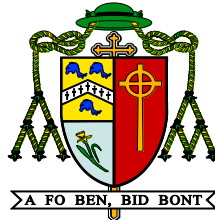


Diocese of Wrexham

in North Wales



INSPECTION REPORT

Saint Winefride's Catholic Primary School

Acting Head Teacher: Sian Jones - Evans

Chair of Governors: Angelo Feliciello

Date of Inspection: May 2011

Date of previous Inspection: February 2009

Inspectors: Kathryn Ranson and Shelagh 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

Introduction

This was a re- inspection of the school carried out by two Diocesan Inspectors. The inspectors visited all religious education lessons and held meetings with the acting headteacher, the chair of governors, the parish priest, the governor responsible for religious education, 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.

Information about the school

Saint Winefride's is a small Catholic primary school situated in the parish of Saint Winefride in Holywell. The mission statement is "Learning and Growing Together in the Love of Christ". The school draws pupils from a variety of social backgrounds. There are 146 pupils, including nursery, on roll, with 61% who are baptised Catholic; 20% of children are eligible for free school meals and 25% of children are viewed by the school as having learning difficulties. The school has undergone a period of change and considerable turbulence in leadership and staffing since 2009.

Overall effectiveness of the school as a Catholic school

The standards and provision for collective worship are adequate. The children are now more involved in planning for prayer, and preparing and leading the collective acts of worship, together with the class teacher

Provision for religious education and teaching and learning are just adequate. Standards of work vary across the school. Response to the recommendations of the last Section 50 inspection has been slow and limited mainly through staff absence. Assessment procedures in religious education have been introduced but they lack the rigour yet to impact on raising standards. The "I can statements" are being used and formal assessments have begun to be annotated. The marking of written work is not consistent in informing children what they can do and what they need to do to improve. There are still too few opportunities for children to extend their writing in religious education. Book scrutiny shows that there is a still a lack of challenge for the more able pupils.

The spiritual life of St Winefride's is very well supported by the parish priest and the parish catechists who teach the very successful sacramental preparation programmes. The school makes an active contribution to the life of the parish.

The behaviour of the children seen across the school was good. This was supported by the use of positive behaviour management strategies across the school.

The school has improved recently in a few areas needing development but its overall improvement since its last inspection is fragile. The school's self-evaluation document must be reviewed as a matter of urgency to reflect a true picture of this Catholic school. It needs to be more evaluative and reflect the views of the staff, pupils and governors. Priorities for the improvement of religious education and the Catholic life of the school need to arise from an accurate self-evaluation and the school development plan must have a clear understanding of what is needed and a commitment to improvement.

The school's capacity for sustained improvement is unsatisfactory. It is limited by the inconsistencies in staffing, particularly in having sufficient Catholic staff, and the lack of clarity with regard to priorities and strategies for addressing them effectively. The school

lacks sufficient capacity to move forward at this time. The school's own judgements about the quality of teaching and learning and standards of children's work are not in agreement with those of the inspection

What the school should do to improve further

Implement the recommendations from the last inspection which were:

- To review the Catholic Self Evaluation document as a matter of urgency so that it reflects a true picture of the school and its priorities.
- The senior management team needs to demonstrate a strategic team effort and a good working partnership to move the school forward
- To set up rigorous systems for classroom observation in religious education
- The Governing Body should take a more proactive role in the raising of standards of teaching and learning in curriculum religious education

In addition the school should

- Appoint a curriculum leader for religious education to support the implementation of these strategies and to raise standards. .
- Ensure that strategic forward planning for the Catholic life of the school has clear outcomes, success criteria and timescales and is supported by rigorous monitoring and evaluation involving governors in the process.
- Strengthen monitoring and evaluation procedures so that they are rigorous and incisive in addressing weak performance and so that the outcomes provide governors with accurate information about standards across the school.

