

# **Diocese of Wrexham**

**in North Wales**



## **INSPECTION REPORT**

### **Our Lady's Catholic Primary School Bangor**

Acting Head Teacher: Ms. K O'Hanlon

Chair of Governors: Mr. Martin Cropper

**Date of Inspection: September 2011**

**Date of previous Inspection: November 2005**

**Inspectors: Mrs K Ranson**

**Mrs. S Williams**

Canonical Inspection under Canon 806 on behalf of the Bishop of Wrexham and inspection of Denominational Education under Section 50 of the Education Act 2005

## **BACKGROUND TO THE SECTION 50 INSPECTION.**

During each inspection, the inspectors follow the diocesan framework for inspection agreed by the Bishop of Wrexham and held by the Diocese of Wrexham. The inspection looks at the school as a Catholic school required to fulfill its statutory requirements under Section 50 of the School's Inspections Act, 2005 and the school's inspection requirements held under the authority of the Bishop of the Diocese, (Code of Canon Law, Book III: 806).

**During each inspection the inspectors will aim to focus on three main questions of the school, as a Catholic school.**

**Key Question 1: How good are the outcomes?**

**Key Question 2: How good is provision?**

**Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?**

Inspectors will provide an overall judgment on the school's current performance and on its prospects for improvement.

**The inspectors will use a four-point scale and judgment.**

**What the judgment means**

Excellent

Many strengths, including significant examples of sector-leading practice

Good

Many strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement

Adequate

Strengths outweigh areas for improvement

Unsatisfactory

Important areas for improvement outweigh strengths

## **Introduction**

The inspection of the school was carried out by two Diocesan Inspectors. They visited all religious education lessons and held meetings with the headteacher, the Vice Chair of governors, representatives of the Governing Body, the Parish Priest and members of staff. They observed the school's work and provision, including prayer and collective worship. They looked at a range of evidence, including key documentation such as the school's self evaluation, school development plan and pupils' work.

## **Context of the School**

Our Lady's is a small Catholic primary school situated in the parish of Our Lady and St. James in Bangor. The mission statement is "Growing and Learning together with Jesus as our light". The school draws pupils from a variety of social backgrounds. Of special note is the fact that 56% of the children are from countries abroad and have neither English nor Welsh as their first language. There are 122 pupils on roll, including nursery, with 62% of children who are baptised Catholic; 8% of children are eligible for free school meals and 12% of children are viewed by the school as having special learning needs. The school was inspected in 2005. The previous headteacher left to take up a new headship in August 2011 and the deputy head of the school is the newly appointed, acting headteacher.

## **Summary of the inspection findings.**

As a Catholic school, the school's current work is good and the prospects for improvement are good.

Our Lady's School is judged to be good because:

The Catholic ethos of the school is well established and the school community owns and understands its Mission Statement "Growing and Learning together with Jesus as our light". It is a happy and positive Catholic school with an emphasis on respect, on diversity, well being and being looked after. This shows in the behaviour and attitude of the pupils who enjoy their learning and behave well.

Provision for religious education is good and the standard of written work across the school generally, is good. Collective worship is planned and its development is given high priority.

Staff and pupils show a high regard for the Catholic life of the school. The governors are committed to the school's work as a Catholic school. They have established a Mission and Purpose committee. Governors visit the school and monitor religious education and they take part in some acts of collective worship.

Governors and school leaders have been involved in the self evaluation process and the school has in place a development plan that is purposeful and manageable. The school has good links with the parish and pupils are encouraged to have a sense of their diverse culture, the wider world and other people's beliefs and needs. The school raises money for good causes, particularly in support of CAFOD.

Since the last inspection, the school has made improvements. Collective Worship is now planned and the pupils are involved in delivering collective acts of worship. This also needs to be evaluated and monitored

The school's self-evaluation document has identified that the self evaluation process needs to be further developed. The school development plan is a purposeful and manageable document which sets a clear direction for future school improvement. However the school needs to include the need to establish rigorous systems to assess record and monitor success in religious education.

Given the determination by the school to secure the positions of school leadership, the school's prospects for improvement are good at this time.

