



DIOCESE OF
SHREWSBURY

SECTION 48 INSPECTION REPORT:

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

School: Ss John Fisher & Thomas More Catholic Primary
School
Address: Woodhouse Lane
Benchill
Manchester
M22 9NW
Tel No: 0161 998 3422
URN: 105531
Headteacher: Mr D Hemington
Chair of Governors: Mr C Wilson
Date of Inspection: 18 March 2013
Inspectors: Mrs S Lyonette
Mr P Sharp

Mission Statement

Our Mission here at SS John Fisher and Thomas More is to value the uniqueness of every person in our Catholic Christian Community. Realising that each individual is created in God's likeness. While striving for excellence we accept the children as they are and seek to teach them all the Gospel values with Jesus at the centre of all our lives.

Prayer frames each of our days and strengthens us to fulfil our purpose as educators. We acknowledge our parents/carers as the first educators and appreciate their support and involvement in school life. Daily, we seek to provide opportunities and rich learning experiences to further the development of the whole child.

We celebrate the children's achievements, strive to realise their hopes, encourage them to reach their goals and dream of whom they may become.

FACTUAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Pupils	FS		Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Total
	PT	FT							
Number on roll		93	45	41	42	35	41	30	327
Catholics on roll		61	31	31	32	32	30	23	240
Other Christian denomination		7	5	4	6	2	5	0	29
Other faith background		22	6	5	1	0	2	5	41
No stated religious affiliation		3	3	1	3	1	4	2	17
Number of learners from ethnic groups		45	26	23	25	16	17	17	169
Total on SEN Register		7	8	4	5	7	15	5	51
Total with Statements of SEN		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
FSM (those currently eligible) <i>NB: The % eligible for the Pupil Premium is higher – 56%</i>		39	18	18	15	13	25	10	138 (42%)

Exclusions in last academic year	Permanent	0	Fixed term	0
Index of multiple deprivation	Ranked = 1			

PARISHES SERVED BY THE SCHOOL	
Name of Parish	No of Pupils
Our Lady, Queen of Peace <i>- This is the overarching parish consisting of St John's, St Anthony's & St Elizabeth's</i>	327

With reference to Year 6 – the Catholic schools to which your pupils transferred	
PUPILS TRANSFER	
Name of School	No of Pupils
St Paul's Catholic High School	27
Loreto Grammar School	2

RE TEACHING TIME	FS		Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Total
	PT	FT							
Total RE teaching time (Hours)		2*	2.4	2.4	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	16.8

- RE is also included in Continuous Provision within the EYFS

STAFFING	
Full-time teachers	15
Part-time teachers	6
Total full-time equivalent	18.19
Support assistants	17
Percentage of Catholic teachers f.t.e.	82%
How many teachers teach RE (P) f.t.e.	18
Number of teachers with CCRS or equivalent	7
Number of teachers currently undertaking CCRS	0

NAME OF SCHOOL	
Published admission number	45
Number of classes	13
Average class size KS1	28
Average class size KS2	25

FINANCIAL DATA

EXPENDITURE (£)	Last financial year 2011/12	Current financial year 2012/13	Next financial year 2013/14
RE	2000	2000	2000
English	3000	5700	6000
Mathematics	2000	2000	2000
Science	555	1500	1500
Premises –memorial garden /stained glass windows		11,133.00	

Key to judgements: Grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 requires improvement and grade 4 inadequate

Judgement

OUTCOMES FOR PUPILS

1

The staff at Ss John Fisher and Thomas More create a happy and caring environment where children feel safe and are motivated to work hard to achieve their potential.

The policies for Religious Education, Behaviour and Sex and Relationship Education, and the variety of liturgical celebrations and assemblies ensure that there is a holistic approach to learning and daily life. Pupils enjoy raising funds for CAFOD, Mission Together, BECOT, (an organisation supporting orphaned children in Tesoro, Uganda), Cornerstone and City of Angels. All these organisations help those in need and the children are learning that their efforts do make a difference. Because of this, pupils understand the importance of respect for themselves and others based on the schools own Mission Statement “to value the uniqueness of every person, with Jesus at the centre”.

The school leaders have developed a thorough baseline assessment on entry to the nursery which gives a clear picture of the pupils’ religious knowledge and understanding of prayer. As a result of this information and regular assessments teachers are able to evaluate the outstanding progress pupils make by the time they leave at the end of Year 6. The written work in books, lesson observations and senior leaders’ records indicate that the pupils gradually develop the knowledge to enable them to reflect on the life of Jesus and the implications his life has for their own lives.

The children show respect for each other and listen with interest when discussions are taking place. In each of the lessons observed, children worked effectively and made the most of the learning opportunities provided. Pupils expressed their views confidently about the teachings of Jesus and their use of appropriate vocabulary was a particular strength in lessons observed. Lessons observed had good and outstanding features and provided a range of effective learning strategies, which were successfully supported by all the teaching assistants working in each class. Records kept by teachers indicate that pupils are making significant progress in their knowledge and understanding which is having a positive impact on their day to day behaviour and actions.

