

Diocese of Wrexham

in North Wales



INSPECTION REPORT

St Anthony's Catholic Primary School Saltney

Head Teacher: Mr John Morgan

Chair of Governors: Mrs Susan Franklin

Date of Inspection: 20th November 2019

Date of previous Inspection: March 2013

Inspectors: Mrs Carol Morgan

Mrs Julie Johnson

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

Outstanding

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 Inspectors from the Diocese of Shrewsbury. They visited six religious education lessons and held meetings with the head teacher who is also the Religious Education Coordinator, the chair of governors, the parish priest, staff members, and pupils. 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

St Anthony's is a voluntary aided Catholic Primary School in the Diocese of Wrexham. The local authority is Flintshire. The school is situated in Saltney on the Welsh/English border about three miles from Chester city centre.

The Mission statement is: "Learning and Growing Together with Jesus"

"Dysgy a Tyfu Gyda'r Jesu"

There are 116 children in the school, (as at September 2019) including 10 part time Nursery pupils. 38% of pupils are baptised Catholics. 19% of pupils are eligible for free school meals. 11% of pupils have English as an additional language. 22% of children are from ethnic backgrounds other than White British, 13% higher than the Local Authority average. 38% of pupils have been identified as having additional learning needs.

The Head Teacher was appointed in April 2016 after being Acting Head since September 2013 and the school has a Senior Lead Teacher. Of the six members of the teaching staff, four are Catholic and four have the Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies (C.C.R.S.).

Summary of Inspection Findings

This is a good Catholic school.

The school is good overall in providing and promoting Catholic Education. The school's Mission Statement "*Learning and Growing Together with Jesus*", is an integral part of school life and informs everything that is done.

The behaviour and attitude of the pupils are good, and pupils engage well in their learning. They say that they enjoy their lessons in Religious Education.

Some members of the staff are also members of the parish and the school makes great efforts to ensure links with the parish are promoted and that it includes the wider community in its activities. The school works hard to raise funds for local, national and international charities throughout the year.

Since the last inspection the school has continued to implement Diocesan recommendations.

Self-evaluation systems are in place and are accurate. Provision for Religious Education and Collective Worship is good. Assessment procedures are consistent, and in line with Diocesan policy.

The leadership of the school demonstrates high levels of commitment and dedication, and the capacity for sustained improvement is good. The Headteacher's vision for the school is shared by staff, governors and the Parish Priest. As Headteacher and as the Religious Education coordinator, he is committed to ensuring that standards in Catholic Life, Religious Education and Collective Worship continue to rise.

Recommendations

R1 Continue to develop pupils' independence and expertise in all areas through well-planned creative activities

R2 Develop the use of coaching and mentoring across all areas of Religious Education so that staff are supported in delivering high quality teaching

R3 Develop the monitoring and evaluation role of governors through recording and reporting their participation in learning walks/lesson observations and work scrutiny

What happens next?

St Anthony's Catholic Primary 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.

KQ1 How good outcomes are for individuals and groups of pupils

During discussions, in lesson observations and in responses to questionnaires, pupils demonstrated that they are proud of their school. They enjoy the interesting activities they are offered and understand the ways in which they can live out their faith through their daily lives. They are articulate about sharing with and helping those in need in the local community and beyond. They do this by supporting the local Foodbank and raising knowledge of global events and issues through support for CAFOD and Mission Together.

Pupils enjoy their Religious Education (R.E) lessons and enjoy learning about Jesus. They feel that R.E, '...makes you think about the way we live our lives'. They were knowledgeable about prayer and were able to discuss different symbols, their school badge and the school's Mission Statement. One pupil said, 'We try to stay on God's path by following Jesus'.

Pupils' books are well-presented, and all work is marked or annotated. Pupils were able to discuss their targets and how teachers inform them about how well they are doing, through teacher comments and through peer (purple pen) marking.

Pupils make good progress in R.E lessons from their mainly low starting points. At the end of each Key Stage, the standards pupils achieve are usually good. Pupil progress is tracked using 'driver' words and pupils respond positively to adult, peer and self-review of their work.

Pupils happily plan and lead Collective Worship and Year 6 report that they are, '... able to do this on our own'. They enjoy the times they come together for Collective Worship, as a class or as a whole school. Pupils were observed to be engaged and attentive and to pray with reverence during Collective Worship. They joined in joyful singing and were able to join in traditional prayers with confidence. From Nursery onwards the use of the Welsh language for prayers such as the Sign of the Cross and for songs encourages pupils to develop their language skills and to feel confident in speaking in front of their peers.

Pupils were eager to explain that they have lots of opportunities to do things with other schools, especially the Secondary School. They have a wide range of interests including an Eco Council and they feel it is important to look after our environment and to consider the ways in which human beings can limit pollution.

Pupils enjoy coming to school and they report that, 'Everyone gets included', that this is, '...the best thing about the school'. If anyone misbehaves, 'Teachers deal with it very well,' but they felt that 'No one is really badly behaved'. They feel very safe in school and there is a buddy system in place. The behaviour in almost all lessons observed was good and this enables lessons to proceed at a good pace.

Taking all the above aspects into account the school is judged to be good for the outcomes achieved by individuals and groups of learners.

KQ2 The quality of the school's work in providing Catholic education

The quality of teaching seen across the school was good overall with some very good practice. The best lessons seen were those where explicit links were made between what was being taught and pupils' experience of Church, liturgy and how we live out our faith. Pupils engage well and enjoy their RE lessons, especially those where they experience creative activities. Teachers generally plan for a range of practical and imaginative activities that enable pupils to learn new skills and to embed their learning. Questioning by teachers and other adults was often open, which enabled most lessons to move at a good pace and supported the pupils in their learning. In order to develop quality first teaching, peer coaching should be used to support teachers' planning and delivery so that they gain confidence in teaching Religious Education. Pupils' behaviour across the school is good.

