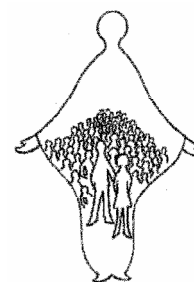


**SALFORD DIOCESE  
INSPECTION REPORT**

**SACRED HEART  
ROMAN CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL  
Bradshaw Row Accrington Lancashire BB5 4HG**



Inspection date June 2007  
 Reporting Inspector Mrs. Joan Duffin  
 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 209  
 Appropriate authority The governing body  
 Chair of Governors Mr. P. Hogan  
 Headteacher Mrs. J.R. Williams  
 Religious Education Co-ordinator Mrs. M. Adams  
 Date of previous inspection November 2002

| <b>The Inspection judgements are:</b>                        | <b>Grade</b> | <b>Explanation of the Grades</b><br><br>1 = Outstanding<br>2 = Good<br>3 = Satisfactory<br>4 = Inadequate |
|--|--------------|---|
| Overall effectiveness of the school                          | 3            |   |
| Leadership and management of the Catholic life of the school | 2            |   |
| The quality of Collective Worship                            | 2            |   |
| Achievement and standards in Religious Education             | 3            |   |
| The quality of teaching and learning in Religious Education  | 3            |   |
| The quality of the Religious Education curriculum            | 3            |   |
| Leadership and management of curriculum Religious Education  | 3            |   |

*The following pages provide reasons to support these judgements*

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

Sacred Heart is a voluntary aided Roman Catholic primary school. It serves the parishes of St. Mary (Oswaldtwistle), St. Mary (Clayton), St. Anne (Accrington) and St. Joseph (Accrington). There is no longer a parish church of Sacred Heart. The area the school serves is one of very high social and economic deprivation. The age range of learners is 3 to 11. The indicative admission number is 28 and there are currently 209 children on roll including 39 in the nursery. The number of Catholic learners is 114. 20% of learners are non-Catholic and approximately 10% of the Catholic learners are from a Traveller's background. 35.5% of learners are eligible for free school meals. 45 children are on the special educational needs register. 2 of these children have a statement of special educational need. 8 of the 10 teachers (77%) are Catholic.

## **OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL**

Sacred Heart is a satisfactory school with some good qualities. The school is marked by a happy, friendly atmosphere which establishes a good climate for work. This judgement is in line with the school's own evaluation of its Catholic life and provision for Religious Education. The Mission Statement, "Let love show in all we do", is displayed around the school and sets the tone for the school's aims. The standards attained by pupils in curriculum Religious Education are below average overall in their written work. Orally pupils have a clear understanding of the life and teachings of Jesus. Teaching is satisfactory with some good aspects. Assessment systems need to be improved to enable teachers to help learners raise the standard of their work. The curriculum in Religious Education is well planned and adapted to pupils' needs. The use of information technology could be further developed to hold pupils' interest. Pupils' behaviour is mostly good. There is a good range of provision for collective worship. The Catholic ethos of the school is strong with good provision for pupils' spiritual and moral development. The headteacher leads the school well in its Catholic life.

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

Following the last Section 23 inspection in November 2002 the school was asked to develop prayer and worship and assessment, recording and reporting in curriculum Religious Education. Since then the school has responded well to the issues raised in the last inspection. The headteacher and Religious Education subject leader have introduced systems to monitor, evaluate and assess the quality of Religious Education in the school.

### **Capacity to improve**

The school's self-evaluation is mostly accurate. It relates to the School Improvement Plan and priorities for Religious Education have an appropriate place in its action plans. The headteacher has a clear understanding of the direction the school should take and senior management team, 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 improving the use of assessment systems to match teachers' planning to learner's needs.
- Broaden the range of activities for learners by developing the use of information and communication technology in Religious Education.

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

The leadership and management of the Catholic life of the school are good. The governing body fulfils its role well in respect of its Catholic foundation. The headteacher has a clear vision of the nature of the Catholic school and governors are supportive and challenging to the headteacher. They judge that the school is moving forward in all aspects of its work and the inspector agrees with this. The Mission Statement lies at the heart of the school's aims, policies and expectations. The child friendly version is on display around the school. Inclusion is a strong aspect of the school's mission. The headteacher sets a clear direction for the school and the school's self-evaluation is mostly accurate. There is a strong Catholic ethos in the school characterised by Gospel values and inclusion. Non-Catholic staff fully support and uphold the Catholic nature of the school in all they do. The parish based Sacramental Preparation Programmes are planned and run effectively with support from the school. There is support for the school from the parents as seen in the good response to the questionnaire sent out. Children are given many opportunities to care for those less fortunate than themselves through donations to CAFOD, St. Joseph's Penny, the British Heart Foundation, the local hospice and the choir singing for people in the local sheltered accommodation.