During discussions with the School Council and Mini Vinnies, pupils expressed their appreciation for the care and support offered to them by all the staff working in school. The members of the School Council told us that they had learnt about bullying, and they all knew they could speak to the adults in school if they had any problems. The pupils’ responses to the questionnaire about school life indicated overwhelmingly that children are happy and enjoy their prayer times; they learn new things in their Religious Education lessons; they feel they have to work hard and that the teachers are fair and show them how to improve. A number of children indicated that some lessons could be more interesting and their own expectations of behaviour are very high.

During the Whole School Collective Worship, all pupils demonstrated reverence and respect. They were at ease when praying and three children led the school with their spontaneous prayers. There is an established tradition of praise through singing in the school and all pupils sang prayerfully. Approximately one third of Key Stage 2 pupils are members of the school choir and perform on a regular basis. They lead parish Masses, carol concerts for the local community and sang The Peoples’ Passion, a church project, which was broadcast on Radio 4. Senior leaders and staff have worked hard to encourage pupils to take a more active part in Collective Worship. Mini Vinnies and House Captains are key role models for pupils as they now prepare and lead a variety of prayer times. Although there have been developments in this area, further opportunities for more regular and creative involvement for all age groups will allow more pupils to deepen their personal spirituality. Year 6 pupils take part in an annual retreat day with other primary schools at Sacred Heart Parish Centre based on the work of CAFOD. Pupils also have the opportunity of a weekly prayer group organised by volunteers from the parish.

LEADERS AND MANAGERS	1
<p>The staff are committed to the mission of their school: “While striving for excellence we accept the children as they are and seek to teach them all the gospel values”. The leadership team and governors are excellent role models and therefore all policies are rooted in Christian values. Governors and the Team Ministry Leader told Inspectors that both the Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher’s personal witness to the gospel values has a positive influence on the prayerfulness that is such a significant part of the school. The adults in the school successfully carry out their work within this Christian environment, which they too foster on a daily basis. Following rigorous consultation and, because of their commitment to the on- going development and sustainability of Catholic education in Wythenshawe, the governors are converting to academy status as part of a Multi-Academy Trust.</p> <p>The environment is instrumental in providing a prayerful atmosphere and promotes a sense of belonging to a caring Catholic community. Special rooms have been given names that remind everyone of these values. For example the Nurture room is called the Romero Centre, the nursery is the Primus Centre; other rooms are known as the Kairos Room. A Prayer and Memorial garden has been created to enhance the spiritual development of the whole community. The school leaders and staff have established a close working relationship with Wythenshawe Team Ministry. Pupils have benefitted from talks on vocation and baptism and help with preparation for liturgies. The Parish catechists successfully lead the preparation for the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Communion and involve parents and children working together in sessions after school.</p> <p>The Religious Education leader monitors Religious Education through lesson observations, discussions with staff, reading children’s written work and tracking pupil progress. These evaluations are then considered by the senior leaders and staff training is then planned to address areas for development in staff meetings. This ensures that there is regular support for staff. Pupil standards will improve further when staff are more used to the new assessment procedures and moderation of standards are undertaken across all year groups, as well as with other Religious Education leaders in the diocese.</p> <p>The Headteacher informs Governors about the Catholic life and Religious Education through his termly report. Governors are involved in termly evaluation meetings, when specific objectives for Religious Education are considered. The priority this year has been the introduction of the new Religious Education scheme “The Way the Truth and the Life”, which was introduced in September 2012.</p> <p>Parents views are sought annually through a questionnaire and pupils are used to sharing their thoughts and concerns during Circle Time and Collective Worship. The School Council is another opportunity for pupils to express their own ideas, however this would be more effective if meetings were held regularly and pupils in all classes had agreed ways of communicating their ideas to their class councillor.</p>	

PROVISION	2
<p>Teachers plan their lessons effectively and, as a result, teaching is consistently of a high standard. All staff are committed to helping pupils develop an understanding of Jesus’ teaching; therefore teachers and teaching assistants guide and nurture all pupils irrespective of language and cultural differences.</p> <p>Inspectors observed good and outstanding teaching and this supported the judgements made by the senior leaders. Pupils enjoy their learning and are highly motivated to do their best. Activities are differentiated when appropriate and teaching assistants work effectively with individuals and groups. The support given to pupils with English as a second language and those who have other needs is a particular strength of the school. This targeted support is carried out skilfully so that all pupils have the opportunity to make significant progress in Religious Education during their time at the school.</p> <p>Teachers have found the content in The Way the Truth and the Life Handbook helpful and this has increased their own confidence when teaching the traditions and beliefs of the Catholic Church. As they become more accustomed to the scheme, more innovative ways of teaching will enable pupils to respond in creative ways. This will provide opportunities for pupils to become more independent</p>	

learners and encourage them to grow in confidence when considering their own actions based on the gospel values taught and experienced at Ss John Fisher and Thomas More.