How good outcomes are for individuals and groups of pupils

Learning and progress are adequate. The standard of work in religious education books is adequate overall but it lacks variety and challenge, especially for the more able children. The use of levels of attainment needs to improve and systems for more accurate moderating of assessment must be established. Evidence from lesson observations during the inspection shows that the children enjoy religious education and can work diligently and effectively when the tasks are appropriate for their abilities and when clear explanations have been given.

Generally teaching across the school lacks sufficient pace. Where, occasionally, the teaching was good the pupils responded well. They were enthusiastic and understood what was required of them. Where the teaching was adequate and satisfactory, the learning was slow in pace and repetitive. Lesson planning has improved and this shows more detail about differentiation and opportunities for informal assessment. However, care must be taken when planning for mixed age groups to ensure every child makes progress.

Pupils know about religious practice in their parish. They cooperate well with each other when the school raises funds or organises activities to address the needs of others. The children respond to others outside of school that are less fortunate than themselves.

The quality of the school's work in providing Catholic education

The teaching of religious education is not of consistent quality across the school and this is reflected in the standards and progress. The required programme of monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning, lesson observations, book reviews and pupil interviews, has been severely disrupted by staff absence. This has had an impact on the standards of attainment and achievement in religious education. The judgements made by the school in respect of the quality of teaching and learning in religious education and of the standards the children achieve are not accurate. Although some good teaching was observed during the inspection, evidence from the children's books suggests that this is not consistent. This is leading to underachievement.

Currently there is no tracking system in place for the monitoring of pupil achievement in religious education. Formal assessment takes place three times a year. Evidence of informal assessment is limited across the school. Early Learning Goals are not in use. While work has been done to improve assessment and the use of attainment levels in religious education, this remains a priority. The moderation of pupils' work needs more development so that assessment is consistent across the school. Rigorous systems for assessing recording monitoring and evaluating religious education are needed to ensure high standards continuity and progression.

The school has been without a subject leader for some time and the lack of leadership, monitoring and tracking has prohibited an accurate overview of progress in this subject. Standards in religious education must be raised and good practice shared across the school. The school must urgently address the weaknesses in religious education by ensuring that the work is properly coordinated and monitored; that standards are raised across the school and that assessment is moderated carefully and monitored.

Prayer and Collective Worship have improved recently and since the last inspection. It is now planned, recorded and evaluated by the staff across the school. Focal points and display boards are now also evident in each classroom. The standard set for classroom Collective Acts of Worship was adequate. The full school collective worship was also satisfactory however children need to be more involved. Children should be introduced to various methods of prayer.

How effective leaders and managers are in developing the Catholic life of the school

Leadership and management of the Catholic life of the school are inadequate. While the Inspectors recognise the difficult circumstances at the school and that there is some improvement, real concerns remain. The leadership of the school, including the governors, are working hard to improve the situation but the school currently lacks sufficient Catholic staff and experience and the depth of knowledge to raise standards at this moment in time.

A Mission & Purpose committee has recently been established to look at the Catholic life of the school. A Quality Assurance committee has recently been established to ensure policies are up to date and reviewed. The school has a good relationship with the parish and money is raised for CAFOD & other agencies.

Governors do not currently monitor the standards in religious education and there is little input in the self evaluation document. Governors have not seen the school's action plan. There is no formal process in place to report to governors on the progress of religious education and the lack of a tracking system means that religious education is not given the same priority as other core subjects. No money has been spent recently on resources for religious education.

Governors recognise that to date, religious education and the school's Catholic life has not been given the priority that is warranted within a Catholic School. They have given an assurance that these shortcomings will be addressed and are committed to raising standards within the school.

The following judgements apply to the school.

DESCRIPTION OF JUDGEMENTS

The following descriptions are intended as guidance to help inspectors to make judgments by considering the relative balance and significance of strengths and areas for improvement. A best-fit judgement is then made.

Excellent

Many strengths, including significant examples of sector leading practice or practise that is both consistent and highly effective.

Good

Many strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement

Adequate

Strengths outweigh areas for improvement

Unsatisfactory

Important areas for improvement outweigh strengths

