

**DENOMINATIONAL INSPECTION  
REPORT (Section 48)**

on

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

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**School:** St. Bernadette's Catholic Primary School

**Address:** Devonshire Road  
Bispham  
Blackpool  
FY2 0AJ

**Telephone Number:** 01253 35641

**Email address:** admin@st-bernadette.blackpool.sch.uk

**School URN:** 119691

**Headteacher:** Mr Sean O'Hare

**Chair of Governors:** Fr Stephen Pearson

**Section 48 Inspector:** Mrs Adrienne Delaney

**Date of Inspection:** Friday 7<sup>th</sup> March 2012

The inspection report is produced for the Rt. Reverend Michael Campbell O.S.A., the Bishop of Lancaster (c.f. Code Canon Law, 804, 806), and for the Governing Body of the school (Education Act 2005, Section 48). The inspection reviews, evaluates and plans further improvements in the school's witness to the Catholic faith and Curriculum Religious Education. This process begins with the school's own self-evaluation.

The inspection schedule follows criteria set by the National Board of Advisers and Inspectors.

## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

St. Bernadette's Catholic Primary School is an average sized school situated in Blackpool. The majority of pupils live in the local area. Most pupils are of British heritage. The number of pupils with English as an additional language (EAL) is low in comparison to the national average. The number of pupils on free school meals (FSM) is also low.

## **FACTUAL INFORMATION**

### **Pupil Catchment:**

Number of pupils on roll:	203
Planned Admission Number of Pupils:	30
Percentage of pupils baptised Catholics:	84%
Percentage of pupils from other Christian denominations:	0.7%
Percentage of pupils from other faith backgrounds:	4%
Percentage of pupils with no religious affiliation:	5%
Percentage of pupils from ethnic groups:	0.4%
Percentage of pupils with special needs:	5%

### **Staffing**

Full-time teachers:	9
Part-time teachers:	2
Percentage of Catholic teachers:	91%
Percentage of teachers with CCRS:	55%

### **Percentage of learning time given to RE:**

YR 10%	Yr4 10%
Yr1 10%	Yr5 10%
Yr2 10%	Yr6 10%
Yr3 10%	

### **Parishes served by the school:**

1. St Bernadette's
2. St Teresa's

**Overall Effectiveness**

**1**

**Capacity for sustained improvement**

**1**

## **MAIN FINDINGS**

St Bernadette's is an outstanding Catholic school. It is well led by a committed head teacher and a positive Catholic ethos results in well-behaved, polite pupils. Pupils' spiritual and moral development is given high priority. The vision that the head teacher has for the school is shared by the governors and the staff. Good relationships are evident and these build a harmonious and inclusive community. All areas for improvement since the last inspection have now been acted upon.

Children are happy to come to St Bernadette's and they demonstrate pride in their school, which means that they have positive attitudes to learning. Pupils make good progress from starting points which are well below average and most attain standards which are at least broadly average. Pupils are well supported in their learning and additional support is well deployed. More able pupils are not always being sufficiently challenged but pupils with SEN are progressing well. The school offers pupils a variety of opportunities to contribute to the Catholic life of the school. Pupils show interest in the spiritual and moral values of others and respond in a caring manner to those in need. They are showing increasing independence in preparing prayer and acts of worship.

The school provides a good Catholic education for pupils. Teaching is good and there is evidence of this in lessons. Where teaching is good, lessons are carefully planned to meet the different needs of pupils. Marking shows positive comments and pupils know how to improve their work. Assessment and monitoring systems are in place and have a positive impact on individual pupil progress. Parents and carers are kept informed as to learning and progress. The Religious Education curriculum is good, with additional resources being used to enhance it. The quality of Collective Worship is outstanding with children taking ownership for preparation and delivery.

The head teacher and senior leaders are committed to improving outcomes for pupils. Teaching and learning are being monitored well and tracking systems have been developed in order to improve outcomes. The impact of these is being regularly analysed. The quality of self evaluation is good. The head teacher is aware of the needs of his own, and of the staff's, professional development. Governors are committed to discharging their responsibilities well and are eager to both challenge and support the school. Partnerships with other providers and organisations have been

established and are promoting Catholic learning. Pupils are developing a sense of belonging to a wider community and an understanding of the common good.

## **Capacity for sustained improvement**

The school's capacity for sustained improvement is outstanding. The governors, management, teachers and the staff working in school demonstrate a clear understanding of areas for development. The quality of self evaluation is good and governors and staff are committed to ensuring that the raising of standards is of the highest priority. The subject leader monitors RE standards well and assists the leadership team in driving forward good planning and best practice, thus securing the best outcomes for pupils.