With the support and leadership of the Religious Education leader, teachers are now starting to develop assessment strategies to support and further improve teaching and learning related to 'The Way The Truth and The Life'. Opportunities to moderate responses from pupils across all age groups will enhance further the standards in Religious Education.

The Collective Worship policy, reviewed annually, gives guidance to all staff when preparing Acts of Collective Worship. These are a regular feature of the school week. The range of informal and formal prayer times with the whole school, in smaller class groups and in their own classrooms means pupils are comfortable praying together in song and with words. The House Captains and Mini Vinnies told us they have enjoyed preparing liturgies for the school community and this opportunity should be developed further to include all pupils.

The senior leaders have introduced more opportunities for parents to take part in parish, school and class Masses as well as class assemblies. These are well attended by parents although staff and governors always welcome even more participation in these events.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS	1
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Ss John Fisher and Thomas More is a prayerful community offering spiritual and moral guidance to all its pupils from a variety of different cultures and backgrounds. They welcome the positive contribution made by families and pupils from their respective cultural and religious faith backgrounds and together they provide an outstanding Catholic education for the pupils learning at the school. The staff, pupils and governors are witnesses to the teaching of Jesus in school and in the wider community by the positive and enthusiastic way they join in many local activities throughout the year.

The atmosphere in the school reflects clearly the commitment and dedication of the senior leaders, staff and governors to providing an environment where all children are respected and learn to respect and accept the differences of their peers. The response of the pupils to this commitment is evident, and their respect for each other and their awareness of others less fortunate than themselves is rooted in the gospel values that are at the centre of the education provided.

In order to improve further, the school should:

- Continue to develop assessment procedures as indicated in the school development plan. These procedures should include moderation between classes and age groups so that senior leaders can be certain that there is consistency and accurate levelling across the whole school.
- Continue to develop the Collective Worship, which is a strength in the school, by involving the children more in the planning; actively consider opportunities for pupils of all ages to lead assemblies or class prayer times.

INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Key to judgements: Grade 1 = outstanding, grade 2 = good, grade 3 = requires improvement and grade 4 = inadequate	Judgement
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OUTCOMES FOR PUPILS

How good outcomes are for pupils, taking particular account of variations between different groups	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life of the school	1
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education	1
How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship	2

LEADERS GOVERNORS AND MANAGERS

How effective leaders, governors and managers are in developing the Catholic life of the school	1
How well leaders, governors and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic life of the school and plan and implement improvement to outcomes for pupils	1
How well leaders, governors and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education and plan and implement improvement to outcomes for pupils	2

PROVISION

How effective the provision is in promoting Catholic Education	2
The quality of teaching and how purposeful learning is in Religious Education	2
The extent to which the Religious Education curriculum promotes pupils' learning	2
The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school	2

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

How effective the school is in providing Catholic Education	<u>1</u>
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**PARENTS' QUESTIONNAIRES
135 RETURNED**

	please tick	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
1	My child enjoys school	67%	32%	1%	0%	0%
2	I am happy with the values and attitudes that the school teaches	65%	33%	1%	0%	1%
3	I am made to feel welcome in school	66%	33%	0%	1%	0%
4	The school seeks the views of parents/carers and takes account of their suggestions and concerns	49%	44%	3%	0%	4%
5	The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught in Religious Education	56%	36%	3%	1%	4%
6	The school enables my child/ren to achieve a good standard of work in Religious Education	59%	36%	0%	0%	5%
7	The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress in Religious Education	49%	43%	3%	1%	4%

QUESTIONNAIRES FOR YEAR 2 PUPILS

		Yes 	Sometimes 	No 
1	I like being at this school.	64%	29%	7%
2	I learn new things in R E lessons.	74%	29%	2%
3	I enjoy learning about Jesus and how to live as His friend.	93%	4%	2%
4	I have to work hard.	79%	21%	0%
5	My teacher helps me when I get stuck so I can make my work better.	67%	31%	2%
6	My teacher listens to me.	76%	21%	2%
7	When I am unhappy there is always an adult I can talk to.	74%	19%	7%
8	I get praise when I do my best.	67%	24%	12%
9	Other children are kind and behave well	45%	45%	9%
10	I am happy on the playground.	62%	31%	7%
11	I am allowed to help in class and around school.	64%	29%	7%
12	I enjoy the times we say our prayers, talk to God and sing songs about Jesus.	67%	21%	3%

QUESTIONNAIRES FOR YEAR 6 PUPILS

		Yes	Sometimes	No
1	Do you like being at this school?	85%	15%	0%
2	Do you find out new things in Religious Education lessons?	70%	30%	0%
3	Are your Religious Education lessons interesting?	41%	48%	11%
4	Do you get help when you are stuck?	59%	41%	0%
5	Do you have to work hard?	81%	19%	0%
6	Do teachers show you how to make your work better?	78%	22%	0%
7	Do other children behave well?	11%	81%	7%
8	Are teachers fair to you?	78%	19%	4%
9	Do teachers listen to your ideas?	59%	37%	4%
10	Are you given responsibility?	44%	52%	4%
11	Do you enjoy your times of prayer together?	74%	26%	0%