



## ARCHDIOCESE OF LIVERPOOL

### INSPECTION REPORT

### ST. CUTHBERT'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY AND NURSERY SCHOOL

LIVERPOOL

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Tuesday 7 October 2008

Inspectors                      Ms. Nora Finnegan              Mr. David Ashley

URN                                      104649

Inspection carried out under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005

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| Type of School          | Catholic Primary  |
| Age range of pupils     | 4 -11   |
| Number on roll          | 121   |
| Chair of Governors      | Rev. Fr. Patrick Kelly                                  |
| School address          | Aviemore Road,<br>Liverpool,<br>Merseyside,<br>L13 3BB. |
| Telephone number        | 0151 228 4137   |
| E-mail address          | Cuthberts-ao@st-cuthberts.liverpool.sch.uk              |
| Date of last inspection | 1 February 2005   |
| Headteacher             | Mr. Dennis Hardiman                                     |

## 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. Cuthbert's is a smaller than average Catholic Primary School which serves the local parish of St. Oswald's King and Martyr. The school is situated in an inner suburb of the city in an area of considerable social and economic disadvantage. The proportion of children eligible for free school meals is well above the national average. The number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is also well above average. Most children are of white British heritage. About 20% come from a minority ethnic background. An above average proportion of children are at the early stages of learning English. Since the last inspection the school has become part of a federation with St. Sebastian's Catholic Primary School which is situated about a mile away. The schools share the same headteacher, senior leadership team and governing body. The school is a designated Reading Recovery school, and is part of the West Derby Network Learning Community. Standards on entry to the school are well below national expectation. There are 121 children on roll of whom 89 are baptised Catholics and 19 come from another Christian denomination. There are 13 children from an *Other Faith* tradition. There are 12 members of staff, 9 of whom are Catholic. Six of the seven teachers who teach Religious Education have a Religious Education qualification. The school has been successful in gaining many awards in recognition of the Dyslexia Friendly School Status, National Healthy School, Active Mark for Sport and recently the International School Award.

## 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. Cuthbert's is an outstanding Catholic school. It is a vibrant, inclusive community, underpinned by a very strong Catholic ethos, where all are valued and respected and life is lived to the full. This encourages children to flourish in all aspects of their development and establishes a very positive climate for work. Positive relationships, which are a strength of the school, have been established by working in genuine partnership with home, parish and the local community. Standards are outstanding. Learners achieve well and make outstanding progress. Teaching and learning are outstanding overall with four examples of outstanding teaching observed during the inspection. Assessment is outstanding and provides clear guidance on learning. The school is outstanding in meeting the Religious Education curriculum needs and interests of all learners. Learners' behaviour is outstanding. The quality of Collective Worship is outstanding. The provision for learners' spiritual and moral development is outstanding. The school is outstanding in promoting community cohesion. The Religious Education subject leader provides outstanding leadership and support to staff. The leadership of the Catholic life of the school through the Mission Statement by the headteacher and senior leadership team is outstanding. This is evident through their clear understanding of the mission of a Catholic school. They have very high expectations, are aware of the school's strengths and have a clear vision of how to meet development needs.

**Grade: 1**

### **Improvement since the last inspection**

The school had one key issue from its last Section 23 Inspection in February 2005. Informal and formal assessment are now fully in place and the information is used to inform future planning and teaching. The Religious Education coordinator has worked very hard to introduce a consistent approach to planning, delivery and assessment of Religious Education. Use of creative teaching and learning strategies have been introduced to ensure that the needs of all learners are met. Monitoring of planning, teaching and learning and assessment has been introduced. Time and finance have been provided for the development of the coordinator and for whole staff in-service. The Mission Statement has been formally reviewed by all members of the school community. Opportunities for spiritual and moral development across the curriculum have been highlighted. The Religious Education handbook and the Collective Worship policy have been updated. Parents/carers are given detailed information about what is taught in Religious Education and are invited to participate in celebrations. Resources have been updated. Religious Education and the Catholic life of the school are evaluated on a regular basis.

