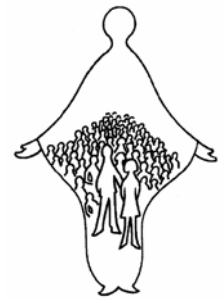


**SALFORD DIOCESE  
INSPECTION REPORT**



**ST AUGUSTINE OF CANTERBURY  
ROMAN CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL  
Lowerhouse Lane Burnley Lancashire BB12 6HZ**

Inspection date December 2007

Reporting Inspector Mr. J. Brierley

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

Type of School Catholic Primary  
 URN 119491  
 Age range of pupils 4-11  
 Number on roll 140  
 Appropriate authority The governing body  
 Chair of Governors Mr. I. Taylor  
 Headteacher Mrs. A. Hardisty  
 Religious Education Co-ordinator Mrs. E. McGregor  
 Date of previous inspection June 2003

<b>The Inspection judgements are:</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Explanation of the Grades</b>  1 = Outstanding 2 = Good 3 = Satisfactory 4 = Inadequate
Overall effectiveness of the school	2	
Leadership and management of the Catholic life of the school	1	
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**

St Augustine of Canterbury is a smaller than average Roman Catholic voluntary aided primary school in the Diocese of Salford serving the parish of St Augustine of Canterbury and St Mary Magdalene in an urban area with considerable social and economic deprivation. The age range of pupils is from 4-11 years. The vast majority of pupils are of white British heritage. In the last two years there has been an influx of Traveller children and children joining the school at other than the usual times. There are significantly more children with special educational needs in the younger end of the school, indicating that the profile of the school is changing. The indicative admission number is 30 and there are presently 140 pupils on roll. 110 learners (79%) are baptised Catholics. All classes are vertically streamed. 30 learners (23%) are eligible for free school meals and 38 (27%) have been identified as having special educational needs but no child has a statutory statement of special educational need. 4 out of the 7 teachers (57%) are Catholics.

## **OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL**

St Augustine's of Canterbury is a good Catholic school with outstanding features. The headteacher and deputy head provide the school with strong leadership. Together they have successfully built an effective and productive team of teachers and support staff. The team work conscientiously together in providing an effective Catholic education which meets the needs of learners. The governors carry out their statutory duties through their committee structure. They provide support, encouragement and challenge for the headteacher and staff as an aid to raising standards. The curriculum committee monitors the progress of the School Development Plan and helps the head to evaluate the plan's effectiveness in successfully meeting objectives. The school's Mission Statement is central to the daily life of the school and can be traced through the School Development Plan and policies. Parents hold the school in high regard. The school has a warm, welcoming and caring environment which caters for all aspects of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. During the inspection the pupils were well behaved, polite, happy and friendly and generally showed a good attitude to their learning. Pupils are making relatively good progress in Religious Education. Teaching is good overall with some outstanding teaching observed during the inspection. Religious Education is planned using the Salford Diocese *REvision 2000* scheme. The school enriches its curriculum through a range of extra curricular activities. Recent building and playground refurbishment has greatly enhanced the learning environment.

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

Following the last Section 23 inspection in June 2003 the school successfully developed good communication and more effective links between the parish catechists, school and homes through the Sacramental Programme. The amalgamation of two parishes since the last Religious Education inspection, however, resulted in a review of how the completion of the Sacramental Programme is delivered.

### **Capacity to improve**

The school's capacity to improve is good. The school has an established monitoring and evaluation policy carried out by the headteacher, senior leadership team and subject co-ordinators. This helps the school in achieving an accurate self-evaluation. The headteacher and governors have a clear vision for their school and are constantly working towards that vision.

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

- Complete the review of the marking policy and establish its use as an aid to the raising of standards.
- Continue to establish, monitor and evaluate the outcomes of the Salford Diocesan assessment and standardisation guidelines for curriculum Religious Education.

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

Leadership and management of the Catholic life of the school are outstanding. The headteacher, staff, parish priest and governing body share the same vision for the Catholic life of the school and support each other in its promotion. Learners from other faiths are warmly welcomed into the Catholic life of the school. The School Development Plan is drawn up by the senior leadership team in consultation with teachers and governors who set priorities and monitor progress towards effective completion. One priority is to develop the Catholic ethos of the school. The school has planned the development of social cohesion at all levels of leadership through its objective to improve the personal development of pupils. This objective includes the provision of a wider range of experiences for learners outside the curriculum in order to raise their understanding of disability discrimination, different cultures and faiths and gender and race equality. Links between the school, home and church are fostered through the Sacramental Programme. The parish priest is a frequent visitor to the school and through his celebration of class Masses is well known to the children. The school's Mission Statement, at present undergoing a review in consultation with learners, parents, staff and governors, is central to the life of the school. Its claim that "We nurture our children's understanding of the Catholic Faith in a warm and welcoming Christian environment"- is in evidence throughout the school. During the inspection members of the elected school council were able to discuss their religion and state, "We are closer to God through prayer".

