



DIOCESE OF BRENTWOOD



Inspection Report

Name of School: St Alban's Catholic Primary School

LA: Havering URN: 102236

Inspection Date: 16th June 2010

Reporting Inspectors: Mr Anthony Castle and Ms Colette Dawson

This Inspection was carried out under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of School: Primary
School Category: Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils: 4 - 11
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 211
Appropriate Authority: The Governing Body
Date of previous Inspection January 2007

School Address:
Heron Flight Avenue,
Elm Park, Hornchurch, Essex, RM12 5LN
Tel. No. 01708 555644
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Chair of Governors: Mrs. Anne Palmer
Headteacher: Mrs Bernadette Matthews

Introduction:

The Inspection was carried out under Section 48 of the Education (Schools) Act 2005 by inspectors appointed by the Diocesan Bishop at the request of the Governing Body of the School.

The Inspectors acknowledge and are appreciative of the full support, co-operation and courtesy they enjoyed from Governors, Headteacher, Staff and Pupils of the School both before and during the Inspection. The Inspectors wish to express their gratitude to all concerned.

The focus of the Section 48 Inspection was:

- Classroom Religious Education
- The Catholic nature of the School through;
 1. Worship
 2. Links with the Catholic and wider community
- Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development

The Section 48 Report

**St Alban's Catholic Primary School,
Heron Flight Avenue,
Elm Park, Hornchurch,
Essex,
RM12 5LN**

Head Teacher: Mrs Bernadette Matthews

Date of Inspection: 16th June 2010

Description of the School:

St Alban's Primary School is a voluntary aided Catholic school situated in the London borough of Havering and in the Diocese of Brentwood. It is an average sized school located about two miles from the parish church of St Alban's. The school is popular and oversubscribed in many year groups. The school primarily serves the parish of St Alban's in Elm Park and draws from a number of wards within Havering. The demographics of the school is gradually changing partly as a result of the regeneration of the Thames Gateway which is impacting on the range of ethnic, social and economic backgrounds of new entrants into the school.

Record of Evidence Base:

Two Inspectors were in the School for the equivalent of two inspection days.

- The study of pre-inspection documentation including the Self-Evaluation Form/ Denominational Provision (SEF/DP).
- The observation of complete lessons.
- Scrutiny of pupils' work.
- Participation in Class Mornings Prayers and an Act of Collective Worship led by Year One.
- Meetings with the Head Teacher, the Parish Priest, the R.E. Co-ordinator and the School Council.
- Observations of R.E. Displays in the Class rooms and around the school.

What the School does well:

At Alban's continues to be an outstanding Catholic School which displays many strengths. It is firmly committed to developing its Catholic identity under the inspirational and outstanding leadership of its Head Teacher who is very well supported by her Leadership team, committed Governors, highly motivated Staff, Pupils and their Parents / Carers and the Parish Priest.

Religious Education (R.E.) is an area of high focus in the school. The **'Here I Am'** programme, recommended by the Bishop of the Diocese, is fully implemented. The 'Before You Begin' element of the process is securely embedded at the beginning of each topic. They clearly understand the **'Here I Am'** process and use it effectively to provide a high quality and stimulating curriculum. Information Communication Technology (ICT) is used effectively to enhance the quality of lessons.

The overall quality of teaching and learning in Religious Education (R.E.) is good or outstanding. Lessons are well planned, paced and a wide range of teaching strategies are used effectively. Learning objectives are stated, explained and revisited. In all of the lessons observed, pupils were on task, engaged, highly motivated, challenged and enjoying their R.E. Behaviour is outstanding both in class and around the school. The children are very courteous, warmly welcoming visitors. Pupils were enthusiastic and purposeful and worked well together. Relationships and class management are recognised strengths of the school.

Assessment in R.E. is consistent in all year groups. It is systematic, rigorous and informative. There is a clear assessment focus for each of the **'Here I Am'** topics which gives excellent evidence of **'Relate'** knowledge and understanding. Positive feedback is given to the pupils and this enables them to make progress. Assessment for Learning (AFL) is firmly embedded in the whole assessment process. The marking of pupils' work needs to be more consistent and diagnostic. The school is aware of this and plans to address it and develop it further.

The leadership and management of the R.E. by the R.E. Co-ordinator who is a member of the newly constructed Leadership Team is outstanding Her leadership

drives the assessment procedures used by all the teachers, she monitors R.E. lessons and is very supportive of all staff, teachers and teacher assistants. Her line of management ensures that there are good links between R.E., the liturgical life of the school and Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education.

The School meets both the national and diocesan requirements for the allocation of curriculum time for taught R.E.

Collective Worship, liturgical celebrations, the celebration of major Saints' feast days, the feast of St Alban and the school's links with the local parish are all strengths of St Alban's School.

St Alban's School promotes an outstanding and tangible Catholic ethos.

This is subscribed to by all the stakeholders – Governors, the Head Teacher and her leadership team, staff, pupils and their parents / carers. The School provides outstanding opportunities for the pupils to develop a strong sense of community through activities which engender feelings of loyalty and belonging. The School continues to develop strong links with other schools both Primary and Secondary in the Deanery and beyond. Through their work with 'Kids Alive' they have global links which the school intends to further develop. The emphasis on community cohesion is an outstanding strength of the school. Excellent support is given to CAFOD and an astounding £3,000 plus was raised this year for NSPCC.

Displays and artefacts in R.E., in the classrooms and around the School, especially the prayer focus areas are outstanding. A model Mission Statement, which is child friendly, is display around the school, in classrooms and in pupil's work books.

St Alban's Primary School values links with parents / carers with every effort being made to improve and maintain communication with parents / carers as their children progress through the school. Home-school-parish relationships are excellent. The governors of the school are very dedicated, hardworking and supportive of everything the school does.

Pupils are given every opportunity to become responsible citizens. This is evident in their concern for each other and for those who are in need. St Alban's participates in the annual Diocesan Citizenship Awards. This is particularly evidenced by the work and role of the School Council and the generous fundraising for the charities that the School supports.

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is excellent. St Alban's has embedded the Diocesan developmental programme, 'A Journey in Love' into their Sex and Relationship Education programme with excellent effect.

What needs to be improved?

There are no specific areas requiring improvement other than ensuring that the areas highlighted by the Section 48 Self Evaluation Form continue to be addressed. These include the need to continue to develop the marking of children's work as already mentioned.

Overall, St Alban's Primary School continues to be an outstanding Catholic School which displays many strengths. It prepares its pupils so that they transfer to their Secondary Schools as happy, well-adjusted young people who are a credit to themselves, their parents / carers and their school. The School owes much of its success to the outstanding Catholic leadership of the Headteacher and her Leadership Team and to the valued support and expertise of her staff and governors.