



ARCHDIOCESE OF LIVERPOOL

INSPECTION REPORT

ST. CHRISTOPHER'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

SPEKE

Inspection Date Tuesday 1 February 2011

Inspectors Rev D Melly Mrs A McNally

Unique Reference Number 133615

Inspection carried out under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005

Type of School Catholic Primary

Age range of pupils 3 - 11

Number on roll 306 (excluding Nursery + 52 part time)

Chair of Governors Mrs F Stoddart

Head teacher Mrs C Denby

School address Tarbock Road

 Speke

 Liverpool

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Date of last inspection 5 March 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 Christopher's school is a larger than average sized Catholic Primary School situated in Speke mainly serving the parish of St Christopher. There are 306 children on roll of whom 263 are baptised Catholic, 14 come from other Christian denominations, and 2 from other faith or religious traditions. Twenty seven have no religious affiliation. There are 19 teachers of whom 15 teach religious education. Thirteen teachers are Catholic. Nine teachers have a suitable qualification in religious education and 1 teacher is currently pursuing the CCRS. Since the last inspection a new Headteacher has been appointed and the deputy has taken over as the Subject co-ordinator.

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:-

The school is outstanding in providing Catholic Education. There is a clear vision for Catholic Education which is embraced by the whole school community. Since the last inspection the school has securely maintained and built on previously good performance. Self evaluation is rigorous and accurate. 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. The school is successful in addressing the areas it has identified for improvement. The leadership team is deeply motivated and consistently communicates its high expectations to staff in order to secure improvement. Staff are affirmed and supported. Teachers are provided with In-service to support their ongoing development. Realistic and challenging plans stem from the accurate analysis obtained through monitoring and are being used effectively to improve outcomes. Any underperformance is challenged.

Overall the school has an outstanding capacity for sustained improvement.

What the school needs to do to improve further

- Continue to implement the targets set out in the school's Self-Evaluation Document. This includes:
 - further enhancing the provision of the formal tracking system (currently being trialled in year 2) throughout the whole school;
 - embedding formal moderation into current school practice;
 - establishing a pastoral area group 'moderation' cluster.

How good outcomes are for individuals and groups of pupils

Pupils' achievements in Religious Education are outstanding. On entry to school many children have a limited or no knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith. Pupils' attainment in Religious Education is outstanding. Pupils make outstanding progress in relation to their starting points and capabilities. Analysis of assessments undertaken provides evidence of pupils generally attaining appropriate levels for their age and stage of development in each key stage. There is no difference in performance between pupils of different gender. Pupils are becoming increasingly more religiously 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 becoming more aware of the demands of religious

commitment in everyday life. Any underachievement is challenged. Pupils are encouraged to work independently and collaboratively. Pupils' enjoyment of their learning is outstanding as shown by their interest, enthusiasm and behaviour. Pupils are actively involved in developing and evaluating the Catholic character of the school by formulating and living the Mission Statement. The school council has been instrumental in developing the new 'Behaviour Policy' and initiation of 'lunch with the Headteacher' award and weekly social awards. Pupils have an outstanding sense of belonging to the school community and value and respect others. Pupils are encouraged to take on roles of responsibility in the school and wider community e.g. school council, monitors and buddies. Pupils benefit from participation in away days and retreat activities. Pupils are considerate and caring of others both in school and the wider community. Pupils have a very good sense of right and wrong and apply this in their personal relationships. Education for personal relationships has fostered positive attitudes in pupils. Pupils take an increasing responsibility for themselves and their actions. They praise and acknowledge the contribution of others. They show a readiness to embrace and celebrate their lived experiences.

Pupils are outstanding in responding to and participating in the school's Collective Worship. They are becoming increasingly more confident in preparing and leading worship from their earliest years. They act with reverence and are keen to participate in a variety of gatherings. They sing joyfully, reflect in silence and join in community prayers appropriately and with confidence. No-one is expected to act in a manner contrary to their beliefs and all show mutual respect. Pupils' knowledge of prayer and liturgy is increasing. They are becoming familiar with a variety of prayer styles. Unique to the school in the circumstance following the death of the Priest of forty years Fr. Cunningham, children wrote reverent and thoughtful prayers to him expressing their sadness at his passing and they were pleased that he was now being looked after in heaven. They appreciate and are open to the Word of God in the scriptures.

