



## ARCHDIOCESE OF LIVERPOOL

### INSPECTION REPORT

## ST. JOHN FISHER CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

### WIDNES

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Inspection Date: 4 October 2011

Inspectors: Rev D Melly Mr M Halford

Unique Reference Number: 111392

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	201
Chair of Governors	Mr D Pich
Head teacher	Mrs M Armstrong
School address	Edward Street Widnes Cheshire WA8 0BW
Telephone number	0151 424 7794
E-mail address	Head.stjohnfisher@halton-borough.gov.uk
Date of last inspection	12 June 2008

# 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.

## Information about the school

St John Fisher School is a smaller than average Catholic Primary School situated in Widnes and mainly serving the parish of St John Fisher and St Marie. There are 201 children on roll of whom 180 are baptised Catholic, 21 come from other Christian denominations, and there are no pupils from other faith or religious traditions. There are 8 teachers who teach Religious Education. Seven teachers are Catholic. Five teachers have a suitable qualification in Religious Education. Four teachers are due to begin study for the CCRS this term. Since the last inspection the Senior Management Team has been restructured with the appointment of a new deputy head and an assistant head. A new parish priest has been appointed. The infant building has been extended and remodelled. The outdoor area has been enhanced, incorporating the existing trees and other natural features. A state of the art computer suit has been installed.

### Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

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Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school.

# Inspection Judgements

## Overall effectiveness:

how effective the school is in providing Catholic Education 

2
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The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1
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## Main Findings:-

The school is good overall in providing Catholic Education and has many outstanding features. There is a clear vision for Catholic Education which is embraced by the whole school community. Since the last inspection the school has securely maintained previously good and outstanding performance. Self evaluation is good and accurate. Outcomes for pupils are good. There is no significant difference in performance between groups of pupils. Outcomes for pupils with additional or special needs are good. The leadership team is very highly motivated and communicates its high expectations to staff in order to secure improvement. The Catholic life of the school and curriculum Religious Education has a very high profile in the school. Teachers are provided with in-service to support their ongoing development. Realistic plans stem from the accurate analysis obtained through monitoring and are being used to improve outcomes.

Overall the school has now an outstanding capacity for sustained improvement.

## What the school needs to do to improve further

- Enhance provision for curriculum Religious Education by:
  - Providing more differentiated tasks to challenge the more able and assist the lower achievers.
  
- Enhance provision for curriculum Religious Education by:
  - Introducing the marking of children's work in such a way as will extend their thinking.
  
- Develop current practice in Collective Worship by:
  - Developing the plans to encourage pupils to be more involved planning and leading Collective Worship. More use of music, song, drama etc would also enhance an already outstanding provision.

## How good outcomes are for individuals and groups of pupils

Pupils' achievement in Religious Education is good. On entry to school many children have a limited or no knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith. Pupils' attainment in Religious Education is good. Pupils make outstanding progress in relation to their starting points and capabilities. Analysis of assessment undertaken provides evidence of pupils' generally attaining the appropriate level for their age and stage of development in each key stage. There is no difference in performance between pupils of different gender.

Outcomes for pupils with additional or special needs are good. Pupils are becoming more religiously literate. Their knowledge, understanding and skills are developing appropriate to their age or capacity. They are developing the skills that enable them to think spiritually, ethically and theologically and are becoming more aware of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life. Pupils' enjoyment of their learning is outstanding as shown by their interest, enthusiasm and behaviour. Pupils are actively involved in developing and evaluating the Catholic character of the school by their involvement in reviewing the Mission Statement and its expression in their daily lives, their participation in Collective Worship and above all by the way they treat each other. Pupils have a good sense of belonging to the school community. Pupils are encouraged to take on roles of responsibility in the school and wider community e.g. the School Council, House Captains, Buddies, Friendship bus stop Buddies and setting up for Collective Worship. Pupils are exceptionally considerate and caring of others both in school and the wider community. Pupils have a good sense of right and wrong and apply this in their personal relationships. Pupils take an increasing responsibility for themselves and their actions. They praise and acknowledge the contribution of others.

Pupils are outstanding in responding to and participating in the schools Collective Worship. They act with reverence and are keen to participate. They reflect in silence and join in community prayers appropriately and with confidence. No-one is expected to act in a manner contrary to their beliefs and all show mutual respect. Pupils' knowledge of prayer and liturgy is increasing.

<b>How good outcomes are for individuals and groups of pupils</b>	
How well pupils achieve in Religious Education	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• pupils' standards of attainment in Religious Education</li> </ul>	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the quality of pupils' learning and their progress in Religious Education</li> </ul>	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school	1
How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship	1

## **How effective the provision is for Catholic Education**

The quality of teaching is consistently good in ensuring that pupils are interested, engaged and make good progress. Four of the eight lessons were outstanding. Teachers take into account pupils' prior learning and ensure when planning that the work consolidates, builds on and extends their knowledge and understanding. This is a strength of the school. Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to work very well collaboratively. Good use is made of time and resources in all classes e.g. Interactive White Boards and particularly PowerPoint, laptops, cameras, story, focus tables and Here I Am displays (which included Driver Words and Learning Objectives), and memorabilia from home. Great attention has obviously been paid to creating an outstanding learning environment, including exceptional outdoor facilities. On the day teachers and others used a variety of strategies to sustain and motivate pupils particularly through good open questioning which led to lively and meaningful discussion, talking partners, tasks which were differentiated, challenging and exciting and

catered for all, including the high achievers. Encouragement and affirmation was also used to great effect.

