

**SALFORD DIOCESE  
INSPECTION REPORT**



**ST.HERBERT'S  
ROMAN CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL  
Edward Street , Chadderton, Oldham OL9 9SN**

Inspection date June 2011

Reporting Inspector Mrs Carolyn Page

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

|                                  |                      |
|----------------------------------|----------------------|
| Type of School                   | Catholic Primary     |
| URN                              | 105722               |
| Age range of pupils              | 3-11                 |
| Number on roll                   | 310                  |
| Appropriate authority            | The governing body   |
| Chair of Governors               | Rev. P. McKie        |
| Head teacher                     | Mrs. M. J. Sainsbury |
| Religious Education Co-ordinator | Mrs. M. Kane         |
| Date of previous inspection      | February 2008        |

| <b>The Inspection judgements are:</b>                                  | <b>Grade</b> | <b>Explanation<br/>of the<br/>Grades</b><br><br>1 = Outstanding<br>2 = Good<br>3 = Satisfactory<br>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                      | 2            |   |
| Leadership and management of curriculum Religious Education            | 2            |   |
| <i>The following pages provide reasons to support these judgements</i> |              |   |

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

Saint Herbert's is a larger than average, Roman Catholic, voluntary aided primary school, in the Diocese of Salford. It serves the parish of St. Herbert's in Chadderton, Oldham. The majority of learners live in the parish. The school and church are located in an area of mostly privately owned and rented housing. 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 40 and there are currently 310 learners on roll. Numbers have increased in recent years. The school is a popular school. All year groups with the exception of Y5 are full with a waiting list for other age groups. The year 1 class has 4 additional pupils to the statutory expectation of 40 due to parent's success at appeals. 252 learners (75.3%) are baptised Catholics, mostly coming from St. Herbert's Parish but also from 11 neighbouring parishes. 16% of children are eligible for free school meals. 16% or 44 pupils have been identified as having special educational needs. This is below National Average. 6 pupils have a statutory statement of special educational needs (above National average). 11 of the 12 teachers (92%) are Catholics. Since the last inspection the school has developed with new and improved buildings and outside play areas. The Governing Body in conjunction with the Local Authority has provided a Learning Centre to provide the community with before/after school clubs, provision for courses day and evening and Holiday Fun Clubs

## **OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL**

Saint Herbert's is a good Catholic school with some outstanding features. It is very successful in offering its learners a traditional Catholic education in a friendly and supportive environment where differences and diversity are welcomed and celebrated. The whole school community, very well supported by the parish priest, ensure the pastoral and spiritual needs of the learners and their families are fully met resulting in good home, school and parish links. The school is firmly at the heart of the parish it serves. Positive, happy, respectful relationships are evident throughout the whole school community. Driven by the leadership of head teacher and her hard working staff the school has created an ethos where everyone recognises the need to work together as an "extended family" showing love and concern for all members. Learners enjoy coming to school and attendance is good. Children work hard to achieve the expectations of their teachers. The children are friendly, polite and welcoming and their behaviour at all times is exemplary. Pupils have been described as "ambassadors of the school" In discussions with the inspector they were open, honest and deep thinking, demonstrating self confidence and an excellent knowledge of the school they love. Collective Worship is a strength of the school. The school offers its learners a wide variety of opportunities to develop all their talents. The school is successful in developing the spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness of its learners. The school very successfully realizes the aims of its Mission Statement.

### **Improvement since the last inspection**

Following the last inspection in February 2008 the school has addressed the 2 key issues:-

1. Raise standards in Religious Education through the full implementation of the diocesan assessment procedures and by establishing a file of assessed and levelled work as a reference for moderation.

Assessment of pupils' work has been conducted. Informal discussions have been held regarding assessment opportunities. An assessment file has been compiled for all children. Scrutiny of work has been conducted by subject leader and SLT and results shared with staff.

2. Continue rigorously to monitor and evaluate teaching and learning in curriculum Religious Education.

The RE leader and SLT has through discussion and book scrutinises has monitored and evaluated the teaching and learning in curriculum Religious Education

### **Capacity to improve**

The school's self-evaluation is honest and accurate and gives a clear indication of how the provision is to be further developed. The school has experienced significant absences in this academic year, with senior staff temporarily taking responsibility for key positions including RE leader. The experienced, hardworking head teacher has developed a team approach to ensure that the shared vision of staff and governors for the future development of the school will be realised. The capacity to improve therefore is good.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

1. Closely evaluate and implement the revised RE Scheme, The Way the Truth and the Life throughout the school. Ensuring continuity between mixed age classes through rigorous planning, monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning.
2. To encourage Governors to formalise their monitoring of curriculum RE
3. Monitor the effective use of the school's marking policy in RE books to raise standards.
4. Develop a cohesive approach to assessment.



## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL**

The inspector agrees with the school that leadership and management of the Catholic life of the school is good. The clear Mission Statement permeates all aspects of the school's life and directs all policies, although it has not been reviewed for some years. It is prominently displayed throughout the school. The parish priest is a regular and welcome visitor to the school. He has a very significant impact on the daily life of the school. Governors visit school regularly. The head teacher ensures the governing body are kept informed through her reports. The Sacramental Programme, led by an ex-head teacher, fully supported by the school, is a very successful feature of parish life. "Faith Friends" from the parish act as catechists. Displays in the church demonstrate parish school links. The school is to be commended as 9 teachers have a Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies or its equivalent. The parish priest gives his support to staff through tutorials. For several years the school has been committed to community cohesion and has well established links with other local community schools, primary schools and secondary schools in Oldham. Equal opportunities based on respect for all are recognised and diversity and difference are celebrated.

