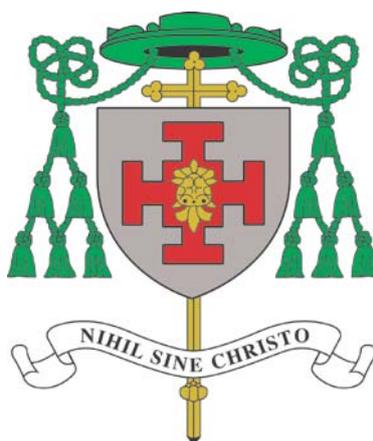


# DIOCESE OF SHREWSBURY

## DIOCESAN EDUCATION SERVICE

*...committed to encouraging 'fullness of life'*



### SECTION 48 INSPECTION REPORT:

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

School:	St Michael & All Angels Catholic Primary School
Address:	New Hey Road Birkenhead CH49 5LE
Tel No:	0151 677 4088
URN:	105090
Headteacher:	Mrs S Collins
Chair of Governors:	Mr P Regan
Date of Inspection:	7 March 2011
Inspectors:	Mrs S Hudson Mrs J Johnson

<b>Key to judgements: Grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory and grade 4 inadequate</b>	<b>Judgement</b>
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<b>OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL</b>	<b>2</b>
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**How effective the school is in providing Catholic Education**

St Michael and All Angels Catholic Primary School provides a good Catholic education for its pupils, with outstanding levels of pastoral care and support. The school holds its vision '*At St Michael's we will encourage all children to reach their full potential in body, mind and spirit inspired by our Catholic Christian way of life*' and its motto '*Love Others As Jesus Loves You*'; truly at the heart of its daily work.

The school's distinctive Catholic ethos is evident in all aspects of its work, genuinely guiding daily working practices. Pupils are extremely well cared for and supported effectively in their learning, development and wider well-being. The school is fully inclusive and provides a welcoming environment. Pastoral care is outstanding, with all members of the school community valued as unique individuals. The school is rightly proud of the attention and quality of care that is provided to every child.

Pupils feel safe, secure and appreciated. Patience, respect and understanding underpin all relationships. Pupils know that they are listened to and that they are valued and accepted. Within this caring environment pupils are experiencing at first hand what it means, and feels like, to be part of a fully inclusive Christian community. Pupils demonstrate tolerance, care and understanding in their relationships with each other.

Whilst standards in Religious Education are broadly average, pupils are making good progress due to good teaching. Pupils are developing secure knowledge, skills and understanding in matters related to Religious Education. They are being provided with good opportunities for spiritual development and participate with reverence in the prayer life of the school.

Parents are extremely supportive of the school and pleased with the quality of provision and education provided for their children. Parents speak of "the welcoming warmth and care", and of how, "Gospel values are lived out in the expectations of behaviour, as well as, in the modeled behaviour of teachers. An excellent school".

The Headteacher is dedicated to the school. She is well supported by a committed and skilled senior leadership team; and a knowledgeable Governing Body. Matters related to the Catholic mission and core purpose of the school are given priority. All staff contribute very effectively to the well-being of pupils. Teachers demonstrate dedication and commitment to providing good quality provision for Religious Education.

The school has made overall improvement since its last inspection. The senior leadership team is committed to ensuring provision continues to improve, and has the capacity to effectively steer its future development.

**What the school could do to improve further**

- To sharpen the analysis of monitoring outcomes, leading to more rigorous, in-depth and accurate self-evaluation, with the impact of actions taken clearly evident in the improved quality of provision within Religious Education.
- To build upon the work already begun in developing assessment and marking procedures, resulting in consistent whole-school approaches, which assist the school in raising standards; and also involve pupils in knowing clearly what they do well and what they need to do to improve.
- To increase opportunities for pupils to participate in; and to plan and lead acts of reflection and of collective worship.

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

From wide and varied starting points pupils make good progress in their Religious Education, reaching standards which are broadly average by the end of Year 6. Through the work undertaken within Religious Education lessons and through the ethos and practices of the school, pupils are experiencing at first hand what it means to be part of a Catholic community. They are gaining knowledge and skills, and developing their understanding of the Catholic faith in purposeful and meaningful ways. Consequently they are able to talk about the work they have undertaken, to demonstrate their levels of understanding and most importantly to relate this to their own lives, particularly in the ways in which they treat others.

Pupils participate well in lessons. They enjoy their work and show good levels of interest. Teachers work hard. Lessons are both well-planned and well-delivered, with adults well-deployed to ensure all pupils' are able to be successful. High quality resources are used well, stimulating pupils' interests and helping to develop their understanding. Pupils enjoy their Religious Education lessons, although the quality of work produced is variable both in quantity and quality across the school. Pupils share their thoughts and ideas willingly and they work well together. In their relationships with each other they demonstrate patience, respect and understanding. They show consideration and genuine care. Behaviour observed at all times during the inspection was good, with pupils being polite, helpful and friendly.

