

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

St. Anne's is a voluntary aided Roman Catholic primary school situated in the Crumpsall district of north Manchester and serving the parish of St. Anne. Pupils are drawn from a wide variety of socio-economic backgrounds and social need. There are 246 pupils on roll including a Nursery class with 30 full time places. 212 pupils are baptised Catholics. There are currently 43 pupils in the school who live outside the parish. The age range of pupils is from 3 to 11 years and the school's admission number is 36. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is 30%. The school has identified 45 pupils as having special educational needs and 3 pupils have a statutory statement of special educational need. There are 11 full time teaching staff 10 of whom (91%) are Catholics.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL

St. Anne's is a satisfactory Catholic school overall with some features which are good and some which are inadequate. The school's Mission Statement is displayed in the main areas of the building. Its inclusive ethos is a foundation on which to build an environment in which staff and pupils are valued and nurtured. Good relationships exist between the staff and pupils as the worth and self esteem of all children are encouraged. The spiritual, moral, and social development of learners is good. Assemblies and classroom worship give good support to the curriculum. Pupils are well motivated and behaviour is good. From Foundation Stage to the end of Key Stage 2 pupils make good progress. The headteacher assessed the quality of collective worship and teaching and learning to be satisfactory. However inspection evidence gathered shows these to be good.

Improvement since the last inspection.

Since the last inspection the school has undergone a number of changes in staff personnel including the appointment of a new headteacher and a new co-ordinator for Religious Education. The key issues raised in the last Section 23 Inspection have been addressed. Future developments in prayer and worship were identified and support received through in-service training from a diocesan adviser. Systems for the observation of teaching and learning have recently been put in place. Assessment opportunities and activities are developing but the levelling of pupils' work is not yet linked with diocesan assessment materials. The governors have appointed two newly qualified staff since the last inspection. There is a leadership team in place whose responsibility is to support the headteacher in the leadership and management of the school. With better co-operation this team could make a positive impact on the strength of support for their colleagues.

Capacity to improve

The school's self-evaluation is comprehensive. The governors, headteacher and deputy have a shared vision for the future development of the school. The leadership team is, however, not fully committed to addressing the issues necessary to continue the development of all aspects of the Catholic life of the school. There is satisfactory evidence in the monitoring of the curriculum and prayer and worship that all members of the school community are aware of the goals the school is aiming to achieve. The school has a satisfactory capacity for further improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Clearly define the roles and responsibilities of the senior management team in order to provide improved support for the leadership of the school as a Catholic community.
- Further develop the use of the Salford Diocese assessment materials for Religious Education in order to create a portfolio of examples of the levels at which pupils are working.
- Continue to support the new Religious Education co-ordinator in the development of her role.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

The leadership and management of the Catholic life of the school is inadequate. The school's Mission Statement is central to the daily life of the school. It will be reviewed shortly due to recent changes to the governing body and school leadership. The governors and headteacher share a vision for the ongoing development of the Catholic life of St. Anne's. However not all members of the senior leadership team are prepared to accept the changes that are necessary to achieve and sustain any future development. As a result effective communication and mutual support within the whole staff team is unsatisfactory. This is detrimental to the ethos within the school and currently limiting the school's ability to move forward in a true Christian spirit and environment. The roles and responsibilities of the senior management team should be clearly defined in order to provide improved support for the leadership of the school as a Catholic community. The newly appointed school chaplain is a regular and welcome visitor in the school. He is keen to take an important role in the religious and spiritual life of the pupils. The governing body are well informed on aspects of Religious Education and the Catholic life of the school through headteacher reports. The relationship that currently exists between the home and school is good. Partnership with parents is further encouraged through newsletters, parent evenings and good information and reporting regarding the progress of their children. Parents are invited to share in school Masses, assemblies and liturgical celebrations. The school maintains good links with the diocesan advisers. The school plays a leading role in the preparation of pupils for the Sacraments of Initiation and extends its links with the wider community by supporting various local and word wide charities

THE QUALITY OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

The provision for collective worship in the school is good. Opportunities for prayer and worship are well planned, organised, and celebrated. The meaningful opportunities for worship that were observed during inspection are a regular and important part of the pupils' prayer life. In all worship observed the pupils prayed with reverence and respect which demonstrates the growing importance of prayer in their daily lives. Each classroom has a focus area for prayer and worship with colourful displays reflecting the topics the pupils have studied. A whole school assembly led by Years 4 and 5 helped pupils to appreciate the importance of prayer in the life of Jesus and His instruction to the Apostles of how they should pray to God. The class were grouped in pairs in a circle formation as pupils gathered to the Taize chant "O Lord hear my prayer". A brief enactment of the occasion when Jesus explained in simple language to the Apostles how they should speak to their Father in heaven was followed by a sung version of the Lord's Prayer. Pupils were reminded that they cannot ask for forgiveness if they do not forgive others. In a classroom act of worship in Year 1 and 2 pupils gathered to quiet music. They recalled and reflected on the beauty and strength of God's creation and shared their thank you prayers for a person who loves and cares for them. Linked with the month of the Rosary the worship concluded with a prayer to their special mother Mary. In all worship observed pupils prayed with reverence and respect during opportunities for quiet reflection. Opportunities to share worship with the school and parish families contribute to promoting a living Christian faith.

