

**SALFORD DIOCESE
INSPECTION REPORT**



ST. ANNE'S ROMAN CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL
Feilden Street Blackburn BB2 1LQ

Inspection date February 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 119511
 Age range of pupils 3-11
 Number on roll 256
 Appropriate authority The governing body
 Chair of Governors Mr. Glyn Hughes
 Headteacher Mrs. Barbara Cuff
 Religious Education Co-ordinator Mrs. Alex Baker
 Date of previous inspection November 2005

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	1	
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	2	
<i>The following pages provide reasons to support these judgements</i>		

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

St. Anne's is a voluntary aided Roman Catholic primary school serving the Gem Church of St. Anne and the community within its historic parish boundaries in Blackburn. It is situated in the town centre of Blackburn. The age range of learners is 3 to 11. The indicative admission number is 30 and there are currently 256 pupils on roll. There are 169 Catholic learners. The majority of pupils live locally in an area of high deprivation. However a significant minority of pupils come from areas outside the town centre. 14.6% of learners are from an Asian heritage cultural background and 8.5% are from Eastern Europe. 18.4% of children have English as a second language. 69 of pupils have been identified as having special educational needs and two of these have a statement of special educational need. 8 of the 13 teachers (66%) are Catholic.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL

St. Anne's is a good Catholic school with some outstanding qualities. There is a happy, caring atmosphere which establishes a good climate for work. The range and quality of provision for collective worship is outstanding. There is a strong Catholic ethos in the school and excellent provision for pupils' spiritual and moral development. The standards achieved in curriculum Religious Education are satisfactory. Less able children are well supported and achieve well but more able learners are not always challenged to achieve their potential. Systems of monitoring and evaluation are well established. Assessment is not firmly embedded and the results of assessment are not used effectively to raise standards, particularly in written work. Teaching is good and the curriculum is well planned. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They show respect for themselves and others. Governors are knowledgeable and offer support and challenge to the headteacher. The headteacher leads the school well. She has a clear vision for the school and is aware of its strengths and areas for development. The school welcomes pupils from an Asian cultural heritage and from Eastern Europe. There is strong community cohesion. Very good relationships exist between the school, parents, parish, the associated high school and the local community.

Improvement since the last inspection

Following the last Section 48 inspection in November 2005 the school was asked to develop a system of assemblies with regular input from the children and to find more rigorous ways of assessing attainment and progress in curriculum Religious Education. It has worked hard and has addressed the first issue very well. Although some steps have been taken to improve assessment, more work needs to be done in this area to raise the standard of pupils' written work.

Capacity to improve

The school's self-evaluation is mostly accurate. The headteacher has a good understanding of the 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

- Raise standards in curriculum Religious Education by embedding a rigorous system of assessment and using the results effectively.
- Ensure that learners regularly produce written work in curriculum Religious Education that is appropriate to their age and ability.

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 lies at the heart of the school's aims, policies and expectations. Every child feels valued in an atmosphere of mutual respect. The governing body fulfils its role well in relation to its Catholic foundation. It has knowledge of the Catholic life of the school through headteacher reports and the close involvement of several governors. The parish priest of Sacred Heart is a member of the governing body and the priest in charge of St. Anne's Gem Church is a frequent and welcome visitor. The headteacher has a clear vision of the nature of the Catholic school and, together with the leadership team, promotes the Catholic life of the school very effectively. All staff fully support the many and varied opportunities for prayer and worship in the school and promote learners' spiritual and moral development in all they do. There is a strong Catholic ethos in the school. Community cohesion is strongly supported. Children from an Asian cultural heritage and Eastern European children are welcomed into the school community and pupils develop respect and understanding of other faiths and cultures. The Sacramental Preparation Programme is planned and run effectively with strong support from the school. Children are given many opportunities to care for those less fortunate than themselves by generously giving to charities such as CAFOD, St. Joseph's Penny and breast cancer and involvement in THOMAS (Those on Margins of a Society).

THE QUALITY OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

Provision for collective worship in the school is outstanding in relation to the range and quality of opportunity available. The liturgical life of the school is well planned by the headteacher, Religious Education co-ordinator and the priest in charge. Whole school Masses are held at the beginning of term and class Masses celebrated regularly. Whole school and class assemblies are held regularly with classroom worship on the days when there is no assembly. Pupils help to prepare the liturgy, choose hymns and lead the celebrations. The outstanding assembly observed during the inspection was led by Years 1 and 2. It celebrated the feast of Candlemas in song, drama and readings. The children sang beautifully and spoke clearly. The Polish community were included by saying the Our Father in Polish. All the children responded prayerfully and respectfully. Parents were happy to be part of the celebrations. The very good classroom worship observed in the Foundation Stage used story, song and pictures to explore the ways in which different people show their love for us. The children listened well and joined in the singing. They are learning how to make the Sign of the Cross. Harvest, Christmas and Holy Week celebrations are examples of the liturgies held throughout the year. Some of the older pupils join the Legion of Mary where they pray for and visit people in the local community. Collective worship makes an excellent contribution to the spiritual and moral development of learners and to promoting community cohesion. The attractive displays and altars around the school provide further opportunities for personal prayer and reflection.