Pupils are rightly proud of their school. They recognise the patience, respect and high quality care that all adults provide for them. They know that they are genuinely cared about; and cared for. Adults ensure every pupil is given attention, is listened to and is valued and accepted as a unique and precious individual. As a result pupils feel safe and secure. They are developing a strong sense of belonging and of community. They are encouraged to take responsibility for themselves and for their actions with forgiveness genuinely a part of school life. Consequently children know when they have tried but things go wrong, that they are able to learn from their actions and to try again. This is a school that does not give up on pupils in challenging circumstances but works with them and their families with a genuine desire to be fully inclusive.

Pupils thoroughly enjoy a range of enrichment opportunities offered to them, including retreats. During the inspection they spoke enthusiastically about their recent visit to a Hindu temple. Such worthwhile opportunities and experiences are enabling pupils to widen their knowledge, understanding and appreciation of people with other faiths, beliefs and cultures.

Pupils engage willingly in daily prayer and enjoy times provided for personal prayer. They benefit from regular opportunities for collective worship, including being able to attend Mass in St Michael's church. During these times pupils are respectful, praying together and singing enthusiastically. Whilst pupils are provided with some opportunities to lead times of reflection, increasing the opportunities for pupils to participate directly and to plan and lead their own times of reflection, prayer and collective worship is an area of provision for the school to develop.

Pupils demonstrate concern and awareness of the needs of others, both within and outside the immediate locality. They provide support to a range of local, national and global charities including raising money for Haiti, Romania and The Ark. Pupils are provided with opportunities to participate in events such as Mission Together where they are learning about and supporting the education of pupils in Africa. The school also works closely with the Catholic Children's Society. Community and parish links are very strong, described as providing 'a common sense of belonging to both the school and the Church'.

<b>PROVISION</b>	<b>2</b>
<p><b>How effective the provision is for Catholic Education</b></p> <p>Pupils make good progress because teaching is good. This good teaching is enabling pupils to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding well. Planning takes into account pupils' needs and ability levels, and adults are well-deployed to ensure pupils are able to succeed. Consequently pupils are well supported. Teachers are currently developing their assessment systems in order to provide a more accurate picture of pupil achievement. Pupils are being encouraged to be reflective and to engage in self-assessment, although approaches are not yet consistent across the school. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and plan valuable learning experiences. In lessons pupils are expected to work hard. Whilst pupils do participate well the school is aware of some inconsistencies in the quality and quantity of work produced by pupils and also in the quality of marking and response to pupils' work. Resources are of a very good quality and are used effectively to support teaching and enhance learning. Learning environments are filled with attractive displays of pupils' work, many of which reflect current Religious Education themes and provide good quality focal areas for prayer and reflection.</p> <p>The school provides a wealth of enrichment opportunities, including retreat events, mission experiences, visits, partnership working with a range of schools and events such as 'The 'Big Sing'. These opportunities are all thoroughly enjoyed by pupils.</p> <p>Collective worship and prayer is an integral part of the life of the school. Varied prayer opportunities are planned and provided. These opportunities respond to pupils' needs as well as reflecting the whole school themes within the Diocesan Religious Education scheme of work 'Here I Am'. Good account is also taken of the liturgical year. These times of prayer and worship are used effectively to provide opportunities for pupils to develop their knowledge and understanding, as well as to support the development of spirituality. The respect and good level of participation by all members of the school community at these times is to be commended, with adults acting as good role models.</p>	
<b>LEADERS AND MANAGERS</b>	<b>2</b>
<p><b>How effective leaders and managers are in developing the Catholic Life of the school</b></p> <p>The senior leadership team is deeply committed to the Catholic mission of the school and to the vocation of teaching. There is no doubt that the Catholic mission of the school is truly at the heart of its daily work. Senior leaders are knowledgeable and act as role models for others. They lead by example, especially in the high quality of care they provide and in the effective relationships they build with pupils. They are rightly proud of the outstanding provision for care, guidance and support. All aspects of Religious Education are given priority within the school. Monitoring of lessons and pupils' work is regularly undertaken and this is assisting the leadership team in identifying strengths and areas for development. Sharpening the focus of monitoring and ensuring rigorous analysis of outcomes, will certainly assist the leadership team in securing focused improvement. Matters related to the religious life and mission of the school are given priority.</p> <p>The school is fully inclusive; each child is valued and respected as a unique individual. The school works very effectively with a range of agencies to support the welfare and well-being of pupils, going to great lengths to meet pupils' needs.</p> <p>Governors are visible figures within the school and parish community; parish relationships are strong. Governors help in many practical ways and they give willingly of their time and energies. They are supportive and knowledgeable but also provide challenge, seeking to ensure the best possible provision for pupils. Of particular note is the high level of support provided by Fr Simon, who is a regular visitor and enthusiastically supports the work of the school in many practical ways. He is well-known to pupils and his involvement and level of engagement is greatly appreciated.</p> <p>Parents are kept well informed through a range of means and the school works hard to provide opportunities for parents to be involved in the life of the school. Parents are extremely satisfied with provision within the school and the level of care provided for their children. Partnership working is used effectively to widen pupils' experiences and to promote Catholic learning and pupil well-being.</p>	

## INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<b>Key to judgements: Grade 1 = outstanding, grade 2 = good, grade 3 = satisfactory and grade 4 = inadequate</b>	<b>Judgement</b>
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<b><u>OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL</u></b>	
<b>How effective the school is in providing Catholic Education</b>	<b>2</b>
How good outcomes are for pupils, taking particular account of variations between different groups	2
How effective the provision is in promoting Catholic education	2
How effective leaders and managers are in developing the Catholic life of the school	2
The school's capacity for sustained improvement	2

<b><u>PUPILS</u></b>	
<b>How good outcomes are for pupils, taking into account of variations between different groups</b>	<b>2</b>
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education	2
• <i>The quality of pupils' learning and their progress</i>	2
• <i>The quality of learning for pupils with particular learning needs and/or disabilities</i>	2
• <i>Pupils standards of attainment in Religious Education</i>	3
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life of the school	2
How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's collective worship	2

<b><u>PROVISION</u></b>	
<b>How effective the provision is for Catholic Education</b>	<b>2</b>
The quality of teaching and how purposeful learning is in Religious Education	2
The effectiveness of assessment and academic guidance in Religious Education	3
The extent to which the Religious Education curriculum meets pupils needs following Bishops Conference policy and Diocesan requirements	2
The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school	2

<b><u>LEADERS AND MANAGERS</u></b>	
<b>How effective leaders and managers are in developing the Catholic life of the school</b>	<b>2</b>
How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic life of the school and plan for improvement to outcomes for pupils.	2
How well leaders and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education and plan for improvement to outcomes for all pupils	3
The extent to which the governing body provides effective challenge and support for the Catholic dimension of the school so that areas for development are tackled decisively and statutory and canonical responsibilities are met	2
How well leaders and managers develop partnerships with parents / carers and other providers, organisations and services to promote Catholic learning and pupil well-being	2
How effectively leaders and managers promote community cohesion	2

## Parents' Questionnaire

209 Questionnaires issued.

69 Questionnaires returned

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
1	My child enjoys school	35	33	1		
2	I am happy with the values and attitudes that the school teaches	36	31	1		
3	I am made to feel welcome in school	33	33	2		1
4	The school seeks the views of parents/carers and takes account of their suggestions and concerns	26	34	6		2
5	The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught in Religious Education	30	28	7		4
6	The school enables my child/ren to achieve a good standard of work in Religious Education	30	32	1		5
7	The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress in Religious Education	25	30	7		6

NB Figures may not add up to 69 because a question may not have been answered.

## Questionnaire for Year 2 Pupils

	Dear Children, Please put a tick under the face that you think is your best answer to each question. Thank you	yes 	sometimes 	no 
1	I like being at this school.	22	7	
2	I learn new things in Here I am lessons.	29		
3	I enjoy learning about Jesus and how to live as His friend.	23	4	2
4	I have to work hard.	24	5	
5	My teacher helps me when I get stuck so I can make my work better.	25	4	
6	My teacher listens to me.	19	10	
7	When I am unhappy there is always an adult I can talk to.	26	3	
8	I get praise when I do my best.	26	3	
9	Other children are kind and behave well	13	15	1
10	I am happy on the playground.	26	2	1
11	I am allowed to help in class and around school.	25	4	
12	I enjoy the times we say our prayers, talk to God and sing songs about Jesus.	23	5	1

## Questionnaire for Y6 Pupils

		Yes	Mostly	Sometimes	No
1	<i>Do you like being at this school?</i>	10	7	2	
2	<i>Do you find out new things in Religious Education lessons?</i>	19			
3	<i>Are your Religious Education lessons interesting?</i>	12	7		
4	<i>Do you get help when you are stuck?</i>	16	1	2	
5	<i>Do you have to work hard?</i>	14	4	1	
6	<i>Do teachers show you how to make your work better?</i>	19			
7	<i>Do other children behave well?</i>		12	7	
8	<i>Are teachers fair to you?</i>	14	3	2	
9	<i>Do teachers listen to your ideas?</i>	14	4	1	
10	<i>Are you given responsibility?</i>	18	1		
11	<i>Do you enjoy your times of prayer together?</i>	10	7	1	1