

Introduction

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

The report of the inspection is produced for the Archbishop of Liverpool (Code of Canon Law 804 and 806) and for the governors of the school.

The inspectors are members of the Christian Education Department and their associates approved by the Archbishop of Liverpool for this purpose.

Information about the school

St. William's is an average sized Catholic Primary School situated in Ince, Wigan serving the parish of St. William. There are 223 children on roll of whom 177 are baptised Catholic, 45 come from other Christian denominations, and 1 from other faith or religious traditions. There are 11 teachers of whom 8 teach Religious Education 11 are Catholic. Seven teachers have a suitable qualification in Religious Education and a further 3 are currently undertaking it. Since the last inspection a new headteacher has been appointed.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

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Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school.

Inspection Judgements

**Overall effectiveness:
How effective the school is in providing Catholic Education**

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main Findings:-

St. William's is good overall in providing Catholic Education. There is a shared vision for Catholic Education which is embraced by the whole school community and reinforced in the school's Mission Statement '*By following Jesus' example we will encourage each other to achieve our potential...*' Since the last inspection the school has securely maintained and built on previous performance. Self evaluation is rigorous and accurate. Outcomes for pupils are good. There is no significant difference in performance between groups of pupils. Outcomes for pupils with additional or special needs are good. The school has been very successful in addressing the areas it has identified for improvement. The leadership team is deeply motivated and consistently communicates its high expectations to staff in order to secure improvement. Staff are affirmed and supported. Teachers are provided with In-service to support their ongoing development. Realistic and challenging plans stem from the accurate analysis obtained through monitoring and are being used effectively to improve outcomes. Any underperformance is challenged.

Overall the school has good capacity for sustained improvement. Together with the newly appointed headteacher and her vision for St. William's, the school has already begun to successfully address areas for development in the Self Evaluation Document.

What the school needs to do to improve further

Continue to implement the targets set out in the school's Self-Evaluation Document including:

- Raise the standards of attainment in Religious Education further by:
 - ensuring differentiation is by both task and outcome;
 - providing a range of 'open-ended' tasks to challenge the more able pupils;
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to work independently especially in the Upper Juniors;
 - further develop the work currently being undertaken to ensure all pupils are involved in planning, preparing and leading Collective Worship.

- Further develop the work being done in assessment, monitoring and tracking of children's progress by:
 - building up a portfolio of pupils' work following moderation to enable greater accuracy when levelling.

How good outcomes are for individuals and groups of pupils

Pupils' achievement in Religious Education is good. On entry to school many children have a limited knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith. Pupils' attainment in Religious Education is good. Pupils make very good progress in relation to their starting points and capabilities but opportunities need to be provided to extend the more able through incorporation of a range of open ended tasks. Analysis of assessments undertaken provides evidence of pupils generally attaining the appropriate level for their age and stage of development in each key stage with some exceeding expectations. There is no difference in performance between pupils of different gender. Outcomes for pupils with additional or special needs are good. Pupils are becoming increasingly more religiously literate. Their knowledge, understanding and skills are developing appropriate to their age or capacity. They are developing the skills that enable them to think spiritually, ethically and theologically and are becoming more aware of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life.

Pupils' enjoyment of their learning is very good as shown by their interest, enthusiasm and excellent behaviour. Pupils are actively involved in developing and evaluating the Catholic character of the school through sharing and living out their motto '*Growing together in faith and learning with love and respect*'. Pupils' have a good sense of belonging to the school community and value and respect others. Pupils are encouraged to take on roles of responsibility in the school by becoming school councillors. They have been instrumental in developing the pupil motto and leading ideas for the purchase of playground equipment. Pupils benefit from participation in away days and retreat activities. Year 5 and 6 pupils have recently attended Robinwood Outdoor Education Centre in Todmorden. Pupils are considerate and caring of others both in school and the wider community. This is evident in their many charitable fundraising events in support of CAFOD, Unicef 'Day for Change', Kibera In Need and collecting food for the parish Harvest Festival to name but a few. Pupils have a good sense of right and wrong and apply this in their personal relationships. The school uses SEAL materials, RTime 'Simply Behave' and circle time in support of this. A recent initiative following extensive re-building works has been the development and fitting out of a 'Nurture Room'. Early indications show that this is already having a great impact within the school community. Education for personal relationships has fostered positive attitudes in pupils and the school has recently purchased 'All that I Am' to support this in Years 5 and 6. Pupils take an increasing responsibility for themselves and their actions. They praise and acknowledge the contribution of others. They show a readiness to embrace and celebrate their lived experiences.