## **THE QUALITY OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP**

The quality of collective worship is outstanding. Every day starts with a 'school broadcast' presented by two learners inviting the whole school to join in prayer and contemplation. This is relayed to all classes through the use of interactive whiteboards. A programme of class Masses and whole school Masses to celebrate special occasions is planned in collaboration with the parish priest. A child centred class Mass for the Year 5 and 6 class was observed during inspection. It was attended by parents and was particularly meaningful because the children were fully involved in the choice of readings, appropriate hymns and bidding prayers. At the end of Mass parents and children were invited to reflect on Advent as they followed an interactive whiteboard presentation by learners on the theme of Advent and illustrated by pictures. A rota of class assemblies is linked to the class Mass rota, often based on a relevant theme stemming from the class's Religious Education curriculum. The Year 3 and 4 class assembly witnessed during the inspection was based on the Sacrament of Reconciliation being studied by the whole class and about to be received by some of the children for the first time. During the 'school broadcasts', class Mass and assembly the children were well behaved, reverent, and enthusiastic in singing the hymns. A member of the senior leadership team leads a whole school assembly every Monday while the headteacher leads a whole school achievement assembly every Friday. A focus for prayer draped in the appropriate liturgical colour and displaying an Advent wreath was present in each classroom.

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

Achievement and standards in Religious Education are good. Monitoring shows that attainment on entry is below the national average but progress in Religious Education is consistent throughout the school and standards are good. The school has established a system for monitoring Religious Education by the senior leadership team and the Religious Education co-ordinator which includes 'walkthroughs', looking at exercise books and discussions with staff and children. The Religious Education co-ordinator monitors lesson planning. Teachers produce both long term and short term planning to meet the needs of the mixed age classes. Lesson planning is at its best where teachers identify the lesson objective, main teaching method, differentiated activities and provide a lesson evaluation. The differentiation of pupil tasks observed in the exercise books appeared to be mainly by outcome or the planned use of able teaching assistants working with groups of learners. In some lessons differentiated tasks to match age and ability were witnessed. The quality of teaching and learning was often enhanced by the excellent team work of teachers and teaching assistants in both lesson delivery and helping learners complete tasks. The school has done much to improve teacher marking of children's Religious Education work. In their marking teachers ask thought provoking questions or seek to raise standards by informing children how they can improve their work. The inspector recommends that the school completes its review of the marking policy and establishes its use as a means of helping to raise standards.

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

The quality of teaching and learning in Religious Education is good with outstanding features. All lessons observed during the inspection were at least satisfactory but the majority of lessons observed were consistently good with outstanding features. Teachers seek to make lessons appropriate to the range of ages and abilities in vertically streamed classes. The Reception and Year 1 lesson successfully took account of the two age ranges and linked continuous provision tasks to Religious Education. The Year 1 children completed their focussed discussion and writing task with the class teacher. The Reception children completed their discussion and drawing task with the teaching assistant. Children in a Year 1, 2 and 3 class were 'learning how to talk about their feelings'. This was linked to the feelings of Mary at the Annunciation. They were inspired by a postman delivering letters inviting individuals to carry out new and challenging tasks. As a result children expressed their feelings and understood how Mary might have felt. The 'hot seated' shepherd in a Year 3 and 4 class sharpened the focus of the lesson. A Year 5 and 6 lesson provided differentiation and challenge in preparing items for the Jesse tree. In the lessons children displayed a good attitude to learning, listened attentively to their teachers and showed respect for each other. The school is implementing the Salford Diocesan assessment and standardisation guidelines and is encouraged to continue to establish, monitor and evaluate the outcomes of these guidelines for curriculum Religious Education as a means of raising standards.

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

The quality of the Religious Education curriculum is good with outstanding features. The significance of curriculum Religious Education in the school is clearly visible through displays of children's work and the presence of religious artefacts in classrooms and shared areas. The school uses the Salford diocesan Religious Education scheme *REvision 2000*. This is supplemented by an annual cycle of religious activities that further stimulate children's knowledge and understanding of their religion and its traditions. In the light of the revised diocesan syllabus the school has put Religious Education assessment as a priority. The school has enhanced its Religious Education curriculum through its use of the Salford Diocese guidelines 'World Religions and People of other Faiths' as an aid to studying other faiths and cultures'. As a further means of encouraging social cohesion the school has a multi faith week and a multi cultural week to which visiting speakers are invited. These events help the school fulfil the School Development Plan priority of 'improving the personal development of pupils' so that curriculum Religious Education impacts on other curriculum areas and the Catholic life of the school. The inclusion of Religious Education on staff meeting and governors' meetings agendas ensures that its profile within the school remains high and that Religious Education curriculum is under constant review and development. The school enhances its Religious Education curriculum through its exciting use of information and communication technology programmes to complete Religious Education projects.

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

Leadership and management of curriculum Religious Education are good with outstanding features. The parish priest is a regular visitor to the school and communicates well with the school's headteacher and staff. The governor appointed with special responsibility for Religious Education carries out her role with great enthusiasm and is in regular contact with the Religious Education co-ordinator. Every term the Religious Education governor submits a report to the governing body regarding the Catholic life of the school, Religious Education developments and prayer and worship. The Religious Education Co-ordinator attends diocesan meetings to keep the school abreast of developments in Religious Education and has produced an action plan identifying how the school plans further improvements in curriculum Religious Education. She maintains a file to help her monitor the subject through learners' assessments, lesson planning and monitoring notes. She works closely with the Year 3 teacher who oversees the Sacramental Programme in school. The parish priest, governors and school leaders actively promote their shared vision of what a Catholic school, at the heart of the Catholic community, should be. The school's hard working and dedicated headteacher is well supported by the leadership team, staff of the school and governors in ensuring that curriculum Religious Education impacts on every area of school life so that Religious Education, prayer and worship and living the faith complement each other.