## **Recommendations**

In order to make progress, the school needs to:

**R1** Set up rigorous systems for assessing, recording, monitoring and evaluating religious education to ensure continuity and progression.

**R2** Develop further and embed the self evaluation process

**R3** Develop further strategies to improve skills in religious education, target setting and tracking.

**R4** Ensure, by clear leadership, that all school documentation and policies are of high quality and readily accessible in the school.

## **What happens next?**

Our Lady's School will create an action plan which shows how it is going to address the recommendations. The Diocese of Wrexham will support and monitor the school's progress.

### **Key Question 1. How good outcomes are for individuals and groups of pupils**

Learning and progress are good.

Most groups of pupils make at least good progress relative to their starting points and capabilities. Pupils are keen to do well, are enthusiastic about their learning and work at a good pace. They are reflective and inquiring. Behaviour of the pupils is good. Standards reached in religious education at the end of the Foundation Phase and Key Stage 2 are good and demonstrate positive progression for all pupils, taking into account the high percentage of EAL pupils within the school and the transient nature of the school population.

The school has a very good relationship with the Catholic parish in Bangor. All the pupils worship together regularly through the school year, both in church and in school.

Collective Worship and school prayer have improved since the last inspection. It is now planned and recorded by the staff across the school. There was no evidence to show the pupil's involvement in the planning. Focal points and prayer display boards are evident in each classroom and central areas. The acts of collective worship observed, were good.

The pupils show interest in the religious life of others and care and respect for religious objects in the school. They are considerate towards others and show an understanding of other beliefs and cultures. The pupils sing joyfully, reflect in silence and join in community prayers. They are at ease when praying with their school community and appreciate what is taking place.

### **Key Question 2. The quality of the school's work in providing Catholic education**

Teaching is mainly good across the school. Teaching assistants are employed effectively to support the delivery of religious education.

Assessment systems are in place but the assessment, recording and monitoring of religious education needs to be more rigorous. Pupils have begun to evaluate their success in reaching their targets but its use is not consistent across the school. Although assessment is undertaken in line with diocesan requirements, there are currently no tracking systems in place for the monitoring and recording of pupil achievement in religious education. This is an area that needs more development.

The pupils' work generally is well presented, though teachers' marking does not consistently inform pupils about how to improve their work. As a result, not all pupils are clear about their next steps for improvement. A consistent system of marking work needs to be established across the school.

Strategies to develop thinking and other skills in religious education have been introduced and this needs to be further developed.

Prayer and worship are integral to the life of the school and are of good quality. Developing the prayer life of the school is given the highest priority. Provision in

Collective Worship is planned and shows experience. However the process of evaluation is not clear. The themes for prayer are relevant and consistent with the Catholic character of the school and responsive to the religious diversity of the pupils

### **Key Question 3. How effective leaders and managers are in developing the Catholic life of the school**

The governors are committed to the mission of the church. Staff and pupils value and regard highly the Catholic identity of the school. Governors have established a Mission & Purpose committee. With the headteacher, they monitor religious education through visits to the school, visits to lessons and by attending acts of collective worship. The school's development plan is purposeful and a manageable document which sets out the strategic development of the Catholic life of the school and curriculum religious education and outlines a clear direction for future school improvement. Governors and the headteacher were involved in the self evaluation process and governors receive regular reports on the progress of religious education from the curriculum leader. A sub - committee has been established to ensure school policies are up to date and reviewed annually. However, the school must also ensure that all school documentation is of high quality and accessible in the school.

### **Partnership and School Community**

Our Lady's is a welcoming and inclusive school and its strong Catholic ethos ensures that every pupil is valued and fully integrated into the school community. The school draws pupils from a variety of social backgrounds, 56% of the children have English as a second language. The school celebrates its multi-cultural diversity in assemblies and liturgy and is proud of its varied and diverse population. Gospel values are reflected in the school's happy and caring environment with the aim to help all children enjoy their learning and achieve their full potential. There are good links with the parish and parents who speak well of the school and warmly acknowledge the care and encouragement their children receive. Pupils enjoy coming to school, feel safe and know what to do if they are worried about anything. They like their teachers and know staff care about them.