

SALFORD DIOCESE
INSPECTION REPORT

ST. TERESA'S ROMAN CATHOLIC
PRIMARY SCHOOL

Redcar Road Little Lever Bolton BL3 1EN



Inspection date May 2008

Reporting Inspector Mrs. Joan Duffin

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

Type of School	Catholic Primary
URN	105247
Age range of pupils	4-11
Number on roll	144
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of Governors	Ms. D. Kelly
Headteacher	Mrs. D. Bohan
Religious Education Co-ordinator	Mrs. D. Bohan
Date of previous inspection	April 2005

The Inspection judgements are:	Grade	Explanation of the Grades 1 = Outstanding 2 = Good 3 = Satisfactory 4 = Inadequate
Overall effectiveness of the school	1	
Leadership and management of the Catholic life of the school	1	
The quality of Collective Worship	1	
Achievement and standards in Religious Education	1	
The quality of teaching and learning in Religious Education	1	
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 voluntary aided Catholic primary school which serves the parish of St. Teresa in Little Lever, Bolton. The children come from a mixture of council and privately owned housing. The age range of learners is 4 to 11 and there are currently 144 pupils on roll. The indicative admission number is 20. 134 pupils are baptised Catholics. The children are mostly white British. 10% of pupils are eligible for free school meals. 29 pupils have been identified as having special educational needs. Of these 4 have a statement of special educational need. All 8 teachers are Catholic.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL

St. Teresa's is an outstanding Catholic school. It has very strong Catholic values which establish a very good climate for work. The Catholic life of the school and the range and quality of provision for collective worship are outstanding. The school's self-evaluation is accurate. Governors are well informed and offer challenge and support to the headteacher. The headteacher is an outstanding leader and has a clear vision of what makes an excellent Catholic school. She sets clear direction for the teaching of Religious Education and is ably supported by the senior management team. The standards achieved in curriculum Religious Education are outstanding. The well established systems for monitoring, evaluation, assessment and tracking ensure effective teaching and learning are taking place. The curriculum is well planned. Pupils' behaviour is excellent demonstrating respect for themselves and others. There is excellent provision for pupils' spiritual and moral development. Opportunities are taken to promote pupils' understanding of other faiths and cultures and to promote community cohesion. Excellent relationships exist between the school, parents, parish and associated high school.

Improvement since the last inspection

Following the last Section 23 inspection in April 2005 the school was asked to extend the range of assessment activities. The school has worked hard to address this issue successfully.

Capacity to improve

The school's self-evaluation is accurate and is clearly related to the School Improvement Plan. Priorities for Religious Education and the Catholic life of the school have an appropriate place in its action plans. The headteacher has a clear understanding of the strengths of the school and the areas for development. The headteacher, staff and governors are committed to improvement. There is outstanding capacity for further improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the Religious Education curriculum still further by adopting the new diocesan curriculum as it becomes available.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

The leadership and management of the Catholic life of the school are outstanding. The Mission Statement lies at the heart of the school's aims, policies and expectations. The children are valued as individuals and placed at the centre of the school's high expectations. The governing body fulfils its role well in relation to the school's foundation. It has knowledge of the Catholic life of the school through headteacher reports and close involvement with the school. The priest in residence, the diocesan Vicar General, is a frequent and welcome visitor. The headteacher, who is also the Religious Education coordinator, is an outstanding leader and has a clear vision of the nature of the Catholic school. She is well supported by the senior management team in promoting the Catholic life of the school. All members of staff fully support the many opportunities for prayer and worship and promote learners' spiritual and moral development in all they do. There is a strong Catholic ethos in the school characterised by Gospel values and reconciliation. The parish based Sacramental Preparation Programme is well planned and delivered and strongly supported by the school. Community cohesion is promoted in the school and pupils are given many opportunities to develop a respect for other faiths and cultures. Pupils are also given many opportunities to care for those less fortunate than themselves through their support for such charities as St. Joseph's Penny, the Shoebox Appeal and raising money for a teacher who is going to work in the Sudan. They also sing for the local senior citizens and help to maintain the parish gardens.

THE QUALITY OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

Provision for collective worship in the school is outstanding in relation to the range and quality of opportunity available. The liturgical life of the school is planned by the headteacher in conjunction with the priest in residence. Whole school Masses are held at least termly. Whole school assemblies are held twice weekly and class led assemblies are held on a regular basis. Class liturgies are a feature of the school's provision. Pupils help to prepare the liturgy, choose hymns and write prayers for these celebrations. In the excellent class liturgy observed in upper Key Stage 2 the native American story of the rainbow was used to very good effect to help pupils understand that, though we are all different, we can all work together to be even more effective. An atmosphere of peace and calm was created by the darkened room and soft music. All the pupils were involved in the liturgy and responded prayerfully and respectfully. Reconciliation, Stations of the Cross and the Maundy Thursday Mass provide pupils with an opportunity to prepare well for Easter. Benediction, devotions to Our Lady and nativity plays are examples of other celebrations held throughout the year. Parents, grandparents and parishioners are happy to join in these celebrations. Collective worship makes an excellent contribution to the spiritual and moral development of learners and to promoting community cohesion.

