



INSPECTION REPORT

CHRIST THE KING PRIMARY SCHOOL

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D/ES Number: 8033436

Headteacher: Mrs C Lawler

Chair of Governors: Mrs N McCarthy

Canonical Inspection under Canon 806 on behalf of the Diocese of Clifton
and inspection of Denominational Education under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005

Date of inspection: 16th and 17th October 2006
Date of previous inspection: 9th and 10th November 1999

Reporting Inspector: Mr S. Lake

Description of School

Christ the King is a small school serving the Parish of Thornbury. Around half of the pupils are baptised Catholics. The school has a number of Traveller children and a higher number of children than usual enter or leave the school during their school career. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is above average. Attainment on entry is below average. Four of the six teachers are relatively new to the school.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1: Outstanding; Grade 2: Good; Grade 3: Satisfactory; Grade 4: Unsatisfactory

Overall effectiveness of this Catholic school

This is a good school. A pupil summed it up saying that 'school is really good because we're all treated the same and seen as unique with very good qualities'. The determination to develop the unique potential of each individual is at the heart of this school. The headteacher and governors work together as an effective team to provide good leadership and management resulting in a school where gospel values are lived out and pupils achieve well in religious education. Pupils' spiritual and moral development is outstanding. Pupils show a good understanding of others and a willingness to respect their views. They are tolerant and forgiving of each other. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory with some good elements. This term all teachers have moved to different year groups; as a result of these moves many teachers are having to develop their familiarity with the RE syllabus for their new groups. However behaviour management and good questioning techniques are underlying strengths of the staff; since these skills are transferable to any age group the good achievement in RE is being maintained despite the moves. The school has recognised the need to develop both the subject knowledge of staff and the way in which assessment data is used to enhance pupil's progress through target setting. There are robust procedures in place which enable these issues to be addressed. The school is committed to improvement in standards. The quality of the collective worship is good. The regular opportunities for prayer and worship are well organised and matched carefully to the different backgrounds of the pupils.

Grade 2

Improvement since the last inspection

Improvement since the last inspection is good. All key issues of the last inspection have been addressed. The new staff have settled in well. Standards are rising and the school is continually seeking ways to improve all aspects.

Grade 2

The capacity of the school community to improve and develop

The leadership of the school has effective ways of finding out what is and isn't working. The information gained is used well to plan improvements. The senior staff and governors share a clear sense of purpose. They know the strengths and weaknesses of the school well. The school improvement plan accurately identifies what needs to be done to improve further. The capacity of the school community to bring about this improvement is good.

Grade 2

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve teachers knowledge of the religious education curriculum

- Develop further the use of assessment to set targets for pupils in religious education
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The Catholic Life of the School

Leadership and Management

The leadership and management of the school are good and responsible for the way in which the school has improved despite the fact that many of the teachers have only joined the school in the last few years. Senior staff and governors have a very good understanding of the mission of a Catholic School and the way in which this links with the mission of the Church. The leadership has also taken on board the issues raised by the 'Every Child Matters' agenda. They communicate this very well and motivate all staff to strive and achieve the highest possible standards. Parents recognise this when they state that they choose the school because of its very good Catholic ethos. An outstanding feature of the school is its commitment to make sure that all learners have equal access to the RE curriculum whatever their background and links with the parish are very good. The school is a vibrant and improving community enjoyed by adults and children alike.

Grade 2

The Prayer Life of the School

The school has a rich and varied prayer life. Many different opportunities are taken to provide different types of worship ranging from Rosary groups to whole school liturgies. The Parish Priest visits the school regularly to celebrate Mass and a key feature of this is the way in which those who are not baptised Catholics are encouraged to share and develop their understanding. The prayer life of the school is linked to the liturgical calendar and every week the parish Priest sets a question for the school based on the Sunday gospels. In this way the links between Parish and school are abundantly clear to all parents. The discussions arising from these questions foster the spiritual and moral development of students.

Pupils are enthusiastic about the liturgies that they take part in and say that they really enjoy them. They talk freely about the types of liturgy and their own involvement in class and school assemblies. Pupils particularly like the Thursday assembly when a local church group come in to lead the worship. Pupils commented that they enjoyed the singing on Thursdays. This is particularly relevant because, although the school makes good use of recorded music currently they have no musician and this limits opportunities for using music in worship. The senior staff are looking into ways to resolve this problem as they recognise the importance of music within worship.

Grade 2

Religious Education

Achievement and Standards in Religious Education

Attainment in religious education varies from year to year, not only because of the small cohort but also because of the movement of children in and out of the school during the year. Children start school with below average skills in communication language and literacy and this affects their attainment in religious education which is also below average as children are not able to discuss religious issues as well as other children of the same age. They achieve well in the

Foundation Stage but standards remain below average on entry to Year 1. A great many of the children have little experience of church or religious life before they start school.

Standards attained by the end of Year 6 are broadly average but within this there are two distinct groups – those who are attaining well and those, often recent additions to the school, who are not attaining very well. Those pupils who have been in the school for the whole of their school career are generally achieving better than those who move into the school during their school career. However, taking all factors into consideration achievement at the end of Year 6 is good and matches the achievement of the pupils in English. Pupils with special educational needs achieve as well as other pupils.

Grade 2

Teaching and learning in Religious Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall, with some very good elements and some areas for improvement. The achievement of the pupils in Year 6 indicates that teaching over the last few years has been good. This is apparent in the good behaviour management skills shown by teachers and the very good questioning used to engage pupils in the lessons. A close partnership between teachers and teaching assistants enables good quality support to be offered. Marking in religious education is thorough and often includes helpful comments. Regular assessments to support learning are carried out through brainstorming what pupils know before and after a specific topic although the use of this information to target pupils' learning needs more accurately is a key priority in the school's improvement plan.

This year all teachers have moved to a different year group and many are having to develop their subject knowledge in a new area of the religious education curriculum. Although good systems are in place to provide the necessary support and development, it is too early in the year to see the full impact of these. If the standards and achievement noted above are to be maintained or improved, teachers need to continue to develop their knowledge of the aspects of 'Here I Am' relevant to the year group that they are now teaching

Grade 3

Quality of the Curriculum

A strength of this school is the good quality religious education curriculum and the efforts made by the school to integrate religious education into other curriculum areas. Spiritual and moral developments are well integrated into the curriculum and many opportunities are taken to develop these aspects of pupils' education contributing to the outstanding standards noted in this area. The school is working hard to make religious education the centre of all that is taught. Information and communication technology and literacy are particularly effectively linked to religious education and the school has a priority on its improvement plan to extend these links as far across the curriculum as possible. Pupils have good quality opportunities to learn about other cultures through visitors to the school and this enhances their spiritual and moral development as they consider how people with fewer advantages than themselves live and worship. Other subjects of the curriculum contribute well to pupils' spiritual and moral development for example when pupils looked at the holocaust in history they discussed the moral implications in some depth.

Grade 2

Leadership and management of Religious Education

The leadership and management of religious education are good with some outstanding elements. The headteacher is the subject coordinator but the way in which the school is organised into learning teams with link governors means that all take a share in ensuring that religious education is given a very high priority. Teaching and learning is monitored regularly. Good quality support and training is provided for those teachers who are new to the school or who are not Catholic to ensure that all feel able to deliver the religious education curriculum. Governors are particularly closely involved in this. Regular and thorough reviews are conducted to identify ways in which pupils' achievement can be improved and teachers are supported in setting targets for pupils to bring this about. Priorities in religious education are clearly identified and appropriate resources allocated to them.

Grade 2