ACHIEVEMENT AND STANDARDS IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Achievement and standards in Religious Education are good overall. Progress and achievement in Nursery, Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 is good. By the end Key Stage 2 progress is also good. At the end of both key stages standards are in line with those expected in the diocesan programme of work. In most lessons observed, opportunities were given for learners to build on their prior knowledge and attainment. They were always attentive listeners, who responded well to questioning and participated in lively discussions. Most teachers set activities according to the pupil's age and ability. When support staff were available they were well used to help learners achieve at an appropriate level. By the end of Key Stage 1 learners are beginning to write short sentences of independent work to retell bible stories they have heard. In Key Stage 2 oral work in class or group discussions is good. Independent writing continues to develop as learners record their work in a variety of forms including diary entries, poems and newspaper articles. However in some instances the presentation of work lacks accuracy and a good style of handwriting. In Reception pupils demonstrated their understanding of God's wonderful creation, of the people who care for them and celebrated their thanks through prayer and music. As they move through Key Stage 2 learners have a growing awareness of the beliefs and values of their faith and are able to relate them to their own life experiences.

THE QUALITY OF TEACHING AND LEARNING IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Overall the quality of teaching and learning in Religious Education is good with some very good features in Key Stage 1. Teachers' expectations of their pupils vary but most use a range of techniques and resources to encourage and support learning and meet the needs of all learners. Effective support staff have a positive impact on the behaviour of the pupils. White boards and information communication technology are well used in some classes to create interest and enjoyment in the classroom. Praise and encouragement are also a strong feature of teaching to which pupils respond with enthusiasm. Teachers' planning identifies clear learning objectives, teaching strategies and resources to be used but not all staff complete any evaluation of their teaching or pupils' achievement. Half-termly assessment tasks from *REvision 2000* are completed using the recent diocesan assessment materials. The school is encouraged to develop further the moderation of these assessments in order to determine an accepted level at which a pupil is working. All teaching areas are bright stimulating learning environments with colourful displays of pupils' work. A very good example of teaching occurred in Year 2. Recalling their work on God's creation, pupils' responses showed awareness of their responsibility to enjoy, respect, share and take care of our world. Linking this to harvest time pupils wrote their own prayers of thanksgiving and shared these with the class. Two pupils read a simple version of the parable of the Sower which was discussed and well explained. This was linked to the work to be done in the following lesson. The enthusiasm of the teacher together with her good use of information communication technology helped the learners attain a high standard of achievement in the lesson.

THE QUALITY OF THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CURRICULUM

The curriculum for Religious Education is good. Time allocated to religious lessons is in line with national and diocesan requirements. The school has recently introduced the diocesan guidelines for planning for mixed age groupings in some classes. This planning will need close monitoring to ensure pupils receive full access to the curriculum as they move through the school. Most teachers are knowledgeable and confident in their delivery of *REvision 2000*. Timetabling of lessons ensures adequate time is allowed to enable pupils to produce work of good standard. Teaching assistants play an important role supporting teachers and pupils within the classroom. Good resources including information communication technology when it is available give good support to the delivery of the curriculum. The study of world faiths in Key Stage 2 is not yet fully developed. Further development of this area of work would support the school's contribution to community cohesion. School Masses, together with assemblies and liturgical celebrations, have a positive impact in supporting, and extending the Religious Education curriculum at the school. The school plays a leading role in the preparation of pupils for the Sacramental Programme.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF CURRICULUM RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The leadership and management of curriculum Religious Education is inadequate. Working closely together the headteacher and the school chaplain, who is the link governor for Religious Education, are planning for the ongoing development of curriculum Religious Education as a priority affecting the life and work of the school. This will include forging stronger links between the school and the parish family at St. Anne's. The headteacher's written and verbal reports ensure governors are well informed of Religious Education matters. The co-ordinator for Religious Education who took up the role in January has recently begun to monitor teaching and learning through lesson observations. However as yet she has not attended the diocesan courses for co-ordinators. There is no Religious Education development plan in place to ensure that priorities, progress and the development of the curriculum are regularly monitored and reviewed. The school should continue to provide support for the new Religious Education co-ordinator in the development of her role. With the introduction of some mixed age classes in September the diocesan guidelines for mixed age groupings is still at the early stages of development. Assessment procedures are in place and with further development will help to give a clearer indication of pupils' knowledge and understanding. Further in-service training would encourage all staff to challenge their own practice and be adventurous and creative in their delivery of the curriculum. Governors are encouraged to visit the school for occasions of prayer and worship.