

SALFORD DIOCESE
INSPECTION REPORT

ST. TERESA'S ROMAN CATHOLIC
PRIMARY SCHOOL

St. Teresa's Road Firwood Stretford M16 0GQ



Inspection date April 2009

Reporting Inspector Mrs. Mary McGrail

Inspection carried out in accordance with Section 48 of the Education Act 2005

Type of School	Catholic Primary
URN	106355
Age range of pupils	3-11
Number on roll	224
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of Governors	Rev. Patrick McMahon
Headteacher	Mrs. Anne Heard
Religious Education Co-ordinator	Mrs. T. Loat
Date of previous inspection	December 2005

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	2	
The quality of Collective Worship	1	
Achievement and standards in Religious Education	2	
The quality of teaching and learning in Religious Education	2	
The quality of the Religious Education curriculum	1	
Leadership and management of curriculum Religious Education	1	
The following pages provide reasons to support these judgements		

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

St. Teresa's is a Roman Catholic voluntary aided primary school in the Diocese of Salford. It serves the parish of Our Lady and St. John (with St. Teresa, Firswood) in Chorlton-cum-Hardy, Manchester. The school is situated on the outskirts of the city of Manchester in the centre of an estate of private owner occupied properties. The school also serves an area of rented local authority housing. The learners come from a wide range of socio- economic backgrounds. The age range of the learners is 3 to 11 years. The indicative admission number is 30 and there are currently 224 learners on roll of whom 196 are baptised Catholics. 15% of the learners are eligible for free school meals. 36 of the learners have been identified as having special educational needs with 5 having a statutory statement of special educational need. 4 learners have English as an additional language. 10 of the 13 teachers (77%) are Catholics.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL

St. Teresa's is a good Catholic school with several outstanding features. Its learners are offered a traditional Catholic education in a happy, caring and secure environment. Learners enjoy coming to school and parents are very supportive of the strong Catholic ethos of the school. Home school and parish links are very strong and learners and their families are very well supported by the parish priest and the school on their faith journey. Positive and supportive relationships are evident throughout the whole school community. In the short time she has been in post the dedicated headteacher has been diligent in creating a team approach to promoting a vision for the development of the school. The governing body share this vision and support the headteacher and her senior management team. The school is successful in promoting the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of its learners. The school has very strong links with St. John's school, its sister school in the parish. The school lives out the aims of its Mission Statement to "prepare our children to become part of the wider community with Jesus as our guiding light."

Improvement since the last inspection

Following the last Section 48 inspection in 2005 the school has experienced a turbulent period of uncertainty with changes to the senior management team and governing body. After 3 years as acting headteacher the deputy has resumed her deputy's role following the appointment of the current headteacher in September 2008. 3 new teachers have been appointed to the school. Since 2007 the governing body has had a new chair and vice chair as well as 4 new governors. The school is now experiencing a welcome stability in governance and management. Following the closure of the adjacent parish church in February 2009 work is now in progress to link the school and church in providing a new hall, staff room and kitchen as well as a prayer and Mass room and facilities for the disabled. This is due to be completed in July 2009. Further refurbishment is planned.

Capacity to improve

The school's self-evaluation is honest and realistic and identifies clear priorities. The headteacher, well supported by her senior management team and staff has a clear vision for the future development of St. Teresa's. The chair of governors and governing body share this vision and support it fully. They have the expertise and determination to realise this vision. Therefore the capacity to improve is good.

What the school should do to improve further

- Continue to implement the diocesan assessment framework including the moderation of levelled work.
- Continue to monitor and evaluate rigorously the overall provision for curriculum Religious Education.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

The leadership and management of the Catholic life of the school are good with some outstanding features. The school has a clear and precise Mission Statement which is regularly reviewed. Plans are in place to review the Mission Statement involving all members of the school community. It is on prominent display in all classrooms and throughout the school. The school's aims permeate all aspects of its life and are at the forefront of all policies. The headteacher and her senior management team give very good leadership to the school. Through his many visits to the school the parish priest plays a pivotal role in encouraging and supporting learners and their families. This excellent support is recognised and appreciated by teachers, learners and parents. The very well organised Sacramental Programme is well supported by the school and recognised as a very successful aspect of parish life. Governors are involved as catechists. Governors are well informed on the overall provision for Religious Education through the headteacher's detailed reports and the reports of the designated governor for Religious Education. Monitoring and evaluation by the headteacher and Religious Education co-ordinator has been extended since September 2008 and are well structured and detailed. 5 of the Catholic teachers hold the Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies or its equivalent qualification. The governing body is encouraged to support other staff in acquiring this qualification. The school is continuing to develop productive links with the wider community particularly through the school council.

