



INSPECTION REPORT

School: **Our Lady of Lourdes R.C. Primary School**
Address: **Beech Avenue, Farnworth, Bolton, BL4 0BP**
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URN: **105245**

Headteacher: **Mrs. Linda Chadwick**
Chair of Governors: **Mr. Bernard Carney**

Canonical Inspection under Canon 806 on behalf of the Diocese of Salford
and inspection of Denominational Education under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005

Date of inspection: **28th February 2012**
Date of previous inspection: **October 2007**
Reporting Inspector: **Mrs. Pauline Leatherbarrow**

Information about the school

Our Lady of Lourdes is a Roman Catholic voluntary aided primary school in the Diocese of Salford. It serves the parish of Our Lady of Lourdes and St. Gregory in Farnworth, Bolton. The school is in an area of relatively high social and economic deprivation. The majority of pupils are of White British origin, although pupils from a range of different ethnic backgrounds are represented. There are 203 pupils registered from Reception to Year 6 and in addition there are 30 children registered in the part time nursery. In total 75% children are baptised Roman Catholic. 28 children have been identified as having Special Educational Needs and one child has a Statement of SEN.

The present head teacher and deputy head teacher have been in post since 2005. Of the 12 full time equivalent teachers appointed, 67% are Catholic and 6 teachers hold the CCRS or equivalent qualification.

A new Parish Priest was appointed at the beginning of February 2012 to serve Our Lady of Lourdes and St. Gregory's RC Primary schools

Overall Effectiveness

Grade 1

Our Lady of Lourdes R.C. Primary School is an outstanding Catholic school. It is highly effective and successful in offering its pupils a Catholic education delivered through a rich and vibrant curriculum.

The school very ably fulfils its role in passing forward the traditions, beliefs and teachings of the Catholic Church.

The school is very welcoming to all. Pupils state that they enjoy coming to school and they work hard to meet the high expectations of staff. Pupil's behaviour both in and out of class is excellent.

The dedicated head teacher acts as a role model to her hard working and committed staff. They work together and are ably supported by the Governing Body as a team with a clear vision to ensure all pupils grow and mature in their learning and love of God.

Capacity for sustained improvement

Grade 1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement is outstanding.

The head teacher, deputy head teacher, RE co-ordinator and Governing Body all have a clear overview of the school's strengths and areas for development based on a range of sound and thorough self evaluation procedures.

Robust monitoring is undertaken through; lesson observations, work scrutinies and learning walks. Together they fully exemplify that the school has an outstanding capacity for sustained improvement.

The staff at Our Lady of Lourdes school operate as a cohesive, committed and highly motivated team striving for constant school improvement.

What the school needs to do to improve further

The school has clearly identified what it needs to do to improve further in its own self evaluation. In particular the following:

1. Embed and develop the new assessment guidelines.
2. Continue to provide outstanding teaching using the skills of the staff at Our Lady of Lourdes.
3. Develop close working relationship with the newly appointed Parish Priest

PUPILS

How good outcomes are for pupils, taking particular account of variations between different groups

Grade 1

Pupils demonstrate a very high level of respect for adults and each other. They were fully engaged in collective worship both during assembly and in lesson observations. Pupils are involved in the preparation of liturgies and assemblies. They choose hymns and write prayers under the direction of the class teacher.

Behaviour both in and out of class is exemplary. Children are polite and well mannered. Pupils are able to talk about their faith using appropriate religious language relative to their age and ability. They are able to express their own views and beliefs with confidence and are able to refer to and understand the teachings of Jesus and other key figures and how these apply to their own lives.

Attainment in Religious education is consistently good at the end of both key stages. Levels of attainment in RE are in line or above national expectations with an average of 76%. Work is clearly differentiated and evident in lesson plans, book scrutiny and lesson observations at both key stages during the inspection. In addition, marking identifies where children need to improve their work, set next step targets and gives appropriate praise for work well done. Through their work, children show a developing understanding of liturgy expressed in their own words as they progress throughout the school.

Assemblies are planned with the children and they are of a very high standard. During inspection an excellent assembly was presented to the rest of the school, parents and Governors on the theme of 'How we can grow during Lent' by Year 2. This assembly was thought provoking and presented through drama and humour. Ample time was given to prayer and reflection. Music also played a major role in this assembly and was of a very high standard. Written comments made by parents after the assembly as part of the school's self evaluation were extremely positive as were other comments from previous assemblies.

How effective the provision is for Catholic Education

Grade 1

Prayer is central to the life of the school and is a key part of every school celebration and on a daily basis in class. Our Lady of Lourdes school makes excellent provision for the spiritual needs of its pupils. Throughout the school year it provides a range of rich and meaningful opportunities for pupils, parents and staff to develop and strengthen their relationship with God. For example through the assembly for the whole school and parents sampled during inspection.

Teaching is consistently highly effective in enthusing pupils and enabling them to develop in their understanding of the Catholic faith. Excellent subject knowledge was consistently observed across both key stages. Lessons observed during inspection were graded as outstanding in most lessons or good. Good lesson plans clearly identify the opportunities for assessment and are integral to teaching. Lessons are delivered in a vibrant, interesting and 'fun' way, and children voiced this with great appreciation. High quality resources, including ICT are used very effectively, together with the support provided by other adults to maximise learning. Children were observed to enjoy their work, be highly motivated and able to sustain their concentration for long periods.

The senior management team closely monitor curriculum RE through lesson observations, book scrutiny, teacher planning, assessment data and pupil interviews. Information gathered is used consistently to promote improvements. Pupils know what they need to do to improve their work through teacher marking, self and peer assessment. As a result, outcomes in Religious Education for most pupils are good.

The school provides excellent support for the Sacramental programme and will continue to offer full support in whatever way they can along with the new parish priest who was recently appointed.

LEADERS AND MANAGERS

How effective leaders and managers are in developing the Catholic life of the School

Grade 1

The school's leadership is deeply committed to the Church's mission in education. There is strong evidence that the Catholic mission of the school is a priority along with the spiritual and moral development of its pupils. The committed head teacher is well supported by the deputy head teacher, and by a hard working team of teachers and support staff. Self evaluation is found at all levels within the school and is a reflection of the efficient monitoring procedures in place. Subsequently, the self challenge is evident through the school improvement plan and the honest and accurate self evaluation form and other documentation provided.

Evidence files kept by the RE co-ordinator are meticulous in their detail and provide information on RE curriculum, the monitoring process, pupil progress and an overview of lessons observed.

The very well informed Governing Body are frequent visitors in school and in particular the Chair of Governors and RE Governor. Governors provide challenge to the SMT in their role as critical friend. Several governors have attended relevant training sessions provided by the Diocese. The RE Governor in particular has an in depth knowledge of RE curriculum requirements and along with the Chair of Governors they are very aware of the school's strengths and areas for development.

Governors engage effectively with parents, pupils and the staff as a whole and are well informed about parents' / pupil's views of the school.

The inclusion of all is a central goal of the school and a shared vision by all. Pupils are given opportunities across other cultural / faith boundaries. Acts of worship allow for other pupil's spiritual identity.