

INSPECTION REPORT

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**SACRED HEART
 ROMAN CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Bradshaw Row Church Accrington Lancashire BB5 4HG

Inspection date May 2010
 Reporting Inspector Mrs. M. J. Schofield
 Inspection carried out in accordance with Section 48 of the Education Act 2005

Type of School Catholic Primary
 URN 119658
 Age range of pupils 3-11
 Number on roll 176
 Appropriate authority The governing body
 Chair of Governors Miss D. Kenyon
 Headteacher Mrs J. R. Williams
 Religious Education Co-ordinator Mrs J. R. Williams
 Date of previous inspection June 2007

The Inspection judgements are:	Grade	Explanation of the Grades 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	2	
Achievement and standards in Religious Education	3	
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	1	
<i>The following pages provide reasons to support these judgements</i>		

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Sacred Heart is a voluntary aided Roman Catholic primary school serving pupils from the former parish of the Sacred Heart, Accrington. Following the redrawing of neighbouring parish boundaries the school is now in the parish of St. Mary's Oswaldtwistle yet draws most of its pupils from an extended area including Clayton and Accrington. The immediate area is one of high social and economic disadvantage. On entry to the Nursery the attainment of many pupils is below average. The age range of learners is 3-11 and the indicative admission number is 28. There are currently 176 pupils on roll with an additional 52 part time pupils in the Nursery. 100 of the learners are baptised Catholics. A number of learners are from ethnic minority groups together with learners who come from a Traveller background. 40% of learners are eligible for free school meals. The school has identified 51 pupils with special educational needs. Currently 3 pupils have a statutory statement of their needs. Of the 13 teaching staff 10 (77%) are of the Catholic faith.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL

Sacred Heart is a good Catholic school. The headteacher and her staff work together to ensure that the caring and inclusive ethos within the school is a true reflection of the aims expressed in its Mission Statement. Every member of the school community is valued and nurtured. Teaching is good. Relationships between the teaching staff, their assistants and the pupils are a strength. Learners are rightly proud of their school and show good attitudes to their learning. They are well behaved and enjoy their work. The provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is good. Meaningful and varied opportunities are offered to celebrate prayer and worship together and support and enhance the curriculum. The school is fully supportive of the Sacramental Programme in each of the three parishes. The strong support of the chair in strengthening the role of the governing body is a positive step in the further development of the school.

Improvement since the last inspection

Following the last inspection in 2007 the school has successfully developed the range and use of information and communication technology resources to support curriculum Religious Education. Training for staff in assessment procedures has improved their skills which are continuing to develop. Following a difficult period of disruption in which the school lost the members of its leadership team the governors initially struggled to recruit appropriate staff. The governors have now appointed two non Catholic assistant heads and since September 2009 there has been a strong leadership team committed to moving the school forward. Governors are well informed of developments in the Religious Education curriculum and are welcome to attend school assemblies and masses.

Capacity to improve

The school's self-evaluation is honest and comprehensive. The governors, headteacher and the new senior leaders within the school are committed to continuing the development of the strong Catholic ethos of the school whilst embracing the religious and cultural diversities within its community. All staff are aware of the goals the school is aiming to achieve. The school has a good capacity for further improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Develop a common format for lesson planning to include the evaluation of teaching and learning.
- Further develop assessment procedures in curriculum Religious Education to include the moderation of assessments in order to have a clear picture of the level at which each pupil is working.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

The leadership and management of the Catholic life of the school are outstanding. The key message in the school's Mission Statement is "Let love show in all that we do". All aspects of the daily life and work of the school are a reflection of this statement helping to create a secure, fair environment where enjoyment of school, self esteem and respect are found. The headteacher who is the Religious Education co-ordinator has a clear vision of the Catholic nature of the school and is well supported by the leadership team. All staff are hard working in their commitment to the school's Catholicity. The chair of governors meets regularly with the headteacher. The governing body are supportive and are increasingly involved in shaping the life and direction of the school and in promoting racial awareness and inclusion. They are well informed of the school's strengths and areas for development. The parish priest who is the link governor for Religious Education celebrates Mass regularly in the school. He makes a significant contribution to the religious life of the pupils and supports the curriculum through his input on visits to class lessons. Good relationships exist between the home, school and parish family. Partnership with parents is further encouraged through newsletters and good information regarding their children's progress. Parents are encouraged to share in school Masses, assemblies and liturgical celebrations. Community cohesion is promoted in the school's commitment to the varied opportunities given for learners to develop a respect for other faiths and cultures. The school plays a full supporting role in the preparation of pupils for the Sacraments of Initiation.

