

**SALFORD DIOCESE  
INSPECTION REPORT**



**OUR LADY AND ST. ANSELM  
ROMAN CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL**

**John St. Whitworth Rochdale Lancashire OL12 8DB**

Inspection date March 2009

Reporting Inspector Mrs. Joan Duffin

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

Type of School Catholic Primary

URN 119697

Age range of pupils 4-11

Number on roll 104

Appropriate authority The governing body

Chair of Governors Mrs. N. Carey Whitehead

Headteacher Mr. J. Cunningham

Religious Education Co-ordinator Mr. J. Cunningham

Date of previous inspection June 2006

<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	2	
The quality of Collective Worship	2	
Achievement and standards in Religious Education	1	
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**

Our Lady and St. Anselm's is a voluntary aided Roman Catholic primary school which serves the parish of St. Anselm in Whitworth, Lancashire. The school is in a semi-rural area on the outskirts of Rochdale. The age range of learners is 4 to 11. The indicative admission number is 23 and there are currently 104 pupils on roll. There are 68 Catholic learners. Some pupils are from areas of significant disadvantage. All learners are white British. 5% of pupils are eligible for free school meals. 10 learners have been identified as having special educational needs and 4 of these have a statement of special educational need. 2 of the 5 teachers (40%) are Catholics.

## **OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL**

Our Lady and St. Anselm's is a good Catholic school with some outstanding qualities. There is a happy caring atmosphere which creates a good climate for work. The range and quality of provision for collective worship is good but prayer and worship in the classroom need to be developed further. There is excellent provision for pupils' spiritual and moral development. The standards achieved in curriculum Religious Education are outstanding. Less able learners are well supported and achieve well and more able pupils are challenged to achieve their potential. Monitoring and evaluation of work are well established. Standardisation and levelling of pupils' work is in its early stages and needs to be developed further. Teaching is good and the curriculum is well planned. Pupils' behaviour is excellent; they show respect for themselves and others. Governors offer support and challenge to the headteacher. The headteacher, who is also the Religious Education co-ordinator, has a clear vision for the school and leads the school very well. He is aware of the school's strengths and areas for development. Very good relationships exist between the school, parents, parish and the wider community. Pupils are aware of other faiths and cultures and taught to respect them. The school has the Race Equality Mark and community cohesion is strongly supported.

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

Following the last Section 48 inspection in June 2006 the school was asked to further develop the work of assessment by creating a portfolio of examples of levels at which pupils are working and to continue the established systems of monitoring teaching and learning. The school has worked hard to address these issues.

### **Capacity to improve**

The school's self-evaluation is mostly accurate. The headteacher has a very good understanding of development needs. All staff and governors are committed to improvement. There is good capacity for further improvement.

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

- Develop further prayer and worship in the classroom.
- Raise standards in curriculum Religious Education still further by developing the standardisation, levelling and tracking aspects of assessment.

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

The leadership and management of the Catholic life of the school are good with outstanding features. The Mission Statement lies at the heart of the school's aims, policies and expectations. The governing body fulfils its role well in relation to the school's Catholic foundation. It has knowledge of the Catholic life of the school through headteacher reports and close involvement in the life of the school. The parish priest is a frequent and welcome visitor to the school and knows the children and families well. The headteacher, who is also the Religious Education co-ordinator, has a clear vision of the nature of the Catholic school and promotes the Catholic life of the school effectively. All members of staff fully support the many opportunities for prayer and worship in the school and promote learners' spiritual and moral development in all they do. The Catholic ethos in the school is characterised by Gospel values and reconciliation. Community cohesion is strongly supported through links with local Christian groups, other Catholic schools which have a multi-ethnic intake and schools in Oman and Uganda. Pupils gain an understanding and respect for other faiths and cultures through the study of other world faiths. The parish based Sacramental Preparation Programme is planned and run effectively with support from the school. Children are given many opportunities to care for those less fortunate than themselves through support for St. Joseph's Penny, CAFOD and other charities and by singing for local groups. Parents are happy with the school.

## **THE QUALITY OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP**

Provision for collective worship is good both in respect of its quality and range. The policy for prayer and worship reflects the range of opportunities for collective worship provided for learners. These include whole school Masses at the beginning and end of term, weekly class Masses, assemblies and classroom prayer and reflection. Every day prayer points are linked to the liturgical year. Prayer and worship in the classroom needs to be developed further. Throughout the year there are special liturgical celebrations such as Stations of the Cross, confessions, Nativity plays and Harvest Festival. There are displays and prayer tables in classes to give learners further opportunities for personal prayer and reflection. Pupils take a proactive part in preparing for class Masses and take a full part in Masses and assemblies. They write prayers, present the readings and sing. The assembly observed during the inspection encouraged learners to reflect on God as the artist. "We are God's work of art; let us try to be the great person He has created." The children listened respectfully and prayed reverently. Their beautiful singing enhanced the celebration. Parents are invited to attend the weekly Masses and other celebrations. Collective worship makes a good contribution to the spiritual and moral development of learners. Community cohesion is promoted stressing God's love is all-inclusive.

