



DIOCESE OF
SHREWSBURY

SECTION 48 INSPECTION REPORT:

**THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL
AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

School: St Ambrose Catholic Primary School
Address: Rostrevor Road
Adswood
Stockport
SK3 8LQ

Tel No: 0161 480 8466

URN: 106115

Headteacher: Mrs H Hilton

Chair of Governors: Mr A Martin

Date of Inspection: 5th April 2017

Inspectors: Mrs C Morgan
Mr K Toms

St Ambrose school Vision & Mission Statements

Vision Statement

We at St Ambrose School will grow in the love and service of Jesus and fulfil our potential within a community where everyone is valued.

Mission Statement

The Mission Statement is for all St Ambrose community young and old, and is the foundation of the school's purpose.

- St Ambrose school provides a quality Catholic education for all.
- As part of the parish of St Ambrose we work in close partnership with the community and home.
- Through high standards and expectations we help everyone to achieve their best in work and play regardless of gender, special needs, disability or race.
- We celebrate success and achievement in all things.
- We show love, respect and compassion to all.
- We forgive those who have hurt us.
- We welcome, support and nurture those in need and work to create a place where they feel safe and secure.
- We prepare for and share the Sacraments as a family.
- We provide the foundation for children to become happy, confident, independent learners.

FACTUAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Pupils	FS		Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Total
	PT	FT							
Number on roll	24	27	23	30	29	30	30	24	217
Catholics on roll	6	9	10	14	12	13	14	14	92
Other Christian denomination	3	2	7	6	5	7	4	5	39
Other faith background	0	2	0	0	1	2	1	1	7
No stated religious affiliation	14	13	6	10	11	8	11	4	77
Number of learners from ethnic groups	7	4	5	6	4	7	6	8	47
Total on SEN Register	1	1	2	5	4	7	7	3	30
Total with Statements of SEN							2	1	3
FSM	0	9	4	5	15	6	11	7	57

Exclusions in last academic year	Permanent	0	Fixed term	0
Index of multiple deprivation	7			

PARISHES SERVED BY THE SCHOOL	
Name of Parish	No of Pupils
St Ambrose	197
Our lady& apostles	21
St Josephs	0
St Vincent	0

With reference to Year 6 – the Catholic schools to which your pupils transferred	
PUPILS TRANSFER	
Name of School	No of Pupils
St James High	12
St Annes	0
Harrytown	0

RE TEACHING TIME	FS		Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Total
	PT	FT							
Total RE teaching time (Hours) -- per week	n/a	1:30 Plus linked work	2	2	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	15h 30mins

STAFFING	
Full-time teachers	10
Part-time teachers	2
Total full-time equivalent	11
Support assistants	11
Percentage of Catholic teachers f.t.e.	64
How many teachers teach RE (P) f.t.e.	8
Number of teachers with CCRS or equivalent	2
Number of teachers currently undertaking CCRS	0

NAME OF SCHOOL	
Published admission number	210
Number of classes	8
Average class size KS1	27
Average class size KS2	29

FINANCIAL DATA

EXPENDITURE (£)	Last financial year 2015/2016	Current financial year 2016/2017	Next financial year 2017/2018
RE	£978	£1721 (as of 31.1.17)	£1850
English	£742	£3294	£650
Mathematics	£7991	£1125	£1000
Science	£71	£602	£250

Key to judgements: Grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 requires improvement and grade 4 inadequate	Judgement
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OUTCOMES FOR PUPILS	2
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Pupils at St Ambrose Catholic Primary School are keen to take on additional responsibilities and to contribute their opinions in groups such as the School Council, where they aim to improve and develop the school's ethos for the benefit of all its pupils. In discussion, they showed that they were able to talk about and evaluate different aspects of school life, including their understanding of their faith background. They commented on the importance of their liturgical celebrations in school and within the parish, including school and parish Masses as well as Class Masses, planned with the support of the Parish Priest.

Pupils are very proud of the fund-raising undertaken by the school for organisations such as CAFOD and also for local charities. They were able to discuss what they consider good behaviour and citizenship and could cite ways in which those who did not behave as expected would be guided to make better choices. The recent introduction of 'Restorative Ambassadors' to the playground is well understood by them and they commented positively on this initiative. The behaviour of pupils throughout the inspection was outstanding.

Given their below average starting points, most groups of pupils make good progress and some achieve above average standards by the end of the final key stage. In lessons pupils were observed to work well and in the best lessons, pupils were responding appropriately to probing questioning and applying themselves diligently to the various activities. Pupils now need the opportunity to deepen their own questioning techniques. They demonstrate an ability to respond to teachers' marking, which encourages them to think more deeply and to make reference to their knowledge of Scripture. Standards of attainment are above average in some groups and were generally seen to be improving across the school. Pupils are well placed to develop their ability to reflect on meaning, thus ensuring they reach even higher levels of attainment.

In the Act of Worship observed by the inspectors, pupils took leading roles in acting out a thoughtful and thought-provoking version of The Stations of the Cross. All pupils, including the youngest, participated in the liturgy with reverence, displaying excellent behaviour throughout. Pupils' singing helped to sustain the solemn atmosphere as Year Six pupils led the whole school in a meaningful and memorable Act of Worship.

LEADERS AND MANAGERS	2
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Leaders, governors and managers of St Ambrose Catholic Primary School demonstrate a strong commitment to the Church's mission in education. They are determined to continue to develop the spiritual and moral dimension of their school by improving all aspects of the Religious life of the school. All those connected with the school were able to talk about the importance of high quality Collective Worship and of the Catholic Life of the school. Parents and pupils comment positively on the Catholic ethos and on the time and commitment provided by all at St Ambrose.

