



## **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

Our Lady and St Hubert's is a small voluntary aided Roman Catholic primary school on the outskirts of Great Harwood near Blackburn. The school serves the parish of Our Lady and St Hubert. Situated in a semi rural area with low unemployment pupils are drawn from mainly private homes and some rented accommodation. The range of attainment of pupils on entry to the school is wide. During recent years there has been high inward mobility of pupils in Key Stage 2. The age range of pupils is from 4 to 11. The school's admission number is 23. There are currently 142 pupils on roll 115 of whom are of the Catholic faith. The proportion of pupils currently eligible for free school meals is 8%. The school has identified 34 pupils as having special educational needs. There are no pupils in receipt of a statutory statement of special educational need. There are 5 full time and 2 part time teachers of whom 6 (86%) are of the Catholic faith.

## **OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL**

The overall effectiveness of Our Lady and St Hubert's School is good. The schools strong Catholic ethos is a strength fostering an environment in which all members of its community are valued. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The Religious Education curriculum is well planned, monitored and evaluated. Assemblies and classroom worship of outstanding quality support the curriculum. The teaching observed during inspection was good with many outstanding features. Pupils are well motivated and behaviour is very good. From Foundation Stage to the end of Key Stage 2 pupils make good progress. The headteacher is strongly supported by the governors who have a clear understanding of the strengths and areas for development within their school.

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

Since the last inspection the school has undergone a number of changes in personnel including the appointment of a new headteacher who has assumed the role of co-ordinator for Religious Education. The last Section 23 inspection in October 2002 focussed specifically on key issues identified in an earlier report and stated good progress had been made on all the identified issues. Following the appointment of the new headteacher further progress has been made. There is a firmly established system for the monitoring of planning, teaching and the evaluation of lessons. A review of policies related to Religious Education is planned for the autumn term. There has been a commitment to the updating of resources to support the Religious Education curriculum.

### **Capacity to improve**

The school's self-evaluation is comprehensive. The governors, new headteacher and senior leadership team share a clear vision for developments within the school. There has already been good progress achieved in the priorities identified for further development in an interim School Improvement Plan. Together with the leadership team, governors are committed to supporting staff in the development of all aspects of the Catholicity of the school. The school's capacity to improve is judged to be good.

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

There are no significant areas to be addressed. The school is encouraged to follow the priorities identified in the School Development Plan as under:

- Further develop the work of assessment in providing staff with opportunities to moderate pupils' assessment tasks and so create a portfolio of examples of the levels at which individual pupils are working.

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

The leadership and management of the Catholic Life of the school are outstanding. In all aspects of its work the school is a true reflection of the Mission Statement that is displayed in classrooms and prominent areas around the building. The new parish priest is a regular and welcome visitor in school playing an important role in the religious life of the pupils. The headteacher and senior leadership team promote an ethos where staff, governors and parents work together to ensure pupils develop to their full potential in a Christian environment. Strong relationships exist between the staff and pupils ensuring all members of the school community are valued. Through the school council pupils contribute their ideas to aspects of the management of their school. The governing body has organised committee structures with well-defined roles. By their supportive presence in the school's daily life and through headteacher and link governor reports they are well informed of the Catholic life of the school and its religious curriculum. Leadership at all levels endeavours to promote the spiritual growth of both staff and pupils. Partnership with parents and the parish community is promoted through good information in weekly newsletters regarding the spiritual life of the school. Parents are also informed each half term of the religious topics their children will study. Governors and parents play a leading role in the preparation of pupils for the Sacramental Programme. There is a strong presence of parents and parishioners at assemblies, class masses and other liturgical celebrations. The school maintains good links with the diocesan advisers and the Religious Education co-ordinator attends all relevant training, feeding back to staff when appropriate.

## **THE QUALITY OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP**

Provision for collective worship in the school is outstanding. Opportunities for prayer and worship are carefully planned, organised, celebrated and recorded. This ensures that a range of meaningful assemblies, classroom worship and Masses are a regular and integral part of the pupils' prayer life. Prior to the inspection an assembly led by Years 2 and 3 followed the story of Jesus from Palm Sunday to His Resurrection. It was sensitively and reverently acted by the young pupils and attended by many parents. The appearances of Jesus to the disciples after the Resurrection were the focus for pupils in classroom worship in Years 4 and 5. Pupils gathered round an altar and lighted candles to quiet music. They considered the times when Jesus appeared on the road to Emmaus, on the shores of the lake and to Thomas in the upper room. They were able to express empathy with the disciples and express their feelings, hopes and promises through their own prayers. In all the occasions of prayer and worship observed, pupils showed reverence and respect and a growing awareness of the importance of prayer in their lives. The parish church is situated some distance from the school so the Year 6 Mass to celebrate the feast of the Ascension was held in school and shared with the parish community. It was a further meaningful celebration in which pupils fully participated in well prepared readings, reverent prayers and enthusiastic and joyful singing.