The assessment of pupils work in Religious Education has been greatly developed since the last inspection and teachers are now feeling more comfortable especially with the moderation of children's work. The tracking is excellent and available both on paper and electronically. Teachers are able to identify how well pupils are achieving on a termly basis. Formal assessment tasks are undertaken in line with Archdiocesan guidance. Assessment information is collated by the subject leader and shared with the governors. Achievement and effort are celebrated. Pupils are constantly affirmed and, know how well they are doing.

The curriculum is good in meeting pupils' needs. The school, using the Here I Am programme recommended by the Archdiocese 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 Archdiocesan requirements. Of the total curriculum time 10% is allocated to Religious Education in all classes. This fulfils the requirements of the Bishops of England and Wales. Planning ensures full coverage of the Religious Education programme. Well planned strategies are deployed to enrich pupils learning. The school implements new curriculum developments as appropriate. Enrichment activities such as after school activities and clubs, days out and residential all have a positive impact on the curriculum. The Religious Education curriculum provides outstanding opportunities for pupils' spiritual and moral development.

The Collective Worship provided is outstanding in reflecting the Catholic character of the school and taking into account the variety of Faith backgrounds among the pupils. Collective Worship plays an outstanding part in meeting the Spiritual needs of the pupils. Opportunities are provided to enable full, active and conscious participation of the whole school community. Children are enabled to pray formally and informally. The school has provided opportunities for Staff to develop the skills in planning and leading Collective Worship. Efforts are now being encouraged to help pupils to be involved more in the planning and leading of collective worship. Good opportunities are provided for parents, carers the local and wider community to participate in celebrations of the 'Here I Am' programme and the Church's liturgical year. Collective Worship will be even further enhanced when pupils are more involved in its planning and leadership.

<b>How effective the provision is for Catholic Education</b>	
The quality of teaching and purposeful learning in Religious Education	2
The effectiveness of assessment in Religious Education	2
The extent to which the Religious Education curriculum meets pupils' needs	2
The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school	1

## **How effective leaders and managers are in developing the Catholic Life of the schools**

Leaders and managers are outstanding in promoting and developing the Catholic life of the school and show an outstanding understanding of and commitment to the Mission of the Church. This is reflected in the Schools' own Mission Statement '*Follow Jesus, Enjoy Learning and Achieve the Best You Can*'. All who form part of the school community including parents, governors and children were involved in the development and review of the Mission Statement. Its aims and practical objectives direct and guide every aspect of school life. Outstanding opportunities are provided for the staff and pupils to play an active part in Catholic life and Mission of the school, through their involvement in the review of the Mission Statement and the living out of it, especially in their reverence and respect for each other. The Self Evaluation Document provides evidence of the schools monitoring, analysis and self challenge. Their analysis provides a basis to celebrate the schools strengths and outline areas for development. The Self Evaluation Document is good and accurate and is full of enthusiasm and hope. The school provides good induction and in-service training to enable staff to further understand the Church's Mission in Education by participating regularly in in-service provided by the Department for Christian Education.

Leaders and managers are good in the way they use monitoring data to evaluate the schools performance, celebrate, and plan future improvements. The planning is good. The subject leader is good in guiding Religious Education. She shows great commitment and introduces new initiatives when appropriate. Excellent documentation guides and directs all staff in the delivery of the subject. This is updated as necessary.

Governors are outstanding in fulfilling their responsibilities. They have effectively helped to shape the direction of the school through their involvement with the Mission Statement and their regular attendance at Governor Meetings and visits to the school. Their collective skills are greatly appreciated by all as they support and challenge as appropriate. The involvement of Fr Peter Fox and Sister Eileen Moore in the life of the school has been greatly appreciated and valued over the last 21 years through the provision of a wide variety of experiences.

Leadership at all levels respects difference, values diversity and ensures equal opportunities for all. Prayer, worship and the liturgical life of the school reflects and respects the religious diversity within the school. There are very positive relationships at every level within the school. The school is totally involved in the life of the local community with the various local agencies visiting and helping on a regular basis. Children are also involved in the local community especially by their singing in local care homes at Christmas time. There are also great global links through CAFOD and the links forged with schools in China and Africa. The use of the 'Here I am' programme also promotes community cohesion. Children have explored the beliefs and values of other faiths and religions particularly Judaism, Islam and Hinduism. Speakers have been invited into school to further enhance this work. This all helps to promote tolerance and respect for those who think differently.

<b>How effective leaders and managers are in developing the Catholic Life of the School</b>	
How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school and plan and implement improvement to outcomes for pupils	1
How well leaders and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education and plan and implement improvement to outcomes for pupils	2
The extent to which the governing body provides effective challenge and support for the Catholic dimension of the school so areas needing development are addressed decisively and responsibilities met	1
How effectively leaders and managers promote community cohesion	1