THE QUALITY OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

Provision for collective worship is good. Collective worship is an integral part of each school day. The school's policy for prayer and worship outlines the range of opportunities for pupils and staff to develop together their relationship with God. Classes in turn prepare and present assemblies to which parents, governors and friends are invited and regular whole school Masses are celebrated in the school by the parish priest. During the important seasons of the liturgical year special emphasis is placed on prayer and worship in school. One such event followed the events of Holy Week and concluded with the Stations of the Cross. The importance of such events influences learners' spiritual and moral development. Pupils play an important role in the planning and presentation of all celebrations. The theme of the Mass celebrated during the inspection was "God made no distinction between them and us" The Mass was celebrated Fr. Daly and attended by some parents and parishioners. Individuals or groups of pupils said the well prepared readings and presented the offertory gifts. This celebration was enhanced throughout by the reverence and respect shown by the pupils in their prayers and their enthusiastic singing. Each classroom and display area around the school is a focus area for prayer and worship. Colourful displays of pupils work reflect the topics they have studied. Simple prayers in pupils' workbooks together with the use of quiet time for meditation and reflection in classroom worship are evidence of a growing awareness of the importance of prayer in their daily lives. The school also invites visitors of other faith to share their beliefs with the pupils. Collective worship makes a good 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 satisfactory. Many learners enter Foundation Stage with attainment often below the national expectations. They make good progress as they move through Foundation Stage. In Key Stage 1 pupil attainment is improving so that at the end of Key Stage 2 it is generally good. In all observations during the inspection learners were encouraged to build on their prior knowledge. They were always attentive listeners who were eager to share their ideas. They responded well to questioning and worked well together in pairs or group discussions. Pupils enjoy their work and behaviour is good. The staff set activities appropriate to pupils' age and ability, using their support staff well to help pupils achieve at an appropriate level. Monitoring of planning, observations and work books by the co-ordinator helps to provide information of progress through the school. Pupils in Reception know that they are special to God and part of His family. They know that Jesus had a special love for all children. In Key Stage 1 pupils recognise some stories that come from the Bible and are beginning to write their own short accounts and simple prayers. In Key Stage 2 work is recorded in a variety of ways including diaries, prayers and newspaper reports. There is also good evidence of the study of world faiths. Pupils are eager to take on responsibilities making a positive contribution to the school as councillors and buddies for the younger pupils.

THE QUALITY OF TEACHING AND LEARNING IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The quality of teaching and learning observed during the inspection was good in both key stages. Teachers are secure in their knowledge of the Salford guidelines and use a range of strategies to engage and encourage pupils in their learning. They plan their lessons to include discussion, written work and often drama and worship. However lesson planning varies in detail and does not always show any evaluation of teaching or the pupils' learning and the school is encouraged to develop a common format for lesson planning to include this. These evaluations should form an important part of teachers forward planning. Assessment tasks are completed by the pupils each half term. Moderation of these assessments at each key stage would indicate a clearer picture of the levels which learners are achieving. Interactive whiteboards and information communication technology are a valuable resource and are used effectively to create interest and enjoyment in the classroom. Each teaching area is a bright and stimulating learning environment with colourful religious displays. A good example of teaching was observed in the Foundation Stage. The young learners were reminded that the story of Jesus surrounded by young children showed His love for all children. They had used the computer to create pictures of themselves. They were able to identify pictures of other pupils by considering skin, hair and eye colour and talk of how they were alike and yet different. They knew that some of them went to Church and others to Mosque but understood that God loves each one of them and gives them many gifts. Good use of role play and 'hot seating' activities in Year 3 encouraged the class to write thoughtful sentences to question Peter about his feelings following the Ascension of Jesus.

THE QUALITY OF THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CURRICULUM

The quality of the Religious Education curriculum is good. Time allocated to curriculum Religious Education is in line with national and diocesan guidelines. The school follows the *REvision 2000* guidelines supplemented by activities related to the liturgical year. The improved resources for information communication technology to support the delivery of the curriculum are good. Teachers are knowledgeable and confident in the consistency of their delivery of their lessons. Teaching assistants play an important role in supporting both teachers and pupils within the classroom. Regular monitoring indicates that staff use a variety of ways to ensure that all pupils are actively involved in discussion, presentation and role-play so as to meet the needs of all pupils. School Masses, assemblies and liturgical celebrations have a positive impact in supporting and enriching the Religious Education curriculum. The study of world faiths in Key Stage 2 is supported by visitors into the school. These aim to develop pupils' awareness of the customs and traditions of other faith communities whilst understanding similarities and respecting differences. These positive experiences help to promote community cohesion.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF CURRICULUM RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The leadership and management of curriculum Religious Education are outstanding. Working closely together the headteacher, the senior leadership team and the chair of governors share a vision for the ongoing review and development of curriculum Religious Education. As the co-ordinator, the headteacher has a clear understanding of her role in ensuring Religious Education has a high profile in this multi-cultural and multi-faith school and that progress and the development of the curriculum are frequently reviewed. Assessment procedures are in place to give an indication of pupils' knowledge and understanding. The development of key stage moderation will give a clearer picture of pupil achievement. The monitoring of teaching and learning through observations and the scrutiny of planning and workbooks helps to ensure consistency in raising standards. The co-ordinators attendance at in-service training provided by the diocese and her feedback to staff provides good support to staff and encourages them to challenge their own practice and be adventurous and creative in their delivery of the curriculum. Governors are kept informed of learners' progress in the religious and community life of the school and they share in policy review and practice on their visits to the school for occasions of prayer and worship. The parish priest is a regular and welcome visitor playing an active role in the life of the school community.