**Grade: 1**

### **Capacity to improve**

The school's view of its overall performance is accurate due to its outstanding self-evaluation and monitoring process. 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 very clear understanding of what needs to be developed and is fully committed to improvement. There is outstanding capacity and eagerness for further improvement.

#### **Grade 1:**

#### **What the school should do to improve further**

- continue to implement the targets set out in the school self-evaluation documentation

### **Achievement and standards**

Learners' attainment on entry to the school covers the full spectrum but overall is below that expected nationally. The percentage of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above the national average. The proportion of children eligible for free school meals is also above the national average. Learners make outstanding progress in the school with some children exceeding expectation. Standards in Religious Education overall are outstanding. There are no significant differences in performance by learners of different gender or ethnic background. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress in Religious Education through use of tasks suited to their needs and with the help provided by teachers and teaching assistants. More able children are challenged in a variety of ways e.g. use of challenging tasks and questions. Children's work is marked with positive and challenging comments which enable learners to monitor their own progress. Outstanding use is made of assessment to check on children's progress. In all key stages learners are confident in discussion and ask very good questions showing knowledge and understanding of Religious Education. Throughout the school learners' work is recorded in a variety of ways e.g. poems, prayers, posters, photographs of role play etc. Learners in Key Stage 2 write well independently in a variety of styles.

Catholic beliefs and values are at the heart of children's Religious Education development. Children throughout the school show real enjoyment of Religious Education. They have a very good understanding of the life and teaching of Jesus and are given opportunity to apply his teaching to their own lives and experiences. Learning about *Other Faiths* has led children to an awareness of how other religions make sense of the world, and the need for tolerance and respect. Children's behaviour throughout the school is outstanding. Achievement in all areas of school life is celebrated through a variety of systems in classes and at a weekly Celebration Assembly. Religious Education enables children to make an outstanding contribution to the school community e.g. School Council, Friendship Buddies.

#### **Grade 1:**

## **Quality of Provision for Religious Education**

### **Teaching and learning**

The quality of provision for Religious Education is outstanding. Teaching is outstanding. Four outstanding lessons were observed on the day of inspection. Lessons are very well planned taking account of the needs of different learners within a class. Teachers ensure that past learning is recalled and the learning objective is explored and keywords introduced. A wide variety of creative teaching and learning strategies that capture and retain learners' interest and involvement are used and resources are used effectively to enhance delivery. Very good support is given to those less able and more able learners are challenged in a variety of ways. Outstanding use is made of other adults to support learners. Outstanding use is made of display to enhance both delivery of lessons and further develop children's understanding of topics. Learning is summed up very effectively during the plenary session and related to the objective. Children are also given time to reflect at a deep level in order to relate their learning to their everyday lives. Learners are enthusiastic and show real enjoyment in Religious Education lessons. Outstanding use of both informal and formal assessment, using the expectation statements and attainment target tasks, is made and the information gathered is used to inform future planning. Teaching and learning is monitored on a rota basis. Feedback is given to staff and the information is used to identify in-service needs. Parents and carers are sent a *Here I Am* newsletter which gives them detailed information about the topics being studied. This enables them to become involved in their children's Religious Education. Parents/carers are also invited to celebrations. They receive regular verbal and written reports of their child's progress.

### **Grade: 1**

### **Curriculum**

The school is outstanding in meeting the Religious Education curriculum needs and interests of learners. The use of a wide variety of creative teaching and learning strategies ensures that the Religious Education curriculum is well matched to the needs and interests of all learners. Less able children are very well supported and more able learners are challenged in a variety of ways. 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. Of the total curriculum time 10% is allocated to Religious Education. This fulfils the requirements of the Bishops of England and Wales.

Very strong links are made with home, parish and the local community. The Religious Education curriculum makes an outstanding contribution to learners' spiritual and moral development. The school has begun to formally identify practical ways of supporting the development of learners' spiritual and moral

development. It is very obvious that these are lived out in the daily life of the school.