## **THE QUALITY OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP**

Provision for collective worship is good both in respect of frequency and quality. The policy for prayer and worship reflects the range of opportunities for collective worship provided for learners. These include whole school Masses, whole school and class assemblies, classroom prayer services and special liturgical celebrations such as Stations of the Cross and Lenten and Advent services. There are prayer tables in all classes and effective displays throughout the school which give pupils opportunity for personal prayer and reflection. Pupils are involved in the planning, preparation and presentation of Masses and assemblies and take a full part in them. This was seen to very good effect in an Upper Key Stage 2 classroom worship observed during the inspection. A calm, reflective atmosphere was created in which pupils could breathe in the gifts of the Holy Spirit and breathe out any distractions and negative thoughts they might have. The whole school assembly led by a Lower Key Stage 2 class emphasised the ways in which we could help and support people around the world less fortunate than ourselves. Music was used to good effect and parents were happy to take part. Children's own prayers and reflections are used during these celebrations. Collective worship makes a good contribution to the spiritual and moral development of the learners.

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

Achievement and Standards in Religious Education are satisfactory. Pupils' levels of ability on entry to school are below average. Pupils make progress in school and by Year 6 attainment is about average. Pupils with lower than average ability are supported and achieve well. The diocesan scheme of assessment and levelling has been introduced but the findings are not yet being used effectively in planning to enable learners to improve the standard of their work in curriculum Religious Education. The school intends to extend its work in tracking pupils' achievements and it is encouraged in this. The standard of writing in Religious Education books is lower than the national average in all classes up to Year 4. Learners enjoy their work in most classes and respond well to questioning. Pupils' spiritual development is clearly rooted in the beliefs of the Catholic Church. Learners are generally well behaved and examples of disruptive behaviour are dealt with appropriately. Orally pupils have a clear understanding of the life and teachings of Jesus and are able to apply his teaching to their own lives. They have a clear understanding of right and wrong and the school provides well for their spiritual and moral development. They learn that they should respect themselves and others. The school council and the playground buddies make a positive contribution to the school and give older pupils the opportunity to look after younger ones.

## **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 satisfactory. Teaching in the lessons observed during inspection ranged from satisfactory to good. Lessons are well prepared and mostly conducted at a good pace which maintains pupils' interest and enjoyment. However, not all teachers set high expectations and challenging targets. Questioning is usually effective with good use of open ended questions. In some lessons pupils were not engaged and on task throughout the lesson. A good example of holding pupils' interest was seen in Lower Key Stage 2 where drama, hot seating and reflection were used to good effect in a lesson on the Good Samaritan. In Upper Key Stage 2 a good lesson on the image of the Church used group work, talking partners and pictures on the interactive whiteboard to enable pupils to explore their thoughts and produce some good ideas. Learners with special educational needs are supported by teachers and teaching assistants. Challenge is provided in some classes to the more able pupils. Marking varies from class to class with no general guidelines being observed. Opportunities to point out to learners how they can improve their work were only evident in a few classes. Learners in most classes are well behaved and show interest in their work.

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

The Religious Education curriculum is satisfactory. It complies with local and national expectations with regard to time allocated. It is well planned following diocesan guidelines. Long, medium and short term planning are well organised. Progress is seen throughout the school. The curriculum is made accessible to all pupils. Less able pupils are supported and more able pupils challenged to achieve their potential. The headteacher and Religious Education co-ordinator set clear direction for the teaching of Religious Education. Monitoring, evaluation and assessment of pupils work are in place. Tracking and levelling are being developed. All this data now needs to be used effectively to raise the standard of pupils' work. The diocesan guidelines on the study of world religions are well used to develop respect and understanding of other faiths and cultures. This should now be used as a separate project rather than part of the Religious Education curriculum. The use of information and communication technology in Religious Education is developing. The Religious Education curriculum makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual and moral development. It is enriched by the range of opportunities for prayer and worship provided by the school. It is also strengthened by the good relationships between school, parents, parishes and the associated high school. Music and other extra curricular activities further enhance the provision.

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

The school has assessed its leadership and management of curriculum Religious Education as satisfactory. The findings of the inspection would support this judgement. The governing body is beginning to fulfil its role well as a critical friend after a difficult year. The new link governor for Religious Education is looking forward to developing her role. The headteacher is aware that the clear direction for improvement in the core subjects needs to be applied to Religious Education also. Assessment systems need to be better used to match teachers' planning more closely to the learning needs of the pupils. Guidelines for marking need to be standardised to ensure all teachers make use of the opportunity to point out to pupils ways in which they can improve their work. The time allocated to curriculum Religious Education is in accordance with national and diocesan guidelines. The use of information and communications technology is in its early stages and needs to be developed. All staff and governors are committed to providing an effective Catholic learning environment for the pupils. Relationships in the school are good and help to provide equality of opportunity for all its pupils. Resources are good and the clean, bright environment is enhanced by attractive displays.