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

Achievement and Standards in Religious Education are outstanding. Pupils' attainment on entry to school is slightly below national expectations. They make very good progress throughout the school and, by Year 6, their attainment is outstanding. Learners with special educational needs are very well supported by teachers and support staff and achieve well. Learners of above average ability are challenged to achieve their potential by high expectations and very good teaching. Systems of monitoring and evaluation are well established. Assessment and standardisation of pupils' work have been introduced and are developing well. Tracking of pupils' achievement and target setting are being introduced to raise standards even further. Pupils are confident in discussion and respond to teachers' questioning with knowledge and understanding. They have a good knowledge of the life and teachings of Jesus and are able to apply these to their own lives. Pupils' written work covers a wide range of genres and is of a high standard. Learners' prayers and reflections are used in collective worship alongside traditional ones. The school provides very well for pupils' spiritual and moral development and the 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 school council 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 is good. The teaching observed during the inspection ranged from satisfactory to outstanding. Lessons are well prepared and usually conducted at a pace to maintain interest and enjoyment. Questioning is good with effective use of open-ended questions. The use of technology is well developed. An outstanding lesson in Key Stage 1 used drama, photographs, the smartboard, cartoon writing and scroll writing to re-tell the story of Bartimaeus. Excellent cross-curricular links were incorporated into the lesson including target-setting. The plenary gave pupils the opportunity to feed back to the class their findings, thus consolidating their learning. A good lesson in Key Stage 2 explored the experiences of Jesus' disciples. One group enacted the story of Peter's denial of Jesus. The rest of the class listened to music and watched images on the smartboard to enable them to understand we can talk to God at any time through prayer and reflection. They then worked in pairs to explore their ideas and wrote prayers to God. Pupils are encouraged to ask questions and respond well to the opportunities provided. Teachers ensure that learners understand the purpose of the lesson and consolidate their learning with a plenary session. Marking is good with teachers taking the opportunity to advise learners of ways in which they can improve their work. Pupils' behaviour is excellent.

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

The Religious Education curriculum is outstanding. It meets diocesan and national requirements in respect of time allocated to curriculum Religious Education. The diocesan curriculum *REvision 2000* is used and the new curriculum, *Moving the Vision On*, is being introduced as it becomes available. Scrutiny of pupils' work is undertaken by staff and informal monitoring of planning and lesson delivery occurs regularly. Teachers are more aware of the need to differentiate work to provide support for the less able and challenge to the more able. Technology and the creative arts are used widely to support the Religious Education curriculum. Assessment and standardisation are developing to ensure effective teaching and learning are taking place. Resources, including interactive whiteboards, are used to very good effect. Curriculum provision is enhanced by prayer and reflection, cross-curricular links and the varied extra-curricular activities offered including the excellent award-winning choir. Study of other world religions, dialogue with other Christian denominations and the links with a school in Musqat and with St John's in Rochdale promote community cohesion and provide an opportunity for pupils to develop an understanding and respect for other faiths and cultures. The school holds the Race Equality mark. Excellent links with parents, grandparents, parishioners, associated high schools and the wider community further enhance the provision. The clean, bright, attractive rooms contribute to the happy environment.

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

The school has assessed its leadership and management of curriculum Religious Education as good but the inspector would judge it to be outstanding. The governors provide support and challenge to the headteacher. The parish priest, who is also the link governor for Religious Education, has an excellent knowledge of the curriculum and its delivery. He, together with other governors, is a frequent and welcome visitor to the school. The headteacher, who is also the Religious Education co-ordinator, sets a clear direction for the teaching of Religious Education in the school and is helping to raise standards. Monitoring and evaluation systems are in place. Assessment, standardisation, tracking and target-setting are being developed and need to be developed further. The non-Catholic teachers receive support and guidance from the headteacher. Religious Education is well represented in the School Improvement Plan and in its action plans. Parents are kept well informed through regular newsletters. Links with the local community and the Rochdale Federation of Schools further enhance the provision. Equality of opportunity for all is promoted and the excellent behaviour of pupils contributes to this. All members of staff uphold the Catholic ethos of the school and help to create an atmosphere of happiness and belonging. Parents are very happy for their children to attend the school. The school is committed to creating an effective learning environment with Jesus at the centre.