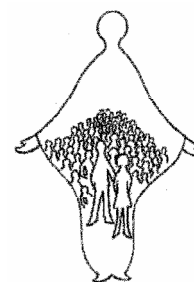


**SALFORD DIOCESE
INSPECTION REPORT**

**ST.KENTIGERN'S
ROMAN CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL
Bethnall Drive
Fallowfield Manchester M14 7ED**



Inspection date April 2007
Reporting Inspector Mrs. Mary McGrail

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

Type of School Catholic Primary
URN 105584
Age range of pupils 3-11
Number on roll 465
Appropriate authority The governing body
Chair of Governors Fr. Thomas Connolly
Headteacher Mr. Paul Jackson
Religious Education Co-ordinator Mrs. Mary Delury
Date of previous inspection April 2001

The Inspection judgements are:	Grade	Explanation of the Grades 1 = Outstanding 2 = Good 3 = Satisfactory 4 = Inadequate
Overall effectiveness of the school	1	
Leadership and management of the Catholic life of the school	1	
The quality of Collective Worship	1	
Achievement and standards in Religious Education	1	
The quality of teaching and learning in Religious Education	1	
The quality of the Religious Education curriculum	1	
Leadership and management of curriculum Religious Education	1	
<i>The following pages provide reasons to support these judgements</i>		

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

St. Kentigern's is a Roman Catholic voluntary aided primary school in the Diocese of Salford. It serves the parishes of St. Kentigern (Fallowfield) and St. Bernadette (Withington) in Manchester. The school is located south of the city centre in an area of high unemployment and in the lowest 2% for deprivation. Learners come from a range of socio-economic backgrounds. The majority live in local authority housing with some in owner occupied properties. The age range of the learners is 3 to 11 years. The indicative admission number is 60 and there are currently 465 learners on roll. 417 of the learners are baptised Catholics. 50% are eligible for free school meals. 92 learners have been identified as having special educational needs and 5 have a statutory statement of special educational need. 13.4% are from ethnic minority groups. 46 have English as an additional language. 17 of the 18 teachers (94%) are Catholics.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL

St Kentigern's is an outstanding school. It is highly effective in offering its learners a traditional Catholic education in a caring, supportive and rich environment where everyone is valued and diversity is celebrated. Parents and learners are fully supported by clergy and staff on their faith journey. Learners enjoy coming to school and work hard to achieve the high expectations of staff. Their behaviour at all times is excellent. They are friendly, polite and helpful. They are developing a strong sense of responsibility and respect for each other and all God's creation. The school is firmly at the heart of the parishes it serves living the vision of its Mission Statement. The school very successfully promotes the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the learners. Prayer has a very high profile in school. Staff, parents and learners are given many opportunities to develop their relationship with God through prayer and worship. The governing body and staff have a shared vision for the future development of this very successful school.

Improvement since the last inspection

Following the last Section 23 inspection in April 2001 the school has addressed the areas for development identified and satisfactorily resolved them. The number of learners on roll has reduced by 100. On average there have been three staff changes each year. 4 new teachers were appointed from September 2006. A Year 6 block has been established. An innovative "Brain Zone, unique to the school, and a computer suite have been provided. Refurbishment of buildings has enabled a library, Music room, Art room and Breakfast club to enhance the provision. The school had beacon status from 2002 to 2005.

Capacity to improve

The school's self-evaluation is comprehensive, accurate and based on very good proven systems developed over several years. The team management approach fostered by the dedicated headteacher and supported by the hardworking staff ensures that the school's capacity to improve is outstanding.

What the school should do to improve further

There are no issues to address. The school should continue to develop its innovative approach to educating its learners in a caring, secure and welcoming environment.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

The leadership and management of the Catholic life of the school are outstanding. The Mission Statement developed by staff and governors was reviewed three years ago. It is on display in the entrance to the school. A simplified “Statement of Mission” is on display in every class. Its aims permeate all aspects of the school’s life. The chair of governors and governors share a clear vision with the headteacher, staff and all members of the school community for the future development of this highly successful school. As designated governor for Religious Education the chair is knowledgeable on the overall provision in the school and is informed by his almost daily visits to the school and his monitoring of the Religious Education curriculum. Members of the governing body are regular visitors to the school. One governor is the organiser of the very successful Sacramental Programme initiative in St. Kentigern’s parish. The assistant priest gives French lessons on his school visits. Very efficient systems, led by the diligent Religious Education co-ordinator and senior management team, are rigorously applied to monitor and evaluate the Religious Education provision. She has a performance management objective each year, which reflects the current developments in Religious Education or prayer and worship. Joint in-service training is attended by governors and staff. 4 teachers who do not currently hold the Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies are in the process of achieving this qualification. The quality of this leadership and management is exemplary.

