


DIOCESE OF LANCASTER EDUCATION SERVICE
INSPECTION REPORT ON THE PROVISION OF DENOMINATIONAL EDUCATION

School name: Lea St Mary's
 Address: Darkinson Lane, Lea Town, Preston, PR4 0RJ
 Name of Headteacher: Mrs R M Kilner
 Date of Inspection: 13th March 2007
 Name of Inspector: Mrs Evelyn Scanlan
 Type of school: Catholic Primary
 Age range of pupils: 4 - 11
 Number on roll: 93
 Appropriate authority: The Governing Body
 Chair of Governors: Mrs K Taylor
 Religious Education Co-ordinator: Mrs B Rowbotham
 Date of previous inspection: July 2000

The Inspection judgements are:	Grade	Explanation of the grades 1 = Outstanding 2 = Good 3 = Satisfactory 4 = Inadequate
Overall effectiveness of the school	2	
Leadership and management of the Catholic life of the school	2	
The quality of Collective Worship	2	
Religious Education - Achievement and standards	3	
Religious Education - Quality of provision	2	
Religious Education - Pupils' needs and interests	2	
Religious Education – Curriculum leadership and management	2	
<i>The following pages provide reasons to support these judgements</i>		

Information about the school:

St. Mary's is a Catholic Primary School with 93 pupils on roll of whom approximately 88% are baptised Catholic. The remaining pupils are from other Christian denominations and one child is from another World Faith. The school serves the parishes of St. Mary's, Lea and St. Robert's, Catforth with 16% of children coming from that catchment area. The majority of pupils come from other surrounding parishes. In the previous academic year most pupils transferred to Our Lady's Catholic High School.

Overall Effectiveness of the school

The overall effectiveness of the school is **good**. A warm and friendly ethos radiates the school's distinctive Catholic nature. Pride in the school is reflected in the high standard of care and maintenance of the property. Good quality and colourful displays of work and artefacts further enhance the Catholic character of the school.

The headteacher, who is recently in post, is committed to raising standards of achievement and to promoting the school's Catholicity. She is ably supported in her work by a dedicated staff. The school has gained the confidence and support of governors, parents and the parish community.

In support of raising pupils' standards of attainment in Religious Education, a new scheme of work is being implemented. The subject leader provides effective and valued support and guidance for staff in this task. Children are polite and well behaved. They are confident in preparing and presenting Acts of Worship. An eagerness to participate in a variety of prayer opportunities and the community life of the school significantly contributes to their spiritual and moral development.

Improvement since the last inspection

The school has continued to make satisfactory progress in addressing the issues raised by the last inspection.

School is confident that action plans currently in place will result in improved standards of attainment and raise the level of enjoyment and achievement in Religious Education.

Capacity to improve

The school exhibits **good** capacity to improve and is committed to raising standards of attainment in Religious Education. To this end a new scheme of work is being implemented. Senior managers have identified the development of rigorous assessment, monitoring and evaluation procedures as fundamental to this process. Senior managers intend to make provision for on-going professional development in support of staff needs and further progress for pupils.

What the school should do to improve further:

- Develop further school assessment strategies and pupil tracking systems to enable staff to improve standards of attainment in Religious Education.
- Continue to provide staff development opportunities to improve teachers' ability to judge levels of attainment achieved by their pupils in support of further progress.
- Continue to ensure effective implementation of the new scheme of work for Religious Education so that standards of attainment achieved by pupils demonstrate good progress through the higher levels of attainment at the end of both key stages.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

Inspection confirms the school's judgement of leadership and management of the Catholic life of the school as **good**.

The aspirations, attitudes and values of the children and staff at St. Mary's are rooted in the values of the school's Mission Statement. This is evidenced by the high standards of care and support for pupils and the high regard of pupils for staff. There is a genuine and tangible atmosphere of spirituality during Worship sessions. Positive and productive links exist between school, parents and the wider community. The partnership with clergy and the parish community continues to develop well. Governors are supportive of school needs, are involved in its work and influence its Catholicity. They are kept informed of progress and achievement in Religious Education through reports from the subject leader. All staff make a full and valuable contribution to the teaching and learning in Religious Education.