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 is consistently effective in ensuring that pupils are interested and engaged and make outstanding progress. Teachers take into account pupils' prior learning and ensure differentiated tasks when planning so that the work consolidates, builds and extends their knowledge and understanding. Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to work independently and collaboratively. Outstanding use is made of time and resources: teaching assistants, ICT including the interactive white board, PowerPoints, recording

equipment and cameras. The 'Memories' topic has invoked plenty of shared discussion and both teachers and teaching assistants used a variety of personal photographs and memorabilia to enrich pupils' learning experiences. Teachers and others use a variety of strategies to sustain and motivate pupils including questioning, drama, talk partners, post-it parades and graffiti walls. Pupils are informed of their progress and how to improve both orally and through marking. They are given opportunities to discuss their work and progress.

The assessment of pupils work in Religious Education is outstanding. The school has outstanding assessment strategies which provide accurate and detailed information on the achievement of all the pupils. Teachers are able to identify how well pupils are achieving and tackle underachievement. Teachers enable pupils to evaluate their own work. Pupils undertaking self-assessment was evident throughout the day. Formal assessment tasks are undertaken in line with Archdiocesan guidance. Assessment information is collated by the subject leader and shared with the leadership team, governors and parents. Achievement and effort are celebrated. Pupils are affirmed, know how well they are doing and know what they need to do to improve further.

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 at least 10% is allocated to Religious Education. This fulfils the requirements of the Bishops of England and Wales. Planning ensures full coverage of the Religious Education programme. Imaginative and well planned strategies are deployed to enrich pupils learning. Curriculum outlines are provided for parents who are consulted on different issues depending on the topic being covered and who readily supply artefacts from home. The school implements new curriculum developments as appropriate. Enrichment activities such as the Children's University, participation in sports days and days out have a positive impact on the curriculum. The Religious Education curriculum provides outstanding opportunities for pupils' spiritual and moral development.

The Collective Worship provided is outstanding in reflecting the Catholic character of the school and taking into account the variety of faith backgrounds among the pupils. Collective Worship plays a key part in meeting the spiritual needs of the pupils. Opportunities are provided to enable full, active and conscious participation of the whole school community. Children are enabled to pray formally and informally. The school provides opportunities for Staff to develop the skills in planning and leading Collective Worship. The teachers then provide the necessary resources and opportunities to help children to develop these skills also. Outstanding opportunities are provided for parents, carers and the local and wider Faith communities to participate in a variety of celebrations of the 'Here I Am' programme and the Church's liturgical year.

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 schools

Leaders and managers are outstanding in promoting and developing the Catholic life of the school and show an outstanding understanding of and commitment to the Mission of the Church. This is reflected in the school's own Mission Statement "we live the Gospel values by caring, learning and achieving..." All who form part of the school community including parents, priests, governors and children were involved in the development and review of the Mission Statement. Its aims and practical objectives direct and guide every aspect of school life and are a useful tool by which the school can evaluate its effectiveness. Outstanding opportunities are provided for the staff and pupils to play an active part in Catholic life and Mission of the school e.g. involvement in developing and implementing the Mission Statement and its aims, planning and delivering Collective Worship, living out the Gospel values of love, tolerance and forgiveness in their behaviour to each other. The Self Evaluation Document provides evidence of the school's monitoring, searching analysis and self challenge. Their analysis provides a basis to celebrate the school's strengths and outlining areas for development. The school provides outstanding induction and in-service training to enable 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 through the use of the 'Before you Begin' materials and attendance at Archdiocesan 'Spirituality' conferences. Pupil visits to places of interest including the Cathedral and Brettargh Holt, Cumbria enable an outstanding reflective response.

Leaders and managers are outstanding in the way they use monitoring data to evaluate the school's performance, celebrate, and plan future improvements. The quality of planning and monitoring is outstanding and impacts well on provision. The subject leaders are outstanding in leading and guiding Religious Education. They show outstanding commitment and introduce new initiatives when appropriate. Outstanding documentation guides and directs all staff in the delivery of the subject. This is updated as necessary.

Governors are outstanding in fulfilling their responsibilities. They have effectively helped to shape the direction of the school through their involvement in shaping the Mission Statement, attendance at the various governor meetings and above all through their visits to the school while staff and pupils are present. There has been governor representation at Families and Schools Together meetings.

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 religious diversity within the school. There are outstanding positive relationships at every level within the school. Leaders and managers facilitate pupils' involvement in service to the local faith and religious communities particularly with the airport's carol and Remembrance services. The school is involved in the immediate neighbourhood served by the school: police, fire service, health advisor, social services, Parklands. The local headteachers meet regularly to discuss their involvement in community issues. Dialogue and collaboration is encouraged with people who hold different beliefs and values. Parents are consulted regularly and involved in a variety of ways in the life of the school: Families and Schools Together, Seal, World Weeks, Masses and assemblies. The use of the 'Here I am' programme promotes community cohesion. Children have explored the beliefs and values of other faiths and religions including Judaism and Islam. This helps to promote tolerance and respect for those who think differently.

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