



ARCHDIOCESE OF LIVERPOOL

INSPECTION REPORT

ST OSWALD' S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Warrington

Tuesday 2 May 2006

Inspectors Ms. Nora Finnegan
Mrs. Angela Paget

Inspection carried out under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005

Type of School	Catholic Primary
Age range of pupils	4 -11
Number on roll	184
Chair of governors	Mr. Mike Whitfield
School address	Padgate Lane, Padgate, Warrington, WA1 3LB.
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Date of last inspection	9 March 2004
Headteacher	Ms. Helen Lennon

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.

Description of the school

St. Oswald's Catholic Primary School is situated in Padgate on the north side of Warrington. It caters for learners aged four to eleven and has 184 learners on roll. The school is situated in an area of mainly private housing and the majority of parents are in employment. The school serves the local parish of St. Oswald's. One hundred and sixty six of the learners on roll are baptised Catholics and seventeen come from other Christian denominations. One child comes from a non-faith background. The vast majority of children are from white ethnic backgrounds. All learners speak English as their first language, with 20.6% identified as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities and seven have a statement of educational need. There are 5.5% of learners who take free school meals. Learners' skills on entry to the school are broadly average. There are nine members of staff, seven of whom are Catholic. Five of the seven teachers who teach Religious Education have a Religious Education qualification.

Since the last inspection the school has had considerable changes in staffing.

Key for inspection grades

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

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Overall effectiveness of the school

St. Oswald's is a good Catholic school with a number of outstanding features. It is a caring, supportive community underpinned by a strong Catholic ethos. The children are respected and supported. This encourages them to be confident and establishes a positive climate for work. Positive relationships have been established by working closely with home, parish and the local community. Standards in Religious Education are good. Learners achieve well and the majority make good progress by the end of Key Stage 2. Teaching observed during the inspection is satisfactory overall, with some lessons having good features. Assessment provides good guidance on learning. In the majority of classes the curriculum is well planned and owned by the school. Learners' behaviour is outstanding. The provision for learners' spiritual and moral development is outstanding. The headteacher leads the school well and has a clear understanding of the school's strengths and a vision of how to meet development needs.

Grade: 2

Improvement since the last inspection

The school had no key issues identified at its last Inspection in March 2004. Since then new assessment procedures have been introduced in line with Archdiocesan guidance. Resources have been purchased to enhance the delivery of Religious Education and Collective Worship. In-service has been provided for all staff on planning, differentiation, Collective Worship and the teaching of *Other Faiths*. Monitoring of workbooks and assessment in Religious Education has been introduced. Staff have reviewed the Mission Statement and the Spiritual and Moral policies. Staff contributed to the self-evaluation of Religious Education and the Catholic life of the school.

Grade: 2

Capacity to improve

The school's self-evaluation is mostly accurate and comprehensive. The priorities for both the improvement of Religious Education and the Catholic life of the school stem from the self-evaluation and will be influenced by the findings of this inspection. The leadership has a clear understanding of what needs to be developed and is committed to improvement. There is good capacity and eagerness for further improvement.

Grade: 2

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that elements of good practice across the school are identified and disseminated to all staff in order to further raise standards;
- Ensure the continuing professional development of staff by providing whole school in-service to further develop their understanding and delivery of the *Here I Am* programme.

Achievement and standards

Learners' attainment on entry to the school is broadly average, with some children also having special needs. Learners make good progress in the school and by Year 6 some learners exceed expectation. Standards in Religious Education overall are good. There are no significant differences in performance by learners of different gender or ethnic background. Learners with special needs make good progress in Religious Education with the help provided by the teachers and learning support assistants. The school checks on the progress made by all and children are given clear guidance on improvement through regular assessment and positive marking which highlights their understanding and skills. Learners are challenged through the display of targets from *Here I Am* topics in their workbooks. The majority of learners are confident in discussion and ask good questions which show knowledge and understanding of Religious Education. Learners are given opportunities to record their knowledge and understanding and express their own thoughts and feelings in a variety of ways e.g. letters, lists, prayers, illustrations, play scripts reports, photographs etc.

Catholic beliefs and values are at the heart of learners' spiritual development. They have a good understanding of the life and teaching of Jesus and are able to apply his teaching to their own lives and experiences. This is made explicit in Religious Education lessons. Their behaviour is outstanding. Learners have a good sense of right and wrong and the school provides very well for their moral development enabling them to make a positive contribution to the school community.