ACHIEVEMENT AND STANDARDS IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Achievement and standards in Religious Education are satisfactory. Pupils' attainment on entry to school is below national expectations. They make progress throughout the school and, by Year 6, their attainment is slightly below average. Learners with special educational needs are very well supported by teachers and learning assistants and achieve well. Pupils with higher ability are not always challenged to achieve their potential. Orally pupils are able to relate stories from the Old and New Testaments. They can talk about Jesus' life and apply his teachings to their own lives. They can discuss other historical figures whose Christian lives show us good example. The range and quality of writing in curriculum Religious Education is below average. The new diocesan scheme of assessment and standardisation has not yet been implemented and the results of the current scheme are not being used effectively to raise standards. Learners enjoy their work and respond well to questioning. Pupils have a clear idea of right and wrong and their behaviour during the inspection was excellent. The school provides well for their spiritual and moral development. The School Council, Muddy Club and Buddies make a positive contribution to the school and give pupils the opportunity to develop independence and responsibility.

THE QUALITY OF TEACHING AND LEARNING IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The inspector agrees with the school that the quality of teaching and learning in curriculum Religious Education is good. Teaching is good with the teaching observed ranging from satisfactory to very good. Lessons are well prepared and mostly conducted at a pace to maintain interest and enjoyment. Questioning is effective with a good use of open ended questioning. Pupils are encouraged to ask questions and respond well to the opportunity provided. The use of technology is developing well. In a good lesson in Key Stage 1 effective use was made of the Smartboard and talking partners to explore the ways in which Jesus worshipped and apply those to their own lives. Teachers ensure that learners understand the purpose of the lesson and some consolidate learning with a plenary session. Marking is good with most teachers taking the opportunity to advise learners of ways in which they can improve their work. A very good lesson observed in Upper Key Stage 2 used pictures and post-it notes to enable pupils to become more familiar with the liturgical calendar and its key events. They worked co-operatively and were able to evaluate their learning. In a good lesson in Lower Key Stage 2 learners made use of brain-storming and examples from famous lives to think of ways in which the Holy Spirit could give them strength. Pupils are responsive and well behaved during lessons.

THE QUALITY OF THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CURRICULUM

The Religious Education curriculum is good. It complies with local and national expectations with regard to time allocated. The new diocesan scheme, *Moving the Vision On*, is being implemented as it becomes available. The curriculum is well planned and made available to all pupils with less able children being supported by teachers and support assistants. More able pupils need to be challenged more to achieve their potential. The headteacher and Religious Education co-ordinator set clear directions for the teaching of Religious Education. Systems of monitoring and evaluation have been established. The new assessment procedures need to be introduced and used to raise standards especially in written curriculum Religious Education. Resources are good and the best possible use is made of the limited building facilities. Opportunities are taken to promote community cohesion and an understanding of other faiths and cultures. The study of other faiths, strong relationships with the local community and the use of Makaton sign language and Polish are examples of this. The Religious Education curriculum makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual and moral development. It is enriched by the wide range of opportunities for prayer and worship in the school. Educational visits and visitors to the school and a range of extra-curricular activities further enhance provision. Parents appreciate all that the school does for their children and are happy for them to attend. Strong links with the parents, parish and the associated high school also enrich the provision.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF CURRICULUM RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The school has assessed its leadership and management of curriculum Religious Education as good and the inspector would agree with this judgement. Governors have a good understanding of the curriculum through regular meetings and reports. The priest in charge of the Gem Church provides advice and support. The headteacher has a clear vision for the school and is aware of its strengths and areas for development. There are established systems of monitoring and evaluation. Some assessment is taking place but the new diocesan guidelines have not yet been implemented. These need to be embedded and used effectively to raise standards, particularly in written curriculum Religious Education, so that all pupils are challenged to achieve their potential. The school's self-evaluation is mostly accurate. Appropriate priority is given to Religious Education in the School Improvement Plan and in its action plans. Non-Catholic teachers are given support and guidance from the headteacher and Religious Education co-ordinator. Resources are good and used effectively. Relationships within the school are excellent and enhance the enthusiasm and enjoyment of learners. Excellent relationships with parents, parish and the local community further enhance provision. The school is committed to providing an effective learning environment and equality of learning for all with Jesus at the centre. The clean, bright attractive classrooms and excellent displays help to create a good climate for work.