ACHIEVEMENT AND STANDARDS IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Achievement and standards in Religious Education are outstanding. Pupils' attainment on entry to school is broadly in line with national expectations. They make good progress in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 and very good progress in Key Stage 2. By the end of Year 6 pupils' attainment is well above that expected for their age. Learners with special educational needs are very well supported by teachers and teaching assistants and they achieve very well. Learners of above average ability are challenged to achieve their potential by the high expectations and excellent teaching. Systems of monitoring and evaluation are very well established. The diocesan scheme for assessment and standardisation has been adopted and is developing well. Pupils are confident in discussion and respond to teachers' questioning with knowledge and understanding. They have a good knowledge of the life and work of Jesus and are able to apply his teaching to their own lives. Learners' own prayers and reflections are used in class prayers and assemblies alongside traditional ones. The school provides very well for pupils' spiritual and moral development and children have a clear idea of right and wrong. Their behaviour during the inspection was exemplary. They show respect for themselves and others. Pupils are given opportunities to develop responsibility, independence and leadership skills through the house system and older children caring for 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 the school is outstanding. The teaching observed during the inspection was outstanding. Lessons are well prepared and conducted at a good pace to maintain interest and enjoyment. The use of technology is developing well. A very good lesson observed in Key Stage 1 used the interactive whiteboard effectively to tell the story of Pentecost. The children then used drama, discussion and art to understand how the coming of the Holy Spirit affected the followers of Jesus. Work is provided which matches pupils' needs including support for the less able and challenge for the more able. Questioning is effective with good use of open ended questions. Pupils listen with respect to other points of view and behave very well. Teachers ensure that pupils understand the purpose of the lesson and consolidate their learning with a plenary session at the end. Cross curricular links are utilised effectively. An outstanding lesson in Key Stage 2 created a Papal Court in which pupils put forward a case for their chosen candidate to be acclaimed as someone who has demonstrated their use of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Every pupil played a part in a presentation and also had an opportunity to be a member of the Papal Court – maybe even the Pope! Teachers have high expectations and challenge pupils to achieve their potential. Marking is good with most teachers taking the opportunity to advise learners of ways in which they can improve their work.

THE QUALITY OF THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CURRICULUM

The Religious Education curriculum is outstanding. It meets national and diocesan requirements in respect of time allocated to curriculum Religious Education. The curriculum is very well adapted to meet the needs of learners by challenging the more able and supporting the less able. The mixed-age classes are re-organised to teach Religious Education in Year groups to ensure coverage of the curriculum. Curriculum provision is enhanced by prayer and worship, cross-curricular links and the varied extra-curricular activities offered. A variety of school trips and visitors to the school further enhance the provision. Teachers' lessons and pupils' work are monitored and evaluated and effective feedback given. Excellent systems of assessment, standardisation and tracking of pupils' work ensure that effective teaching and learning are taking place. Study of other world religions and opportunities to promote community cohesion and an understanding and respect for other faiths and cultures are undertaken. The headteacher is a member of the Community Cohesion group in the education authority and the school is developing close links with a predominantly Muslim school in the area. The caring relationships between all members of the school community create an effective learning environment. The clean, bright attractive rooms and excellent displays contribute to this. Excellent links with the parents, parish, associated high school and the community further enhance provision.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF CURRICULUM RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The school has assessed its leadership and management of curriculum Religious Education as outstanding and the inspector would agree with this judgement. Governors provide challenge and support to the headteacher. The priest in residence is a regular and welcome visitor to the school and, as well as his pastoral role, he is involved with the curriculum from time to time. The chair of governors, who is also the link governor for Religious Education, is very involved with the school. The headteacher sets a clear direction for the teaching of Religious Education in the school. She is ably supported by the senior management team. The effective and efficient systems established for monitoring curriculum Religious Education include scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' planning. The diocesan guidelines for assessment and standardisation have been adopted and are developing well. Curriculum Religious Education is a main priority for the coming school year when the new diocesan curriculum will be adopted as it becomes available. The school's self-evaluation is accurate. All members of staff uphold the Catholic ethos of the school and help to create an atmosphere of happiness and belonging. The school is committed to creating an effective learning environment and equality of learning for all with Christ at the centre.