## **THE QUALITY OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP**

Provision for collective worship is outstanding. Throughout the school year a wide range of rich and meaningful opportunities to strengthen relationships with God are given to learners, staff, parents and parishioners. The celebration of the Mass is central to the life of the school. Whole school Masses are celebrated in church on Holy Days, at the beginning and end of term and special feast days. A Friday timetable is set for classes to attend mass.

During a Key Stage 2 assembly the learners were very respectful and reverent. They were fully involved. All learners spoke clearly and confidently and sang melodiously with genuine enthusiasm. Children took responsibility for operating ICT equipment. Assemblies and class assemblies are led by the staff or children and are held regularly there is a timetable for these events. Parents are invited and enthusiastically attend class assemblies. Assemblies include all learners. Assemblies are also held to celebrate special days from other faiths. The school keeps detailed files of Masses, assemblies and other celebrations.

Prayer has a high profile in school. Learners are familiar with the traditional prayers of the church and are happy to share their spontaneous prayers with others. Each class has a focal area for prayer which is used during class prayer sessions. During a Year 3 act of worship children were encouraged to think of ways they may truly "live their faith". Candles, bread, wine, pebbles, music and flowers were used to aid thought and provide focus. Numerous references were made to the celebration of First Holy Communion which took place over the previous weekend. Class collective worship is a feature of the provision. The teachers lead by example and begin each school year with a Reflection day and Mass.

## **ACHIEVEMENT AND STANDARDS IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

Achievement and standards in Religious Education overall are good. Learners enter Reception with standards broadly in line with national expectations and make good progress. Within and between all key stages they make good progress. The quality of the written work in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 is good. However there are gaps in the coverage relevant to Key Stage 2. By the end of Key Stage 2 most learners have a verbal impressive, factual knowledge of their faith and use good religious vocabulary when communicating their ideas. The oldest learners, discussing sources of information, demonstrated a very good knowledge of their mission as members of the church. Learners appreciate their input into school and take very seriously the decisions made through the school council. Through their involvement with the wider community the children are developing into caring citizens of the future. Children have been involved in donations to Cafod, gifts to St. Charles Lwanga School in Uganda and Christmas Boxes for Eastern Europe.

## **THE QUALITY OF TEACHING AND LEARNING IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

The Religious Education curriculum is good. The school has a policy statement for RE and the RE leader has a job description. All lessons are based on *RE vision 2000*. Teachers have a thorough knowledge of the Religious Education curriculum. The curriculum time allocated to Religious Education meets both diocesan and national requirements. The excellent links between school and parish enable the learners to experience a wide range of opportunities to extend their Religious Education knowledge. The inspector and the school judge the quality of teaching and learning in Religious Education as good. Observations during the inspection confirm this judgement. All lessons are planned with care. Lesson objectives are explained clearly at the beginning of the lesson and repeated frequently during the lesson. The tasks set are appropriate to the age and ability of the learners and therefore meet their needs. There is a good balance between direct teacher input and meaningful discussion with sufficient time allocated for recording the work. During the last year the school in order to raise standards in R.E. have concentrated on the need to give positive, constructive and challenging comments when marking children's work. This is to continue next year. Plenary sessions are well used to bring the lesson to a satisfactory conclusion. Those learners who need extra help are well supported by the teaching assistants who are fully involved in the lessons. The school continues to develop the recording of assessment in R.E. to ensure coverage of all strands in AT 1 & 2. Moderation of levels awarded will ensure consistency of assessment throughout the school. Learners have good attitudes to their learning. They are enthusiastic, keen to be involved in discussions, listen most attentively to the teachers and adults. They co-operate in small groups and pairs and their behaviour at all times is exemplary. The provision of resources is excellent ensuring teachers have the access to activities which can be used in their teaching, the good provision of the building gives space for the teachers to make it into a good learning environment.

## **THE QUALITY OF THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CURRICULUM**

The Religious Education curriculum is good with some outstanding features. Although there are mixed age classes, learners in the same year group have their Religious Education lessons together to ensure full coverage of the curriculum. This is facilitated by extra staff being allocated to the larger groups. All learners receive their curriculum Religious Education entitlement appropriate to their age and ability. The team work evident throughout the school compliments teaching very well as observed in a good lesson with the oldest learners. Pupils were challenged to think of the ministries within the church and their own personal ministry. Learners who need extra help are well supported by the teaching assistants. The school has been teaching the diocesan World Faiths programme for several years. Visits to the Jewish Museum, a Mosque and a Hindu Temple help to develop global awareness. The quality of the Sacramental Programme and the support of "Faith Friends" impacts positively on the overall provision. A joint parish and school initiative to visit the Lake District shrine of St. Herbert is organised each year. The provision for Religious Education makes a major contribution to the quality of the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the learners. No learner is withdrawn from Religious Education lessons.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF CURRICULUM RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

The leadership and management of curriculum Religious Education is good. Books are monitored. The subject leader has yet to monitor teaching and learning through lesson observations although this is planned on the implementation of the new curriculum. The school is encouraged to develop this rigorously .A Religious Education Action plan is in place and has priorities for development identified and clear time scales for their implementation. Further development of assessment strategies has already been prioritised. The parish priest, as designated governor, is very much involved with all aspects of the Religious Education provision and collective worship. The subject leader has attended courses at the Religious Education Centre in her continuing professional development. Resources have been audited, catalogued, and supplemented. Religious Education and collective worship are well resourced. The school has established a Peace Garden for quiet reflection in the school grounds. Attractive displays throughout the school clearly reflect its faith life and every class in the school has a lovely focal point for prayer.