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

Achievement and standards in Religious Education are good with outstanding examples in both key stages. On entry to Reception attainment of pupils is average. In Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 pupils make good progress. In early Key Stage 2 pupil progress is satisfactory and by the end of the key stage progress is very good. At the end of both key stages standards are in line with those expected in the diocesan programme of work. In all the lessons observed pupils were able to build on their prior knowledge and attainment. They listened attentively, responded well to questioning and were eager to contribute in discussions. Activities set according to their ability and good use of support staff enabled most pupils to achieve at an appropriate level. Learners worked in co-operation with partners or in larger groupings. In Reception learners understood that they were special to God who loved them. From early Key Stage 1 pupils are beginning to write simple pieces of independent work. In Key Stage 2 oral work develops in discussions and pupils record their work in a variety of forms including narrative, poems, prayers and diagrams. The older pupils have a growing awareness of the beliefs and values of their faith and are able to relate them to their own life experiences. Opportunities for all learners to reflect on moral issues encourage awareness of God's presence in their lives and of His love and forgiveness.

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

The school has assessed the overall quality of teaching and learning to be good with outstanding features. Inspection evidence gathered agrees with this judgement. Teachers' planning is good identifying clear objectives and a range of differentiated activities to develop each topic. Evaluation of lessons and pupils' learning is evident in some plans but is not consistent across the school. Assessment tasks from *REvision 2000* are completed half termly. The school has taken on board diocesan assessment materials and individual staff have begun to level pupils' work. However the staff should now work together on the development of the moderation of pupils' assessments in order to give an accurate picture of the level at which a pupil is working. Classrooms are stimulating learning environments as teachers use a range of techniques to encourage and support learning. Support staff are used to good effect playing a valuable role in each classroom. The use of information communication technology and well chosen resources create interest and enjoyment in pupils' learning. An example of very good teaching occurred in Year 5 and 6. Linking together the Mass to celebrate the Ascension and a recent study of the gifts of the Holy Spirit the class discussed the mission set for the apostles by Jesus and His promise to send the Holy Spirit. Through challenging questions and discussion the learners understood how the fruits of the Holy Spirit are active in our lives and influence everything we do. Using beautifully prepared illustrations of "fruits" pupils identified ways in which they should demonstrate those qualities in their daily lives and their relationships with others. In the following lesson they would be finding biblical and modern day characters who were good examples fulfilling their mission. In lessons observed pupils were well motivated with positive attitudes to learning. They listened attentively, responded to questions and used appropriate religious vocabulary in their own questions. They were interested in their work and settled well to given tasks.

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

The curriculum for Religious Education is good. The school follows the Salford guidelines *REvision 2000*. Time allocated to Religious Education lessons is in line with national and diocesan requirements. The school has mixed age classes and plans carefully to ensure that all learners receive full coverage of their Religious Education entitlement. Staff are knowledgeable and confident in their delivery of the curriculum. Resources, including information technology give valuable support to the religious curriculum. The co-ordinator observes lessons and quality feedback is given to ensure the further development in the quality of teaching and learning. Masses, assemblies and liturgical celebrations have a positive impact in supporting and extending the Religious Education curriculum at the school. The link governor for Religious Education takes a keen interest in the Religious Education provision throughout the school feeding back developments to the governing body.

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

The school has assessed the leadership and management of Religious Education as good. However inspection evidence gathered indicates this to be outstanding. Written and verbal reports from the headteacher to governors ensure they are well informed of religious matters and there is regular governor attendance at assemblies and celebrations. The headteacher who is the co-ordinator recognises the importance of Religious Education as a core subject affecting the life of this Catholic school. Since her appointment she has written an interim development plan that identifies the further development of assessment as a priority. Attendance at diocesan courses together with good in-house in-service training enables the staff to discuss strategies for further development. Resources have been audited and updated after consultation with staff. There is an effective curriculum monitoring system aimed at supporting staff and maintaining good standards of both teaching and pupils' learning. This encourages staff to reflect on their practice and be creative in the delivery of their lessons and so improve the impact of both teaching and learning. The school has good links with St Augustine's RC High School through cluster group meetings.