THE QUALITY OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

The quality of Collective Worship and other forms of prayer is **good** with some outstanding features.

Acts of Collective Worship are a strength of the school. There are a range of formal and informal opportunities for staff and pupils to engage in prayer and worship. Pupils plan, prepare and lead worship sessions with confidence. Good use is made of ICT to enhance presentation of acts of worship. Acts of collective worship observed during the inspection were interesting and inspired deep thought and a sincere response. Follow-up evaluation sessions elicited honest and respectful suggestions for improvement from pupils. Pupils have access to updated and quality resources. The contribution of collective worship to the pupils' spiritual and moral development is significant.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION - ACHIEVEMENT AND STANDARDS

The school's judgment of Achievement and standards in Religious Education is confirmed as **satisfactory**.

A portfolio of moderated work shows that children do not consistently demonstrate the ability to progress beyond the average level of attainment at the end of each key stage.

Plans are in place to address this issue. In support of raising standards of attainment, a new scheme of work for Religious Education is being introduced which has been assessed by staff as better meeting the needs of pupils' differing levels of ability. A tracking system is also being introduced to show progression in children's attainment in Religious Education. The need for rigorous assessment procedures is a focus for improvement. The subject leader is working with staff to establish a consistent and whole-school approach to assessing pupil progress and to identifying levels of attainment achieved.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION - QUALITY OF PROVISION

The quality of provision for Religious Education has been self-evaluated as satisfactory. However the quality of provision for Religious Education has been found to be good overall and this confirms a judgment of **good**.

Positive self-review and the professional desire to provide the best for pupils confirm that the school has established a strong foundation on which to build and develop further the valuable plans in place to ensure quality provision for Religious Education. Examples of current good quality provision are the effective use of teaching assistants to cater for individual needs and the positive contribution staff make to pupils' spiritual and moral development.

A good start has been made to improving the quality of the Religious Education curriculum. The school took time to explore the potential of various schemes of work to ensure that their final choice for implementation best fitted the pupils' varying needs and abilities. Much work was also put into adapting the selected scheme to ensure continuity and progression in work for mixed age classes. Plans are now in place to develop good assessment practices and procedures.

Teachers are eager to improve further their skills and knowledge to ensure the improved attainment of their pupils. Parents and governors are involved in the work and life of the school through newsletters and invitations to worship sessions.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION – PUPILS' NEEDS AND INTERESTS

Inspection confirms the school's judgement of the school's ability to meet the needs and interests of pupils in Religious Education as **good**.

Discussion with pupils confirmed their enjoyment of Religious Education. Their attitude to the new scheme of work being introduced is positive and demonstrates an enthusiasm for learning. This eagerness was evidenced during observation of a class lesson where pupils responded well to the teacher's questions and worked purposefully with a 'Learning Partner'. This collaboration with each other offered further opportunities to involve themselves well in the lesson. Pupils take care over their work and are pleased to offer their written work for scrutiny.

A 'Learning Partner' system enables pupils to have purposeful collaboration with each other and offers further opportunities to involve themselves well in lessons. Support staff are used effectively to meet the needs of individual children.

Certificates and awards displayed around school give evidence of much successful involvement in community initiatives. Pupils are proud of the school's achievements. They speak with confidence about their school council and of the lunchtime and after school clubs available to them.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION – CURRICULUM LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Curriculum Leadership and Management is **good**.

The subject leader meets the challenge of bringing about improvement in the curriculum with enthusiasm, knowledge and commitment. Staff appreciate the support and guidance offered to them. As deputy headteacher she works closely with the new headteacher in planning for raised standards of attainment in Religious Education. Constructive self-evaluation has identified areas for development, which are being addressed rigorously. Staff development is planned to further improve teaching and learning skills. Governors are kept well informed about curriculum Religious Education through regular reports and meetings with the subject leader.