Pupils are very good in responding to and participating in the schools Collective Worship. They act with reverence and are keen to participate in a variety of gatherings. They sing joyfully, reflect in silence and join in community prayers appropriately and with confidence. No-one is expected to act in a manner contrary to their beliefs and all show mutual respect. Pupils' knowledge of prayer

and liturgy is increasing. They become familiar with a variety of prayer styles. They appreciate and are open to the Word of God in the scriptures.

How good outcomes are for individuals and groups of pupils	
How well pupils achieve in Religious Education	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pupils' standards of attainment in Religious Education 	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the quality of pupils' learning and their progress in Religious Education 	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school	2
How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship	2

How effective the provision is for Catholic Education

The quality of teaching at St. William's is good with some outstanding features. In most lessons teachers are effective in ensuring that pupils are interested, engaged and make very good progress. Teachers take into account pupils' prior learning but need to ensure a mix of tasks when planning so that it builds and extends pupils knowledge and understanding especially in stretching the more able. Creating more autonomy in some classes will engender in pupils a sense of high expectation and challenge. Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to work independently, in pairs and collaboratively in small groups. In most lessons, very good use is made of time and resources for example teaching assistants supporting children with Special Educational Needs, use of the interactive whiteboard, audio and visual media clips etc. Teachers and others use a variety of strategies to sustain and motivate pupils and relationships are very good throughout. Pupils are informed of their progress orally and through marking. Evidence in some books shows that marking is focused on the objectives set and children are given 'next steps' in order to challenge thinking and improve standards further. This needs to be further developed. Plenary sessions in some lessons need to be improved. In the best lessons this is used to good effect in drawing together pupils' learning, challenging their thinking and moving them on. Sharing best practise and modelling will help to raise standards in Religious Education further.

The assessment of pupils work in Religious Education is satisfactory. St. William's has assessment strategies in place which provide information on the achievement of all pupils however 'tracking' is in its infancy and there is not yet enough data to show trends. Early evidence suggests that there is some over estimation of levels especially in Key Stage 2. However, the building up of a portfolio of levelled work following moderation will help to rectify this. Class teachers enable pupils to evaluate their own work using '3 stars and a wish' and across the school there is evidence of pupils using some self assessment techniques i.e. thumbs up within lessons. Formal assessment tasks are undertaken in line with Archdiocesan guidance. Assessment information is collated by the subject leader and shared with the leadership team, governors and parents. Pupils are affirmed and know how well they are doing. Achievement and effort are celebrated at weekly assemblies where pupils receive 'Worker of the Week' and 'St. William's Stars' certificates. This information is shared with parents on the weekly newsletter.

The curriculum is good in meeting pupils' needs. The school using the Here I Am programme recommended by the Archdiocese meets the requirements of the Curriculum Directory for Religious Education. A whole school approach is used and appropriate levels of the programme are being followed in different classes. This ensures complete Religious Education entitlement for each child and meets National and Archdiocesan requirements. Of the total curriculum time 10% is allocated to Religious Education. This fulfils the requirements of the Bishops of England and Wales. Planning ensures full coverage of the Religious Education programme. St. William's vibrant display areas both in class and around school enrich pupils learning in Religious Education. Curriculum outlines are provided for parents on a termly basis in addition to an annual questionnaire. The school implements new curriculum developments as appropriate. Enrichment activities such as sports including rugby, football and judo along with cooking, sewing and dance have a positive impact on the curriculum. The Religious Education curriculum provides very good opportunities for pupils' spiritual and moral development. Another recent addition to the school has been the creation of an inside 'circular prayer space' which is conducive to spiritual reflection. Large enough to seat whole classes it is often used for Collective Worship.

