aspect of school life and every child feels valued, cared for and respected. The pursuit of excellence has ensured the school has maintained and built on previously outstanding performance. This is reflected throughout the school and in extensive high quality documentation and excellent relationships at every level. Self evaluation is honest and accurate, and matches the judgements made in this report. Outcomes for pupils are outstanding. There is no significant difference in performance between groups of pupils. Outcomes for pupils with additional or special needs are outstanding. This is largely due to the care and encouragement shown by staff to their individual needs. The school is successfully addressing the areas it has identified for improvement. The leadership, coordinator and headteacher, are deeply motivated and communicate high expectations to staff and Governors in order to secure improvement. Teamwork is the key to the school's success. Staff are affirmed and supported. Teachers are provided with in-service to support their ongoing development. Realistic and challenging plans stem from the analysis obtained through monitoring and assessment. These and the findings of this inspection will continue to be used to ensure outcomes improve further. There is openness to embracing new initiatives and challenges.

Overall the school has outstanding capacity for sustained improvement.

What the school needs to do to improve further

- Enabling the content of the mission to be more fully known and owned by:
 - providing ways for children to interpret and evaluate it creatively and visually.
- Improve the effectiveness of plenary sessions through monitoring by:
 - ensuring they show how the learning objective for the lesson has been met;
 - enabling pupils to self evaluate their learning using the 'driver' words.
- Implement any ongoing areas for development outlined in the coordinators action plan. This will include:
 - reporting on tracking and analysis to relevant bodies;
 - providing more opportunities for children to plan and deliver Collective Worship from their earliest years.
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How good outcomes are for individuals and groups of pupils

Pupils' achievement in Religious Education is outstanding. Pupils' attainment in Religious Education is above average and children make outstanding progress in relation to their starting points and capabilities. Analysis of assessments undertaken has begun to provide evidence of pupils' attaining the appropriate level and a significant number above, for their age and stage of development in each key stage. There is no significant difference in performance between pupils of different gender. Outcomes for pupils with additional or special needs are outstanding. Pupils are becoming increasingly more literate. Their knowledge, understanding and skills are developing appropriate to their age or capacity. They are developing the skills that enable them to think spiritually, ethically and theologically and are starting to become more aware of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life. Any underachievement is challenged. Pupils are encouraged to work independently and collaboratively. Pupils showed enthusiasm for and some great enjoyment of their learning in Religious Education. Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. Children have a sense of belonging to the school community and value and respect others as modelled by all adults in the school. The Mission Statement is clearly lived out on a daily basis and ownership by the children is enabled through the motto 'Living and Learning together in Faith'. Pupils are encouraged to take on roles of responsibility in the school for example school council, and also the wider community e.g. organising fund raising events for charity and its links with Gambia. Pupils have a good sense of right and wrong and apply this in their personal relationships. They appreciate that good behaviour is an expectation and treat others with respect. They are quick to praise each other. Positive attitudes in pupils are fostered in numerous ways and many initiatives help support this e.g. house points, teacher's certificates, play leaders and reading buddies. Pupils show consideration and care for others both in school and the wider community and take an increasing responsibility for themselves and their actions. They are encouraged to consider their roles as 'Stewards of Creation', thinking hard about how they live their lives. This is also evident in their charitable fundraising events for CAFOD and many other local charities.

Children are outstanding in responding to and participating in the schools Collective Worship. They are developing their understanding of the religious seasons and feasts. They show a readiness to reflect on and celebrate their lived experiences through music and drama, participating at liturgical events. They are keen to participate in acts of worship for example by reading, or using objects symbolically. They sing joyfully and movingly, act with reverence and join in traditional and community prayers appropriately. All show respect. Pupils' knowledge of prayer and liturgy is increasing. They are becoming more familiar with a variety of prayer styles. They are learning to appreciate and are open to the Word of God in the scriptures using some creative ways to explore it and recognising its relevance today. Children should be further encouraged to become more confident in preparing and leading worship from their earliest years.

