

**INSPECTION REPORT ON THE PROVISION OF DENOMINATIONAL EDUCATION**

School name: Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School  
 Address: Poulton Street, Preston, PR2 2SA  
 Name of Headteacher: Mr Martin Gee  
 Date of Inspection: 21st June 2007  
 Name of Inspector: Mr Steven Thornton  
 Type of school: Catholic Primary School  
 Age range of pupils: 5 - 11  
 Number on roll: 117  
 Appropriate authority: The Governing Body  
 Chair of Governors: Mr Phil Crowe  
 Religious Education Co-ordinator: Miss Anne-Louise Barden  
 Date of previous inspection: July 2001

<b>The Inspection judgements are:</b>	<b>Grade</b>	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	3	
Religious Education - Pupils' needs and interest	2	
Religious Education – Curriculum leadership and management	2	
<i>The following pages provide reasons to support these judgements</i>		

**Information about the school:**

Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School currently has 117 children on roll of whom 76 are baptised Catholics (65%), 26 are from other Christian denominations (22%) and 15 are from other world faiths (13%). The school mainly serves the parish of Sacred Heart, Preston with a small number of children coming from the parishes of St. Walburge, St. Bernard, St. Teresa, St. Peter and Paul, English Martyrs, St. Anthony, St. Andrew and Blessed George Haydock and St. Peter and Paul Mawdsley. The school is situated on the outskirts of Preston in an area where much of the housing is over 100 years old.

When children join the school in the Reception class, their attainment is broadly average for their age but their social, language and communication skills are not as strong as other aspects of their development.

At the end of Year 6, the majority of pupils transfer to Our Lady's Catholic High School in Preston.

**Overall Effectiveness of the school**

Sacred Heart is a **good** Catholic school driven by a Mission Statement which permeates all aspects of school life. The school is a welcoming community. Pupils relate well to each other, respect staff and are keen to participate in the spiritual and community life of the school. The school gives a high priority to ensuring the effective spiritual and moral development of pupils. The school has strong links with the parish and the strong support of parents. Parish links are being further strengthened by the work of the recently appointed Parish Priest who is already having a positive impact. The leadership team has a clear improvement plan in place and understands the need to work to specific dates.

Staff are committed to the Catholic life of the school. The quality of care and guidance is good with staff acting as good role models to the children. Staff appreciate the support of the subject leader, share her vision and demonstrate a willingness to bring about changes necessary to raise standards achieved by pupils in RE.

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

The school has made **good** progress in developing Religious Education (RE) since the last inspection.

- A Mission Statement has been produced following consultation with interested partners and is now at the heart of school life.
- Some improvement in assessment practices has taken place leading to a wider range of differentiated activities in each class.
- Partnerships between the school and its parish community have increased, with the Senior Management Team showing good leadership in this area.

### **Capacity to improve**

The school demonstrates a **good** capacity to improve by maintaining its clear focus to raise standards of attainment through the commitment and support of staff and governors and the effective leadership of the subject leader.

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

- To develop a formative assessment system to assist learning and teaching in order to raise standards across the school.
- To continue to develop in-house moderation in response to the new national levels of attainment.
- To review curriculum coverage in response to the new RE scheme and the move to mixed age classes.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL**

The leadership and management of the school is **good**.

Governors are committed and give the highest priority to developing the distinctive Catholic nature of the school. Governors work with the school's leadership team to review the Mission Statement and also to update the School Improvement Plan. The newly-arrived Parish Priest has taken over the role of RE governor and is eager to be involved in in-house moderation. The Senior Management Team ensures that relationships with parents, parishes and other schools are strong and this work features in the School Improvement Plan.

Provision for the children's moral and personal well-being is good and was rightly judged to be a strength of the school by OFSTED (January 2007).

## **THE QUALITY OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP**

The quality of Collective Worship is **good**.

Prayer is central to the life of the school. The school provides a wide variety of Acts of Worship which are relevant and meaningful experiences for all. The parish priest is keen to be involved and is a regular leader of class Masses and other liturgies. Collective worship is thoughtfully and carefully planned with wonderful contributions made by pupils of all ages. The school is well resourced and committed to further improvements, for instance where Y5 pupils used the internet to search for Bible stories on a theme of friendship and composed the psalm for their class Mass.

Pupils are reflective, sing joyfully and pray with enthusiasm. They are dignified in their delivery of scripture and other readings. They know and use traditional prayers appropriately and are enabled to write their own prayers.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION - ACHIEVEMENT AND STANDARDS**

In line with the school's own self-evaluation and moderation, achievement and standards are judged to be **satisfactory**.

Almost all pupils attain standards in RE which are satisfactory given their capability and starting point. On entry, children have below average levels of attainment but good progress is made to raise this to a satisfactory level through Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. A satisfactory level of performance is then maintained through Key Stage Two.

The school understands the need to develop a more effective system of assessment in order to raise standards. The subject leader is leading the staff on an evaluation of the new RE scheme, including the identification of focused assessment opportunities related to clear learning objectives shared with the children at the start of each activity. This information will also be used to plan the next step for improvement in order to have a positive impact on raising standards in teaching and learning.

Pupils are proud of their school and behave well. They respond to opportunities to take responsibility around school and work hard when the school raises funds or organises activities to address the needs of others. On these occasions, pupils are capable of organising themselves for instance in choosing and planning class fund-raising activities.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION - QUALITY OF PROVISION**

The quality of provision for RE throughout the school is judged to be **satisfactory** with **good** elements.

Staff are committed to improving standards due to their confidence in themselves and the new RE scheme which will be at the 'core' of learning and teaching.

The teaching staff are exclusively Catholic and all permanent staff hold the CCRS qualification. With the Parish Priest, they will be an excellent resource for the school to draw on. Their teaching is well focused and uses many different strategies such as oral work, drama and ICT. The subject leader uses book scrutinies effectively to monitor improvements in teaching since the last inspection and has set objectives for future improvement. However, assessment is still not used by all staff to focus sharply on how well pupils are doing and to plan the next steps. Marking of books is inconsistent and the Senior Management Team need to ensure consistent application of the newly-developed marking policy to RE.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION - PUPILS' NEEDS AND INTEREST**

The inspection judgement of how the school meets pupils' needs and interest is **good**.

Pupils are enthusiastic and positive about their learning in RE and in their participation in collective worship. They collaborate readily with others, often take the initiative and appreciate the standard of care they are given. The school meets its requirements in the timetabling of RE and also uses time imaginatively for activities such as the Y6 retreat day at Brettargh Holt and Good Shepherd fund-raising. Classes visit the church for liturgies and for familiarisation. They also invite parents and parish members into collective worship in school. They enjoy the opportunities given to them to extend their learning in RE such as in the use of the internet to research world faiths. The staff ensure that the planning of activities meets the different needs of the children and believe the introduction of the new RE scheme will support them even further.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION – CURRICULUM LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Curriculum leadership and management of RE is judged to be **good**.

The subject leader is enthusiastic and knowledgeable about her role. She has a clear sense of direction and a strong desire to raise standards in the near future. She is organised efficiently, has effective plans to deal with the subject's less effective areas and is determined to share her vision with the Senior Management Team and governors. In particular, the plans to introduce a more systematic, formative assessment strategy for learners and teachers will have a positive impact on raising standards in RE in the future.