THE QUALITY OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

Provision for collective worship is outstanding. Throughout the school year learners, staff and parents are given a wide range of opportunities to develop their relationship with God. The school has a policy statement for prayer and worship which was reviewed in October 2008. Great efforts have been made to promote a feeling of "moving on" and to strengthening the links with St. John's parish and school through prayer and worship, joint celebrations and retreats. The regular celebration of Mass is central to the life of the school and learners take a full and active role in the preparation for these celebrations. Learners are involved in planning and preparing class assemblies on a rota system. A file of celebrations and assemblies is kept. The assemblies and class collective worship attended during the inspection were excellent examples of a worshipping community gathering together at a special time of the church's year. The learners who took part in the Passover meal were very reverent and respectful. The joy and enthusiasm in the assembly led by Reception was an enjoyable and spiritual experience for all involved. Parents appreciate being invited to assemblies and Mass and many attend. Drama productions are included in Christmas and Easter celebrations. Prayer has a high priority at St. Teresa's. Learners are familiar with the traditional prayers of the church and are happy to share their spontaneous prayers with others. As part of the school's contribution to community cohesion other faiths are celebrated in assemblies and visitors are also welcome to lead them. No learner is withdrawn from any aspect of this inclusive provision for collective worship.

ACHIEVEMENT AND STANDARDS IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Achievement and standards in Religious Education overall are good. On entry to the Foundation Stage attainment is broadly in line with national expectations. Language and communication skills are generally weaker. Good progress is made in the Reception class and by the end of Key Stage 1 many learners are able to write simple prayers and retell their own version of stories they have heard. In Key Stage 2 this good progress is maintained in most classes. By the end of the Key Stage learners have a good factual knowledge of their faith. They are able to use appropriate religious vocabulary when explaining their ideas and many take great pride in their written presentations. Where progress has been inconsistent this reflects the number of staff changes over recent years. Learners discuss moral and social issues in a sensible manner and they are proud of their input into school decisions through the school council. They were able to explain in detail how they visit other schools in the community to share ideas for improvements. They recently visited a school which ran a successful tuck shop to see what they could learn. The learners give generous support to local, national and international charities. The older learners accept responsibility willingly acting as prefects and play leaders for the younger ones.

THE QUALITY OF TEACHING AND LEARNING IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The inspector agrees with the school that the quality of teaching and learning in Religious Education is good. All teachers plan their lessons carefully with a clear focus. In some classes the learning objectives are explained very clearly to the learners. There is a good mix of direct teacher input and meaningful discussion with tasks which are set to meet the needs of all learners. Those learners who need extra help are supported by the teaching assistants. Resources are carefully chosen to enhance the learning process. Teachers demonstrate good questioning skills and a thorough knowledge of the Religious Education curriculum. In some classes work is very carefully marked with suggestions given for how work could be improved. Good work and extra effort is praised. The school has made a very good start in implementing the diocesan assessment model. Assessed work is levelled and a file has been established by the Religious Education co-ordinator. This should be continued and extended to include whole school moderation of the levels awarded to ensure consistency. Learners have good attitudes to their learning. They listen attentively to the teacher and respect others input into discussions. They enjoy their work and are keen to be involved in the discussions. When given a task to complete they settle down quickly and stay on task until it is completed. They work well in small groups and their behaviour at all times is very good.

THE QUALITY OF THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CURRICULUM

The Religious Education curriculum is outstanding. The school has a policy statement for curriculum Religious Education which was reviewed in October 2008. All lessons are based on the *REvision 2000* guidelines and *Moving the Vision On* in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. Teachers have attended training in preparation for implementing the revised curriculum in Key Stage 2. The time allocated to curriculum Religious Education meets both national and diocesan requirements. The length of individual lessons is appropriate for the age of the learners. The diocesan World Faiths programme is used in Key Stage 2. Learners visit a range of places of worship to prepare them to develop respect for other faiths and cultures thus contributing to community cohesion. No learner is withdrawn from curriculum Religious Education. The quality of the support offered by the school and parish to learners and their families contributes positively to the overall provision. The well attended Family Mass held on Sundays together with the quality of the Sacramental Programme, fully involving learners and their families in the celebrations, are excellent examples of a vibrant worshipping community led by a very supportive parish priest. Overall the Religious Education curriculum makes a major contribution to the learners, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF CURRICULUM RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The leadership and management of curriculum Religious Education are outstanding. The experienced co-ordinator has been in post for several years. With the strong support of the headteacher, who gives this area of the curriculum a very high profile in school, she has a very clear vision of her role and leads by example. Teachers' lesson plans are well monitored. The learners' work is scrutinized and lesson observations are carefully recorded. All findings are evaluated and inform and direct the school development plan. Clear priorities are then established. In order to support the ongoing raising of standards the school is encouraged to continue to monitor and evaluate rigorously the overall provision for curriculum Religious Education. The governing body is well led by the parish priest in his capacity as chair. He is a regular visitor and, as designated governor for Religious Education, is well aware of the provision. Governors are invited to attend assemblies and celebrations. The co-ordinator attends diocesan training and informs colleagues of initiatives through the many staff meetings she leads. Resources have been audited and catalogued. These are supplemented as required. Every class has a very attractive focal area for prayer and displays throughout the school clearly reflect its faith life.