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

Continue to raise standards in Religious Education by:

- Ensuring that more able pupils are planned for so that they are better challenged in RE.
- Furthering opportunities for pupils to celebrate the cultural diversity within the school and to understand the faith and cultural backgrounds of other communities.

## **PUPILS**

### **How good outcomes are for pupils, taking particular account of variations between different groups**

<b>1</b>
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Pupils enjoy Religious Education and have positive attitudes towards their learning. In discussion pupils described their school as a "brilliant" school where they "all feel safe" and spoke of their RE lessons as "exciting and encouraging." They show high levels of interest and enjoyment and demonstrate literacy in skills and understanding of Religious Education. They are confident in talking about what they are learning and how belief and spirituality impact on their lives. Assessment data and pupil tracking evidence are showing progress and demonstrating improving trends over time and, in particular, over the last three years. Evidence shows that from low starting points, pupils make good progress through the Foundation Stage and through Key Stages One and Two. Their attainment is showing improvement and target setting and tracking are ensuring that pupils are reaching expected levels in RE. Pupils who have disabilities and special educational needs (SEND) are making good progress because their needs are accurately identified and support is carefully targeted to meet

them. However, able pupils would benefit from more challenging tasks being set in RE in order to achieve higher levels.

Parents' replies to the questionnaire show that they are informed and very happy with their children's progress in RE. Pupils are making a good contribution to the Catholic life of the school and derive benefit from it. Older pupils are very clear that their role is to set a good example. One pupil described the school as "making us more conscious people". Pupils take on responsibilities willingly and eagerly and are becoming increasingly active in the Catholic life of the school, beyond their routine lessons. Pupils can articulate how school is helping them to become better people. One pupil in Year 6 said, "School helps us to be kind just as Jesus taught us."

Pupils are beginning to have an understanding that religious beliefs and spiritual values may be different from their own. However, their understanding of other faiths and cultures would be enhanced by further opportunities for learning about children from other cultures within and beyond, their own immediate communities. Pupils show a developing sense of justice, kindness and consideration to others and this is apparent in all the positive relationships that exist within the whole school community. One Year 5 child spoke of "St Bernadette's helping to make us better people."

Pupils' response to, and participation in, the school's Collective Worship is outstanding. Pupils act with reverence and are eager to participate. Older pupils have an emerging sense of how to plan and lead worship with growing confidence and expertise. Pupils have an excellent understanding of the religious seasons and feasts, such as Lent being a time of preparation for Easter. They are becoming skilled in the use of scripture, religious artefacts, hymns, ICT, drama and music to focus and enhance acts of worship. Liturgical worship is modelled effectively by staff in class acts of worship. Collective Worship makes an outstanding contribution to the spiritual and moral growth of the pupils. They show respect for all in St Bernadette's and welcome visitors from their wider community into their happy school.

## **LEADERS AND MANAGERS**

### **How effective leaders and managers are in developing the Catholic life of the School**

**1**

The promotion, monitoring and evaluation of the provision for the Catholic life of the school is outstanding. The Catholic ethos at St Bernadette's underpins all aspects of school life and the Catholic mission is lived out by all. High priority is given to planned improvement that will lead to good outcomes for all. Leaders and managers ensure that a rich, broad and balanced curriculum is provided, with pupils' spiritual and moral

development being at the heart of what is planned. Formal and informal monitoring activities are conducted by leaders and managers and these feed into the self evaluation process, ensuring that strengths and areas for development are identified. High priority is placed on staff training, ensuring that all have an understanding of the ethos and the vision of the school and contribute to St Bernadette's success. The pupils interviewed in upper Key Stage 2 could articulate the school's Catholic mission with a growing understanding. "We learn how to forgive and how to pray", a Year 6 child explained. Leaders and managers work very closely with the parish priest (who is also the RE governor and chair of governors) in promoting the Catholic life of the school. The pupils recognise him as the person who helps with class and parish Masses and who always "speaks kindly and asks questions about our faith."

Monitoring and evaluation of the provision for RE, carried out by the committed and effective subject leader, is good. She is supported well by the senior leadership team. The subject leader ensures that systematic monitoring and evaluation are in place and these are having a significant effect on the improvement made in recent years. She is particularly effective in supporting staff so that they are well informed and apply school policy and practice with confidence. Her commitment and high expectations are supported by senior leaders and together they ensure continuous improvement and good outcomes for pupils.