How good outcomes are for individuals and groups of pupils	
How well pupils achieve in Religious Education	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pupils' standards of attainment in Religious Education 	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the quality of pupils' learning and their progress in Religious Education 	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school	1
How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship	1

How effective the provision is for Catholic Education

The quality of teaching overall is outstanding in ensuring that pupils are interested and engaged and make outstanding progress. Teachers have begun to take into account pupils' prior learning. Differentiated tasks are employed when appropriate but, should be indicated when planning. Teachers ensure the work planned consolidates, builds and extends on pupils knowledge and understanding. Teachers ensure pupils are aware of the learning objectives and outcomes. All teachers must ensure these are re-visited in the plenary session and pupils provided with opportunities to evaluate their learning. Use of the 'driver words' will support this. Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to work independently and collaboratively. Some highly creative and imaginative teaching and learning strategies are employed e.g. use of 'you-tube' extract, famous art work, hot seating and role play to name but a few. When this happens children show a real excitement, enthusiasm for and enjoyment of their work. Monitoring of teaching, planning and workbooks indicates where this happens and this good practice is shared to ensure greater consistency and use of these creative strategies throughout the school. Time management is effective. The school is well resourced. Teachers ensure that resources are used efficiently to challenge and stimulate learning i.e. God's Story, Church's Story CD Roms, Power Point presentations etc. Excellent use is being made of ICT in classrooms. Teachers and others use a variety of strategies to sustain and motivate pupils e.g. excellent and thought provoking marking, rewards and positively affirming pupils throughout lessons. Teaching assistants provide excellent support and have positive relationships with those children who need their support most.

The assessment of pupils work in Religious Education is outstanding. Assessment information has started to be recorded fully and accurately on the attainment record of all pupils. Excellent portfolios of annotated, levelled work ensure consistency of assessment of standards across the school. Teachers are now be able to identify how well pupils are achieving and use this information to differentiate appropriately and tackle any underachievement and further challenge those of higher ability. Pupils know what the school expects of them and how well they are doing in all aspects of their work in Religious Education. Pupils are involved in self evaluation of their work but in some classes teachers need to provide them with greater opportunities to evaluate their own work during plenary sessions. Using the 'driver words' will support this. Assessment information has started to be collated by the subject leader and will be shared with all concerned e.g. teachers, governors and parents. Achievement and effort are celebrated.

The curriculum is outstanding in meeting pupils' needs. The school using the Here I Am programme recommended by the Archdiocese meets the requirements of the Curriculum Directory for Religious Education. A whole school approach is used and appropriate levels of the programme are being followed in different classes. This ensures complete Religious Education entitlement for each child and meets National and Archdiocesan requirements. Of the total curriculum time 10% is allocated to Religious Education. This fulfils the requirements of the Bishops of England and Wales. Teachers ensure full coverage of the Religious Education programme when planning to meet the learning outcomes. Some highly imaginative and well planned strategies capitalise on expertise within and beyond the school enriching pupils learning e.g. use of the interactive whiteboard, links to other subjects e.g. art, music, drama etc. All these and differentiation needs to be evidenced in planning. Parents are informed of the Religious Education topics to be covered each term and are consulted depending on the topic being covered. Suggestions are made to help parents support their children's work in religious Education in this newsletter as well as highlighting other aspects of the Catholic life of the school. The school implements new curriculum developments as appropriate and is enthusiastic regarding the implementation of the new Religious Education programme – Come and See. The Religious Education curriculum provides many opportunities for nurturing pupils' spiritual and moral development e.g. in the current topic 'Holidays/Holydays' children were encouraged to explore how the Holy Spirit provides opportunities to make each day 'Holy'. Teachers enable children to deepen their own understanding and explore differences in belief and practice to their own. This work is promoting respect and tolerance.

The Collective Worship provided is outstanding in reflecting the Catholic character of the school. It takes into account the limited variety of Faith backgrounds among the pupils. Collective Worship plays an important part in meeting the Spiritual needs of all staff and pupils. Key seasons of the Church's year are celebrated and other festivals and feasts e.g. Lent, Advent, Armistice, harvest etc. A prayerful atmosphere is created to ensure all gather respectfully. Creativity in presentation enables children engage with the theme, readings and prayers. Opportunities are provided by teachers to enable full, active and conscious participation of all those present, and enable personal response. Children are enabled to pray formally and informally. In-service for Staff to develop their skills in planning and leading Collective Worship has been provided. This needs to be passed on to pupils. Opportunities are sometimes provided for parents, carers, parishioners and governors to participate in celebrations. This is greatly appreciated. Children also visit church for certain services. This helps develop their understanding of what it is to belong to a parish community.