**Grade: 1**

## **Leadership and Management**

### **Religious Education**

Leadership and management in Religious Education are outstanding. There is a clear vision for the subject within the mission of the school with a focus on very high standards. The Religious Education coordinator provides very strong leadership for the staff who share a commitment to the subject's aims and values. She shows a genuine enthusiasm for her role. An excellent handbook guides and directs all staff in their delivery of Religious Education. Performance in Religious Education is monitored on a rota basis through scrutiny of planning, workbooks and assessment, lesson observations, questioning of learners and monitoring of displays. This enables the school to share good practice and further raise standards. St. Cuthbert's is socially inclusive by providing equality of access and of opportunity for all learners to make progress. Of the seven staff teaching Religious Education six have a suitable qualification. Other adults are planned for and are very involved in supporting teaching and learning during lessons. The subject leader attends coordinators' meetings and topic days. Information is disseminated to all staff during staff meetings or in-service time. The school has now identified the need to give all staff, on a rota basis, opportunity to attend topic days. Time and finance are allocated for development of all staff. Priorities for the subject are clearly identified and targets set. Religious Education is funded on par with other core subjects and quality resources have been purchased during the past year. The Religious Education coordinator keeps governors fully informed of the strengths and areas for development relating to Religious Education. Governors discharge their responsibilities in an outstanding manner and are very involved in the life of the school.

**Grade: 1**

### **Catholic Life of the School**

There is outstanding leadership and management in developing the Catholic life of the school through the Mission Statement. St. Cuthbert's is a place in which the Mission Statement is at the heart of the community and the Gospel spirit of love and respect permeates every aspect of its life and work.

All members of the school community were involved in the formal review of the Mission Statement. The statement has clear aims which highlight the philosophy of education in this Catholic school. These are supported by practical objectives, which show how it is lived out in the daily life of the school. It informs all school policies and plans and is displayed in all classrooms and around the school. Children are very familiar with the message of the Mission Statement as they are given regular opportunities to explore what "With Love" "To go further than I thought, run faster than I

hoped, reach higher than I dreamed, become the person I need to be” means for each one of them individually. Regular reviews of the Mission Statement, with its clear aims and practical guidelines, will enable the governors and staff to effectively monitor and evaluate the Catholic life of the school.

**Grade: 1**

## **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, key stage or whole school gatherings. This fulfils government and Archdiocesan guidance.

An outstanding policy gives very clear guidelines to support the planning and delivery of quality Collective Worship wherever and whenever it takes place. Teachers, other adults and children plan and deliver Collective Worship using the format provided by the Archdiocese. Parents/carers are invited to participate in celebrations. Acts of worship include various forms of prayer, scripture, power-point presentations, reflection and other elements that support liturgical formation. Respect is shown to children of *Other Faiths* in the invitation to prayer. Worship stimulates reflection on spiritual and moral issues and on personal beliefs. The Collective Worship observed was outstanding. Children and adults actively participate in acts of worship. They are also given quality time for reflection at the end of Religious Education lessons. Collective Worship makes an outstanding contribution to spiritual and moral development.

**Grade: 1**

## **Community Cohesion**

The school is outstanding in promoting community cohesion. There is a shared vision and commitment to serve the common good. Leadership at all levels respects difference, values diversity and ensures equal opportunities. Parents and carers are involved in decision-making and the life of the school. They are invited to celebrations, receive regular newsletters and have opportunities to share their views e.g. questionnaires. Collective Worship celebrates, reflects and respects the diversity of belief within the school. The use of the Religious Education Programme, *Here I Am*, provides outstanding support to community cohesion. Learners have had opportunity to explore the beliefs and values of other faiths: Judaism and Islam. St. Cuthbert's has very strong links with the local community e.g. the parish, local schools. The school community shows a concern for the well being of those less fortunate than themselves in their support of local and global charities e.g. Nugent Care, CAFOD, Jospice etc.

**Grade: 1**