The work of the governors is good: they are organised and visible in the school community. The chair of governors attends many school events and supports and challenges leaders and staff. He is well informed, understands the school's performance in RE and the strategies that are being put in place to improve it still further. His monitoring role, and that of other governors, is well developed and structured. He is aware of the appropriate priorities for improvement and provides a level of challenge for leaders and managers within the school.

As a result of the dedication and commitment of the head teacher, who inspires his very committed team of teachers and support staff, the school is outstanding at developing partnerships with parents, other providers, organisations and agencies. He actively seeks ways in which the school can engage in partnerships to promote the Catholic learning and well-being of pupils. He has been instrumental in developing a rich range of partnerships with Catholic primary and high schools, with the local Catholic community and parish organisations. He has developed further links with other faith and non faith groups. As a result of this pupils are given opportunities to grow and develop in their commitment to serve others within the school, the parish and the local community. They are beginning to make links with other faith communities so as to share beliefs, knowledge and practice.

# PROVISION

## How effective the provision is for Catholic Education

1

The quality of teaching and learning in Religious Education is good overall. Teaching observed was good and resulted in good quality learning. The adoption of the 'We Believe' scheme has become embedded and is leading to higher expectations and rising standards. Teachers show regard to learning styles and imaginative use of resources, including ICT, is maximising learning. Planning is good and is a result of focussed assessment and monitoring. Marking is leading to next step learning and advice towards objectives. The setting of challenging tasks could be developed further so that all pupils make appropriate progress. Clearly identified whole school and individual professional development for staff has led to the building of confidence and deepening subject knowledge. These are helping to inspire and engage pupils, especially in upper Key Stage 2 where pupils can speak with confidence on issues such as justice and charity. Members of the support staff are deployed effectively and were observed supporting SEND children, aiding them in their learning. These elements of provision have contributed to the good progress of pupils and tracking suggests further progress will be made in coming years.

St Bernadette's systematic monitoring and evaluation procedures in RE are good and are a key feature in the improvement in standards in recent years. Teachers are applying assessment procedures which are beginning to be more secure and embedded into school practice.

A good Religious Education curriculum is provided by the school which meets the needs of pupils well. The Religious Education curriculum provides outstanding opportunities for pupils' spiritual and moral development. The recently adopted 'We Believe' scheme is being creatively adapted to meet the needs of all pupils. Long and short term planning ensures full coverage of the curriculum and further opportunities are provided to enhance it. The curriculum meets the needs of the Bishops' Conference well.

The quality of Collective Worship in school is outstanding and given high priority. Prayer is central to the life of the school and pupils are offered a range of both formal and informal opportunities for prayer. Staff and pupils are confident and skilled in leading Collective Worship and liturgies. Pupils have a developing understanding of the liturgical calendar and themes for worship are consistent with the Catholic character of the school, ensuring that all major times in the Church's year are acknowledged and celebrated. Acts of worship have a significant impact on parents, pupils and the parish.

# SUMMARY OF INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

**Key for inspection grades:**

Grade 1 **Outstanding**      Grade 2 **Good**      Grade 3 **Satisfactory**      Grade 4 **Unsatisfactory**

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The school's capacity for sustained improvement</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>PUPILS How good outcomes are for pupils, taking particular account of variations between different groups</b>	<b>1</b>
• how well do pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education?	1
❖ the quality of pupils' learning and their progress	1
❖ the quality of learning for pupils with particular learning needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
❖ pupils' attainment in RE	2
• to what extent do pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life of the school?	1
• how well do pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship?	1
<b>LEADERS AND MANAGERS How effective are leaders and managers in developing the Catholic life of the School?</b>	<b>1</b>
• how well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic life of the school and plan improvement to outcomes for pupils?	1
• how well leaders and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for RE and plan for improvement to outcomes for pupils?	1
• the extent to which the governing body provides effective challenge and support for the Catholic dimension of the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory and canonical responsibilities met?	1
• how well leaders and managers develop partnerships with other providers, organisations and services in order to promote Catholic learning and well being?	1
• how effectively leaders and managers promote Community Cohesion?	2
<b>PROVISION How effective is the provision for Catholic Education?</b>	<b>1</b>
• the quality of teaching and purposeful learning in RE?	1
• the effectiveness of assessment and academic guidance in Religious Education?	1
• the extent to which Religious Education curriculum meets pupils' needs?	1
• the quality of Collective Worship provided by the school?	1