There is a range of good monitoring systems in place to evaluate the provision and these now need to be more strategic in order to ensure that the improvements already made are further embedded and that any issues or initiatives are dealt with promptly. Further rigorous analysis of the monitoring activities, including assessment data, as identified in the Religious Education Development Plan, will support the sound diagnosis of the school's strengths and areas for development, ensuring that provision for pupils has a direct impact on the outcomes.

Planning has been an area for development and the most effective planning is based on assessment for learning and this is now being shared throughout the school. There is evidence of joint planning and differentiation is being addressed. Key areas have been identified for development, and good practice would see these being followed up through lesson observations, book scrutinies and assessment data.

The new Religious Education subject leader, the Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher, the active and involved Parish Priest, and the Chair of Governors, are committed to improving outcomes for pupils. The Religious Education subject leader and Deputy Headteacher as well as the Headteacher, are well placed to model best practice and to support staff development throughout the school. A next step would be to observe outstanding practice in some Diocesan schools so that this too could be modelled and shared with all staff.

Outcomes are improving and will be further enhanced by governors' ensuring that areas of the Religious Education Development Plan are regularly evaluated and revised.

PROVISION

2

At St Ambrose Catholic Primary School, inspectors observed that nearly all the teaching is effective in ensuring that pupils are consistently interested in their learning and making progress. Through assessment and internal moderation, as well as through the modelling of good practice, teachers and other adults now plan well to meet the needs of all pupils. Further work on differentiation for different groups has been identified as an area for development. Generally, teachers' subject knowledge is good and some are being well supported by more experienced staff. In the best lessons observed, pupils concentrated well and were seen to enjoy their work. Resources are good, including technology, and are used well to support pupils' learning. Other adults provide support for identified pupils and some were seen to use effective questioning techniques to improve pupils' learning. Feedback and marking were generally good and pupils respond well to points for development. Achievement and effort are praised and celebrated in class, and in weekly assemblies to which parents and carers are invited.

The school's Religious Education curriculum is based on the 'The Way, The Truth and The Life' and complies fully with Diocesan requirements. This curriculum is enriched by the use of well-planned strategies which utilise the strengths within the school. This could be further enhanced through observing outstanding practice in other Diocesan schools. Planning for the needs of different groups and individuals is evident in some classes and now needs to be evident across the school. The pupils at St Ambrose are provided with good opportunities for spiritual and moral development. Pupils have a choice of extra-curricular activities of which many take advantage. The Breakfast Club is popular and contributes well to pupils being prepared for the school day.

Collective Worship is given a high profile in the Catholic life of the school and all staff and pupils participate in a range of formal and informal opportunities for daily prayer. Resources are generally of a high quality and contribute well to class, Key Stage and whole school Acts of Collective Worship. Parents and carers are encouraged to attend the weekly celebrations of pupils' efforts and achievements, as well as classes' end of topic celebrations in Religious Education and key celebrations throughout the Liturgical year.

The Headteacher regularly monitors provision of Acts of Collective Worship, which are led by members of the Senior Leadership Team as well as the Headteacher. Pupils respond very well and contribute to Acts of Collective Worship on a regular basis. Pupils are now well equipped to plan and lead in this area, given the good role models from whom they have been able to observe and learn. A planning sheet for pupils would support their development in this area.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

2

At St Ambrose Catholic Primary School, outcomes for pupils, the provision for Catholic Education and leadership and management in the development of the Catholic life of the school are all judged to be good.

What the school could do to improve further

- Leaders, governors and managers should regularly evaluate and revise each area of the Religious Education Development Plan. This will ensure that rigorous analysis of the results of the good monitoring systems in place, including that of assessment data, is used to support the strategic planning for improvement in provision and therefore impact on outcomes for all pupils.
- Support pupils in planning and leading good and outstanding Acts of Collective Worship.
- Enable leaders and teachers to observe outstanding practice in other Diocesan schools as part of the plan to move the school to outstanding.

Parents' Questionnaires
98 Parents returned questionnaires

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
1	My child enjoys school	66	30	1	1	
2	I am happy with the values and attitudes that the school teaches	67	30			1
3	I am made to feel welcome in school	68	30			
4	The school seeks the views of parents/carers and takes account of their suggestions and concerns	58	38	1		1
5	The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught in Religious Education	48	44	4	1	1
6	The school enables my children to achieve a good standard of work in Religious Education	57	38	1		2
7	The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress in Religious Education	47	45	4	1	1

Pupil Questionnaires (Year 2)

		Yes	Sometimes	No
1	I like being at this school.	29	2	
2	I learn new things in Religious Education lessons.	29	1	1
3	I enjoy learning about Jesus and how to live as His friend.	30	1	
4	I have to work hard.	31		
5	My teacher helps me when I get stuck so I can make my work better.	30	1	
6	My teacher listens to me.	30	1	
7	When I am unhappy there is always an adult I can talk to.	30	1	
8	I get praise when I do my best.	27	3	1
9	Other children are kind and behave well	19	12	2
10	I am happy on the playground.	26	3	1
11	I am allowed to help in class and around school.	30	1	
12	I enjoy the times we say our prayers, talk to God and sing songs about Jesus.	30	1	

Pupil Questionnaires (Year 6)

		Yes	Sometimes	No
1	Do you like being at this school?	18	5	
2	Do you find out new things in Religious Education lessons?	21	2	
3	Are your Religious Education lessons interesting?	11	12	
4	Do you get help when you are stuck?	16	7	
5	Do you have to work hard?	20	3	
6	Do teachers show you how to make your work better?	22	1	
7	Do other children behave well?	3	20	
8	Are teachers fair to you?	19	4	
9	Do teachers listen to your ideas?	17	6	
10	Are you given responsibility?	19	4	
11	Do you enjoy your times of prayer together?	22	1	