



DIOCESE OF
SHREWSBURY

REPORT ON THE MONITORING INSPECTION OF OUTSTANDING SCHOOLS

School: St John's Catholic Infant School

Address: Old Chester Road
Bebington
CH63 7LH

URN: 105082

Acting Headteacher: Mrs M Bulmer

Chair of Governors: Mrs A Lear

Inspector: Mrs Hedger

Date of Previous Inspection:
2 July 2008
Overall Grade 1 (Outstanding)

Date of Current Inspection :
2 July 2014
Overall Grade 1 (Outstanding)

St John's Catholic Infant School continues to provide an outstanding and effective Catholic education. The school provides a warm, friendly and welcoming environment with the school's Mission Statement the focus of a central display.

The school's Mission Statement is firmly at the heart of this school. The children have a clear understanding of the Mission Statement. This is evident in the children's version, written in their own words, with contributions from all of the children in the school. This version was updated in September 2013 and will be reviewed again in 2016. This ensures the views of all children, who currently attend the school, are reflected in the Mission Statement.

The inspector observed a whole school 'Gospel Assembly', based on the Gospel from the Mass of the previous Sunday. This assembly was led by the Headteacher and RE Subject Leader and attended by the whole school, including all staff and some governors. Throughout the assembly the children were attentive and prayerful. They sang with enthusiasm. Children were involved in leading prayers and in acting out scenes from the Gospel readings. At the end of the assembly each class was given a pack, with notes for each child to take home. This was to enable parents to discuss the Gospel readings with their child and included suggestions for further reading or research. This is just one example of very effective home school liaison.

During the learning walk, the inspector visited every class. In each class, there was evidence of high standards of teaching and learning. Evidence of outstanding provision could be found in the children's books; in the quality of displays around the classrooms and in the high regard given to the children's work from 'The Way The Truth and The Life' ; in the conversations between the children and their teachers; and in the teachers' planning notes, which included clear differentiation based on previous assessments.

Every class has its own charter which is displayed and understood by all children. The children are taught about their rights and the responsibilities that come with these. As a result of this work, the school has received the UNICEF Recognition of Commitment Award as a Rights Respecting School. In February each year, two weeks is given to the teaching and understanding of major world faiths. As a result the children learn to respect their own faith and the faiths of other children around the world.

Leadership is outstanding. The inspector met with a number of governors as well as the Parish Priest and RE link governor. They are all actively involved in the religious life of the school. Meetings are often held in the classrooms and depending on the curriculum focus the children are invited to choose a page from their RE workbooks for the governors to see. The governors review all the books, including RE on a regular basis and are fully informed of the standards achieved by the children.

The energetic and dedicated Headteacher leads a highly motivated leadership team, which includes the RE subject leader. They work with a clear vision to motivate and inspire the other staff. The RE subject leader has worked as part of the Diocesan Working Party developing resources for 'The Way The Truth and the Life' and has been instrumental in supporting the transition for pupils from the Infant to the Junior school. The leadership team plan regular training sessions to ensure all staff are secure in their knowledge of RE.

When asked to describe their school the children said, "it is a place of loving, learning and laughter together with God."

Areas of Outstanding Practice

Outcomes for pupils

In the last inspection, children tended to achieve higher in AT1 assessments than AT2. This has now evened out as the result of a new improved tracking and data analysis system developed by the leadership team and now used by all staff. This system means leaders can ensure pupils are appropriately supported and challenged in their learning. The development of this system has enabled staff to consider various parameters prior to planning lessons and has given the staff a valuable tool when setting tasks for differentiation. This is an outstanding use of technology, as a tool for planning and teaching.

Leaders, governors and managers

Leaders work with a clear shared vision. They have a secure understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. They strive to inspire and motivate all to ensure that every child has access to the best possible learning opportunities.

Provision

In the last inspection, Collective Worship and community cohesion were identified as targets for improvement. These have been effectively addressed, with outstanding results.

The children clearly enjoy and value their Gospel Assembly and within each class there are excellent resources for Collective Worship. The children are part of the planning and delivery of these sessions. By engaging in these meaningful Acts of Worship children are provided with a means to support the development of their own private prayer. Throughout their time at the school, the children grow in their faith and draw confidence and comfort from the Collective Acts of Worship as evidenced in their work and in their own written prayers.

In the two weeks study of other faiths, each class converted their classroom into a centre of worship for the faith and culture for their chosen religion. Children invited children in other classes, parents and governors to visit and discuss what they had learnt. The multi-media record provides evidence of outstanding teaching and learning.