Grade: 2

Quality of Provision for Religious Education

Teaching and learning

The quality of provision for Religious Education is good. Teaching observed during the inspection is satisfactory overall with some examples of good teaching. Where teaching and learning is good lessons are well planned and have good pace and timing, use is made of an effective range of teaching and learning styles to capture and retain learners' interest and to meet the needs of all learners within the class. The teacher has high expectations, keywords are introduced and explained and learning is related to both the learning objective and to life. Effective use is made of learning assistants to support less able learners. This ensures that the learning outcome is achieved.

Where teaching is satisfactory teachers do not appear to have a good understanding of the *Here I Am* programme, and used material not recommended by the Archdiocese or relevant to the particular topic being taught. The links between the Scripture reading, teacher input and the tasks set are not highlighted enough or related to the learning objective. All teachers need to ensure that keywords are introduced at the appropriate stage and added to displays and that learning is always summed up and related to the objective during the plenary session. Regular assessment of learners' work is good in the majority of classes. Records are kept and information used by some classes to inform future planning. In order to further raise standards all teachers need to be given opportunity for further ongoing professional development in Religious Education and the *Here I Am* programme. The school also needs to ensure that the elements of good practice across the school are identified and disseminated to all staff.

Parents and carers are enabled to become involved in their children's Religious Education by the provision of a Religious Education newsletter at the beginning of each term which informs them about the topics to be taught in *Here I Am*. When relevant, *Here I Am* work is taken home and parents invited to support their children. Parents and carers are invited to celebrations. Parents' evenings are held twice a year and an annual written report is also sent home.

Grade: 2

Curriculum

The school is effective in meeting the Religious Education curriculum needs and interests of learners. Through using the *Here I Am* programme recommended by the Archdiocese the school 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 diocesan requirements. Ten per cent of the total curriculum time is allocated to Religious Education. This fulfils the requirements of the Bishops of England and Wales. Links are made with home, parish and the local community. The Religious Education curriculum makes a significant impact on learners' spiritual and moral development.

Grade: 2

Leadership and Management

Religious Education

Leadership and management in Religious Education are good. There is a clear vision for the subject within the mission of the school with a focus on high standards. The Religious Education team provide clear guidance and support to staff. They have genuine enthusiasm for their role. A good handbook guides and directs all staff in their delivery of Religious Education. Performance in Religious Education is monitored through scrutiny of planning, workbooks and lessons. The school has identified the need to have more regular monitoring of teaching and learning in order to highlight good practice. It is recommended that analysis of formal assessment is made to further raise standards. St. Oswald's is socially inclusive by providing equality of access and of opportunity for all learners to make progress. Five of the seven staff teaching Religious Education have a suitable qualification. It is recommended that those staff currently without a qualification are encouraged to undertake the *Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies* which is currently on offer within the Archdiocese. Learning assistants are planned for and utilised well during lessons. A member of the Religious Education team attends coordinators' meetings and information is disseminated to all staff during staff meetings or in-service time. Priorities for the subject are clearly identified and targets set. Religious Education is well funded on par with other core subjects. It is recommended that resources purchased are suitable for use with *Here I Am* and current Church teaching. The headteacher and Religious Education team keep governors informed on matters relating to Religious Education. Governors discharge their responsibilities effectively.

Grade: 2

Catholic Life of the School

There is good leadership and management in developing the Catholic life of the school through the Mission Statement. St. Oswald's is a place in which the gospel spirit of love and respect permeates every aspect of its life and work. A good Mission Statement, which expresses the philosophy of education in this Catholic school, was written eight years ago by staff and governors. The Mission Statement has been reviewed informally each year and is used to direct all school policies and plans. Due to many changes in staffing, the school has now identified the need for a full review involving all those who make up the school community. It is recommended that the new statement, which expresses the Christian vision of education together with clear aims and practical objectives, will then be shared with the whole school community. Learners will also need to be given opportunity to explore the new statement and create their own motto which can be placed alongside the new statement in classrooms and around the school. Reflection on the Mission Statement and its clear aims and objectives will then provide an effective system by which to monitor and evaluate the Catholic life of the school during the annual self-evaluation.

Grade: 2

Collective Worship

The quality of Collective Worship is outstanding. The school provides Collective Worship in a variety of ways for each child daily, in class, phase, key stage or whole school gatherings. This fulfils government and Archdiocesan guidance.

A good policy and guidelines support the planning and delivery of Collective Worship. Teachers and learners plan and deliver Collective Worship. Acts of worship include various forms of prayer, scripture, music, song and quality time for personal reflection. Collective Worship stimulates reflection on spiritual and moral issues and on personal beliefs. Learners respond well and actively participate in acts of worship. Good use of focus tables is made in some classes to enhance delivery of Collective Worship. It is recommended that this good practice is disseminated throughout the school.

Grade: 1