THE QUALITY OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

Provision for collective worship at St. Kentigern’s is outstanding. Whole school masses are celebrated regularly in school. Class masses are celebrated weekly in school classrooms. Classes organise these celebrations and are fully involved with readings, music and prayers. Parents and parishioners are invited. Classes organise and take part in the parish Sunday vigil Masses at St. Kentigern’s church. The Eucharist is central to the spiritual life of the school. Throughout the school year special liturgies are arranged. Advent, Lent, Holy Week and May devotions to Our Lady help learners and parents to develop and strengthen their relationship with God. Well organised key stage and class assemblies are a feature of the provision. Class collective worship has been promoted. The sessions observed during the inspection were genuine spiritual experiences for all involved. Prayer has a very high profile in school. The learners are familiar with the traditional prayers of the church. They are happy to share their own spontaneous prayers. The school council has recently selected a “Peace Prayer”, written by a learner, to be the school prayer. At all prayer sessions observed learners were respectful and reverent. Every classroom has an attractive focal area for prayer. Each year all Key Stage 2 learners attend a retreat at the local Marist convent. Records are kept of assemblies and Mass celebrations. The school has a comprehensive policy for prayer and worship. Staff lead by example and begin most school days with a short prayer or reflection service.

ACHIEVEMENT AND STANDARDS IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Achievement and standards in Religious Education are outstanding. Learners enter the Foundation Stage with standards below national expectations. Throughout and within all key stages consistent progress is evident. This is at least good and often outstanding. By the end of Key Stage 1 learners are able to write simple prayers and re-tell bible stories using well constructed sentences. They have a good factual knowledge of their faith and use good religious vocabulary in discussions. This very good progress continues in Key Stage 2. Younger learners have a very good knowledge of the Easter events and a clear understanding of how we need to recognise God in all people. The older learners have a good understanding of the Our Father and are able to interpret the messages of the parables. There are very good examples of extended pieces of writing on religious topics in upper Key Stage 2. The quality and quantity of the presentations is outstanding. Learners are confident when discussing their faith. All work is very well marked and assessed. Learners are very well behaved, friendly and polite. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. They are happy to accept responsibility as members of the successful school council and as playground “Buddies”. They appreciate the advantages of attending a happy school and the opportunities they have to improve their skills through the many clubs the school organises. They give generous support to national, local, and international charities

THE QUALITY OF TEACHING AND LEARNING IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The inspector agrees with the school that the quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. All lessons are carefully planned. Teachers in the same year group plan their lessons together. Resources are very well prepared and used effectively to enhance the learning process. Lessons have a clear focus and clear objectives are established and explained to the learners. A range of teaching styles is evident and designed to meet the requirements of the lesson content and the age of the learners. Collective worship is integrated effectively into the lessons. The older learners repeating the Our Father in Hebrew, during inspection, then using technology to understand the meaning of the words was impressive. The lesson closed with one group teaching the Our Father as a hymn with actions to the rest of the class. Suggestions for follow-up work at home are features of the teaching. Learners are very enthusiastic about their learning and those who need extra help are well supported by teaching assistants. Learners use technology efficiently and work co-operatively in pairs and in groups. They are keen to be involved in class discussions. They settle down quickly and quietly to tasks and sustain their effort until work is completed. They listen attentively to the teachers' input and respect others' input into discussions. Behaviour at all times is very good. The school has developed an effective system of assessment and records are used to plan the next stage of the learners' development. To align these records with the diocesan assessment strategy would be beneficial when levelling the learners' work.

THE QUALITY OF THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CURRICULUM

The Religious Education curriculum is outstanding. The chair of governors and the governing body introduced a Religious Education curriculum structured on the sources of catechesis: Tradition, Scripture, Doctrine, Liturgy, Prayer and Christian Life. This has been adapted over the last ten years to meet the needs of the school. This scheme is supplemented by the additional scheme "The Way the Truth and the Life" All lessons are planned using these schemes selectively. The content more than meets the requirements of the Salford diocesan *REvision 2000* guidelines. The time allocated to curriculum Religious Education meets both national and diocesan requirements. The school has strong, supportive links with the very well organised parish Sacramental Programme and benefits from the excellent support and involvement of the parish priest and assistant priest. Together with the quality of the provision for prayer and worship all these factors serve to enhance curriculum Religious Education at St. Kentigern's. The long established practice of monitoring the Religious Education curriculum by the Religious Education co-ordinator and senior management team has also impacted positively on the overall provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the learners.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF CURRICULUM RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The quality of the leadership and management of curriculum Religious Education is outstanding. The Religious Education co-ordinator has been in post for 10 years. She is extremely knowledgeable, very well organised and keeps meticulous, useful records on the monitoring and evaluation of the overall provision. She is very well supported in her role by the inspirational headteacher and the senior management team. The frequent and welcome visits of the chair of governors, in his role as designated governor, ensure that the governing body is well informed. His classroom monitoring supplements the detailed reports of the headteacher and Religious Education co-ordinator. The co-ordinator ensures colleagues are updated on Religious Education and collective worship issues by leading staff meetings. Attendance at diocesan meetings contributes to her own professional development. Audits of the provision and of resources are regularly undertaken. This has resulted in an excellent range of good quality books and resources being readily available for both teachers' and learners' use. Ideas for the development of Religious Education within the school are prioritised yearly and are included in the School Improvement Plan. The co-ordinator has a performance management objective related to these yearly priorities. Attractive displays throughout the school clearly reflect its faith life.