Teachers and support staff support pupils with additional learning needs in a calm and encouraging manner and learning for all pupils is supported well. Relationships between adults and pupils are extremely positive. Some differentiated activities are planned to ensure the needs of all pupils are met but this varies across the school.

Pupils concentrate well and generally complete the tasks set in lessons in a timely manner. A range of ways to record and enhance learning are used, including ICT. Pupils work well together, both in pairs or small or large groups.

There is a consistent tracking system in place to record formal assessments and any informal assessments. 'I can' statements and 'driver' words are used to support teaching and learning. The school has been working with attainment levels but is beginning to look at age-related expectations. The Headteacher and staff work well with other Catholic schools in their cluster and in the Diocese and the schools regularly moderate work together.

Marking in pupils' books is generally good and provides feedback, which enables pupils to move on in their learning and to make connections with previous work and with how our faith informs our daily lives.

Teachers have good subject knowledge and the good lessons observed provided many links to previous topics and to the Catholic Life of the school.

The school uses the 'Come and See' Religious Education programme, in line with Diocesan recommendations, which meets the requirements of the Religious Education Curriculum Directory. The school ensures that 10% curriculum time is dedicated to Religious Education, thereby fulfilling the requirements of the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales.

The Religious Education curriculum provides a wide range of opportunities for spiritual, moral and cultural development of its pupils and staff. More recently, the school has developed a new policy for Relationships and Sex Education, 'Journey in Love' and this has explicit links to the topics covered in 'Come and See'.

The school works very hard to meet the needs of its most vulnerable pupils. Pastoral support is a real strength of the school. The school is fully committed to inclusion and provides a nurturing environment for all pupils and families.

Collective Worship takes place regularly, either as a whole school or in class bases. Pupils regularly plan and lead Collective Worship independently, at an age appropriate level.

The school endeavours to include parents and cares in all aspects of school life.

Taking all the above aspects into account, the school is judged to be good for the provision achieved by individuals and groups of learners.

KQ3 How effective leaders and managers are in developing the Catholic life of the school

Leaders, governors and managers demonstrate a deep commitment to the Church's mission in Education. The school's Mission Statement, "Learning and Growing Together with Jesus" is felt by all involved to permeate every aspect of school life and was reviewed by the Mission and Purpose committee two years ago. They intend to consult all stakeholders when next reviewing the Mission Statement so that it is understood by everyone.

The Headteacher is extremely proud of the school and is committed to the continued development of the Catholic Life and character of the school, including developing links with the parish. The Headteacher is supported by a Senior Leader and staff are committed to their pupils and the families they serve.

Since his appointment, the Headteacher has worked hard on all areas of Religious Education in the school. He is proud of the way in which Collective Worship has become more pupil-led, and of the work that is done with other cluster schools such as moderation. This has been important as there has been a gap in support from the diocese over the last twelve months or so.

The strengths and areas for development for the school have been identified accurately in its own School Evaluation and the school is well placed to continue to improve. Priority is given to Religious Education in the School Development Plan and there is a comprehensive Religious Education Action Plan in place.

The long-serving Chair of Governors is deeply committed to the school and, with members of the school's governing body, supports and challenges the Headteacher and acts as a 'critical friend'. The governors are kept well informed by the Headteacher on all aspects of Religious Education

through reports and attendance at Mission and Purpose committee meetings. As an area for development, Link Governors could take part in some monitoring and evaluation activities, for example, a Learning Walk, and report back to the Governing Body any implications or outcomes that need to be considered. This model could also be used to monitor other areas, such as Collective Worship. Governors provide the Headteacher with Performance Management targets related to the Catholic Life of the School, which ensures that the highest priority is given to the school's core purpose.

The pastoral care and support are excellent and are a strength of the school. Pupils appreciate the love and care shown to them and say that they feel safe and cared for.

Staff and pupils understand and celebrate the Catholic life of the school. Staff say they support each other and that they are well supported by the leadership team. The school '...feels like a family,' where staff work together and are flexible when needed. There is a good relationship with the parish. They are committed to the way in which the school nurtures all its pupils and to helping the pupils feel supported during their time in the school. Staff feel that pupils accept each other and want to be friends with those who do not always find school life easy.

Almost all parents speak highly of the school and the positive comments on the returned parental questionnaires show that parents appreciate the care and encouragement their children receive. The school continues to invite parents, families and members of the parish to school events and Masses in church.

The parish priest is a frequent visitor to the school and is extremely supportive of the work the school does within the community. He is positive about the progress the school is making in developing various aspects of its Catholic Life. He feels that the school makes a good contribution to the spiritual life of its pupils and that teachers work hard to develop the pupils' knowledge of the Catholic faith.

Pupils attend weekly Mass on a rota basis and are learning more about the liturgy and being part of a worshipping community. The First Holy Communion programme takes place in school and is supported by the school and parish catechists.

Classroom displays generally reflect the current topic in 'Come and See' and displays around the school promote the Gospel values. Further work on linking displays to the church's liturgical year would ensure that staff and pupils develop and enhance their understanding.

The school has excellent links with outside agencies which support its work with children and families.

Taking all the above into account the school is judged to be good in relation to the Leadership and Management of the school. The definition of which is as a school, St Anthony's has '*Many strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement*'.