How effective the provision is for Catholic Education	
The quality of teaching and purposeful learning in Religious Education	1
The effectiveness of assessment in Religious Education	1
The extent to which the Religious Education curriculum meets pupils' needs	1
The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school	1

How effective leaders and managers are in developing the Catholic Life of the school

Leaders and managers are outstanding in promoting and developing the Catholic life of the school and show a real understanding of and commitment to the Mission of the Church. This is reflected in the Schools own Mission Statement and motto – ‘Living and Learning Together in faith’. All who form part of the school community including parents, governors and children were involved in the development of the Mission Statement. Its aims and motto direct and guide every aspect of school life. It would be good to provide ways for children and others to interpret and evaluate the mission creatively and visually using many of the wonderful photographic images on display around the school. This would enable the content of the mission to be known and owned by all. Opportunities are provided for the staff and pupils to play an active part in Catholic life and Mission of the school for example the work undertaken on other faiths or Religions, charity work etc. They are constantly striving to improve and are looking to use the UNICEF Rights Respecting Award to further challenge themselves. The Self Evaluation Document provides evidence of the school’s monitoring, analysis and self challenge. It provides a basis to celebrate strengths and outlines areas for development. Regular in-service training has enabled staff to further understand the Church’s Mission in Education and play their unique part in it. A range of opportunities for Spiritual and Moral development are provided for staff and pupils such as staff praying together, links with the parish and local community, staff and pupils celebrating together throughout each year etc. Pupils have a keen awareness of their need for outreach and support many local, national and international charities first hand and through fundraising e.g. Derian House, Good Shepherd, Children in Need. Parents, the Parish Priest and governors are fulsome in their praise of the school’s commitment to its Catholic Mission. The school’s Religious Education Newsletter keeps parents informed of school/parish links.

Leaders and managers monitor the progress of all pupils and the quality of teaching and learning. A programme of ‘learning walks’ forms part of this. They have begun to use data to evaluate the school’s performance, celebrate, and plan future improvements and the school continues to improve. Targets, timescales and clear lines of accountability are clearly identified. Key areas for development are being and will continue to be tackled systematically. The Religious Education Coordinator is outstanding in the manner in which she leads and manages not only Religious education but a variety of roles in the school. She is innovative, enthusiastic, listens well to advice, welcomes future challenges and is willing to share her own ideas and expertise with others. Clear documentation is available to guide and direct all staff in the delivery of the subject. Governors are good in fulfilling their responsibilities. The link governor for Religious Education visits school regularly to discuss relevant matters and share her expertise as a teacher of Religious Education and senior leader in a local Catholic High School. Governors are effectively helping to shape the direction of the school through setting priorities for improvement, monitoring and evaluating the impact of outcomes. They are well organised and fully involved in evaluating the Catholic life of the school. With the help of and information provided by the headteacher they have some understanding of practice and achievement in Religious Education. This will improve when attainment tracking is shared with them. Their relationships with staff are constructive, challenging and supportive.

Leadership at all levels respects difference, values diversity and ensures equal opportunities for all. Prayer, worship and the liturgical life of the school reflects and respects the limited religious diversity within the school. There are extremely positive and caring relationships at every level within the school. Concern, respect and hospitality are key strengths of the school Leaders and managers facilitate pupils' involvement in service to the Parish, local and wider communities, e.g. links with the Church of England school that shares the same site, a school in Nelson, Lancashire and one in Gambia. Excellent parish links are fostered throughout the year but especially during times of Sacramental preparation. Parents are consulted regularly and involved in a variety of ways in the life of the school. High numbers of parents come into school weekly to support children. Parents also support children's work on Other Religions e.g. The Hinduism workshop. The use of the 'Here I am' programme promotes community cohesion. Children have studied the work of CAFOD and use materials to support their work e.g. Fairtrade and Dream Teams. Children have explored the beliefs and values of other faiths and religions. This helps to promote tolerance and respect for those who think differently. They are encouraged to look at how others make sense of the world, deepen their understanding and explore differences in belief and practice to their own. It would be good to invite members of other religious beliefs to share their understanding and visit some places of worship for other religious traditions to further enhance this work.

How effective leaders and managers are in developing the Catholic Life of the School	
How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school and plan and implement improvement to outcomes for pupils	1
How well leaders and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education and plan and implement improvement to outcomes for pupils	1
The extent to which the governing body provides effective challenge and support for the Catholic dimension of the school so areas needing development are addressed decisively and responsibilities met	1
How effectively leaders and managers promote community cohesion	1