The Collective Worship provided is good in reflecting the Catholic character of the school. Collective Worship plays a key part in meeting the Spiritual needs of the pupils and good use is made of the recently landscaped 'Garden of Creation' area for outside worship. Opportunities are provided to enable full, active and conscious participation of the whole school community. Children are enabled to pray formally and informally. The school provides opportunities for Staff to develop the skills in planning and leading Collective Worship but this needs further development to enable all pupils from the earliest years to plan, prepare and lead Collective Worship. Opportunities are provided for parents, carers, the local and wider Faith communities to participate in a variety of celebrations of the 'Here I Am' programme and the Church's liturgical year. The parish priest is a regular visitor to the school and is fulsome in his praise for the Leadership Team and their efforts in further developing home, school and parish links. He presides at weekly Masses to which all the school community are invited.

How effective the provision is for Catholic Education	
The quality of teaching and purposeful learning in Religious Education	2
The effectiveness of assessment in Religious Education	3
The extent to which the Religious Education curriculum meets pupils' needs	2
The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school	2

How effective leaders and managers are in developing the Catholic Life of the schools

Leaders and managers are very good in promoting and developing the Catholic life of the school. The newly appointed headteacher and the subject leader have shown an outstanding understanding of and commitment to the Mission of the Church. This is reflected in the Schools own Mission Statement '*...through love,*

respect, and appreciation of everyone and everything' and its aims and objectives. All who form part of the school community including parents, Priest, governors and children were involved in the development of the Motto and review of the Mission Statement. Its aims and practical objectives direct and guide every aspect of school life and are a useful tool by which the school evaluate its effectiveness. The Self Evaluation Document provides evidence of the schools monitoring, searching analysis and self challenge. Their analysis provides a basis to celebrate the schools strengths and outlining areas for development. The school has recognised the need to enable all staff on a rota basis to attend In-service training to further understand the Church's Mission in Education and play their unique part it. A range of opportunities for Spiritual and Moral developments are provided for staff and pupils such as praying together during Collective Worship, participation in Before You Begin sessions, attendance at Archdiocesan led NQT and Topic Days etc. These enable opportunities for reflection, growth and spiritual renewal. There is currently three staff undertaking the Catholic Certificate Religious Studies.

Leaders and managers are good in the way they use monitoring data to evaluate the schools performance, celebrate, and plan future improvements. There is some evidence of assessment monitoring and tracking however, this is in its infancy. The subject leader is very good in guiding Religious Education and regularly monitors the quality of Religious Education through undertaking lesson observations, scrutiny of planning and book trawls. She shows a real drive and enthusiasm for the subject and introduces new initiatives when appropriate. Excellent and thorough documentation guides and directs all staff in the delivery of the subject. This is updated as necessary.

Governors are good in fulfilling their responsibilities. They have helped to shape the direction of the school and they discharge their duties effectively. Together with information provided by the Headteacher and subject leader they have a good understanding of performance and standards in Religious Education. Each class is assigned a Governor and termly contact ensures they are kept up to date with curricular themes. Their relationships with staff are constructive and supportive. Governors are frequent visitors to the school and some have undertaken Archdiocesan training.

Leadership at all levels respects difference, values diversity and ensures equal opportunities for all. Prayer, worship and the liturgical life of the school reflects and respects the religious diversity within the school. There are positive relationships at every level within the school. Leaders and managers facilitate pupils' involvement in service to the local Faith, the immediate neighbourhood served by the school and the wider community. The organist from church regularly supports the school choir and hymns learnt are then sung at weekly Mass and on occasions in the local community at Care Homes. Catechists from the parish are outlined to support family Sacramental preparation. The use of the 'Here I am' programme promotes community cohesion. Children have explored the beliefs and values of other Faiths and religions including Judaism, Islam, Sikhism and Hinduism. It is recommended that during 'Faith Weeks' pupils are given opportunities to visit other places of worship or at least invite in guest speakers. This helps to promote tolerance and respect for those who think differently.

How effective leaders and managers are in developing the Catholic Life of the School	
How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school and plan and implement improvement to outcomes for pupils	2
How well leaders and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education and plan and implement improvement to outcomes for pupils	2
The extent to which the governing body provides effective challenge and support for the Catholic dimension of the school so areas needing development are addressed decisively and responsibilities met	2
How effectively leaders and managers promote community cohesion	2