



INSPECTION REPORT

ST LOUIS CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Welshmill Lane, Frome, Somerset, BA11 3API

Telephone: 01373 463728

e-mail address: office@stl-
officest-louisrc.somerset.sch.uk

D/ES Number: 933 3371

Headteacher: Mr R. Triggs
Chair of Governors: Anthony Dixon

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: 3rd-4th March 2010
Date of previous inspection: 8th – 9th January 2007

Reporting Inspector: Mrs P. Antolik

Description of School

St Louis is slightly smaller than an average primary school which serves the parish of St Catharine's, in the market town of Frome. It serves a wide catchment area within the town and outlying villages.

The attainment of pupils on entry to the school is close to national average. The proportion of pupils who are entitled to free school meals is well below average. Most pupils are of White British origin, with the next largest groups being White from other backgrounds and pupils of mixed White and Asian heritage. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average, mainly with literacy and numeracy needs. There are very few pupils who speak English as an additional language.

The school has fairly recently completed an extensive 3 year building programme, which caused a great deal of upheaval for the whole school. It is now a bright airy lively and attractive working environment.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of this Catholic school

Grade 2

St Louis is a good school. It is a caring and inclusive school, where all are valued. The headteacher, governors and chaplaincy are effective in creating a good sense of belonging and purpose for the school in relation to its Catholic mission. There is a shared vision for the school, which is strongly embedded in the Mission statement. The ethos of the school shows a strong support in pastoral care within a culture of continuous improvement.

The school has been re-modelled and this led to much daily disruption and inconvenience over the past 3 years and since the last inspection. The headteacher and governors have worked with staff to maintain stability and a positive day to day attitude,

Pupils are happy and proud to belong to their Catholic community with its close parish links. Prayer and reflection are integral to the life of the school. The parents and pupils identified the consistent high quality of care for individuals as a major feature of the school community.

Pupils enjoy their learning and make good progress on the whole. Current data provides a positive picture of where pupils are now and where they are to be next. Pupils behave well in and around the school and have a good understanding of their Mission statement. They show care and respect for each other, for example the older pupils support and help younger ones in the playground.

The capacity of the school community to improve and develop

Grade 2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement is good. Governors, senior team members of staff and the headteacher have a sense of commitment and pride to promote the Catholic life of the school.

What the school should do to improve further

- Continue to embed the Assessment procedures to accelerate teaching and learning.
 - Develop more shared responsibilities and formal processes for monitoring the Catholic life and curriculum of the school.
 - Develop INSET opportunities for teachers without the CCRS, and creative INSET for the implementation of RE.
 - Upgrade RE resources to support current Programmes of Study.
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How good are outcomes for pupils, taking account of variations between different groups?

Grade 1

Pupils are proud to belong to this good Catholic community and are enthusiastic participants in the ethos and mission it provides. Behaviour across the school is excellent, with pupils treating each other and adults with great respect, having a clear understanding of right and wrong. The viewpoints of those from other faith traditions is respected and valued, and children hold a strong sense of responsibility for those less fortunate than themselves and have a sense of justice. They are keen to participate in school, parish, national and global charity events. They play an active role in liturgical celebrations both in and out of school. These include whole school and parish Masses, liturgies, assemblies and daily prayers. These celebrations are effective in encouraging pupils to participate in a variety of ways, including music, dance and drama. All liturgical celebrations are fully inclusive of age, culture and religion. Daily prayers offer opportunities for spontaneous reflection as well as reflecting the traditions of the Church. Children on entry to St Louis become a member of a school family, which consists of children from every class, led by a teacher who remains in that family group until they leave. Worship, art and forms of Catholic creative expression are celebrated together either within their family groups, as a whole school community or within their class.

The school uses the relationship programme approved by the Diocese but further work needs to be done on its implementation in school.

RE is clearly embedded into the whole school culture and central to its Catholic mission. The school's Catholic ethos is effective in enhancing, developing and supporting pupil's journey of faith. This ethos is articulated through the many varied activities pupils enjoy in RE. The school is able to show value added in the pupils' learning and the pupils demonstrate a good knowledge and understanding of their faith. Children with Special Educational Needs are well supported. An example of this is seen in the Acorn group. Here they have outstanding support in all areas of the curriculum, and the RE work and displays in this class enrich and celebrate the Catholic faith and ethos of these children.

The Year 5 pupils attend a retreat at Ammerdown every year. This retreat is talked about in Key stage 2 by all the pupils who look forward to it immensely.

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

Grade 2

Leaders and managers demonstrate commitment to the mission of the Church by providing a good broad and balanced curriculum, with spiritual and moral development a priority. They fulfil all the requirements of the Bishops' Conference regarding Catholic Schools. The school received good support from its parish priest before he was taken ill. He still visits the school but is not fully recovered; therefore the school is now supported by two other diocesan priests and a deacon. Leaders and managers conduct a range of monitoring activities relating to provisions and outcomes. The school is able to analyse the outcomes to provide an accurate diagnosis of its strengths and areas for future development. Planning is good, and the areas for development are being addressed as new members of staff and the governing body all begin to work together.

The governors discharge their statutory and canonical duties. They attend regular training from the diocese and their local authority. They are firmly committed to the Catholic life of the school and are aware of their responsibilities for the Catholic life of the school, particularly the prayer life of the school. The new Chair of Governors who has a good relationship with senior leaders and is in touch with the head on a weekly basis also attends liturgical celebrations. The governors understand their responsibilities for standards, and these issues are addressed in the current school development plan.

Leaders respect difference, value diversity and ensure equal opportunities for all. Pupils are equipped with skills, which enable them to take a fully active part in their parish and neighbourhood. The school has a regular newsletter but needs to re-establish the RE newsletter. Other faiths are taught in accordance with the 'Here I Am' programme of study.

How effective is the provision for Catholic Education?

Grade 2

Prayer is central to the life of the school and a key part of every gathering and celebration. There are areas for reflection and RE displays throughout the school. There is a quiet area in the school grounds with seating for reflections and quiet times for the children during playtimes. The planning for liturgical celebrations takes account of the Church's year. Parish and parents are invited to attend. Pupils receive sacramental preparation through the parish and this is supported by the school and is a very successful joint venture. The Catholic ethos is evident from the moment you enter the school. Wonderful displays show many art and RE themes. These are produced within their "Family" groups, and exhibitions are set up during the school year to share with the parents and wider community. Music enriches the prayer life of the school. The staff and pupils celebrate together. The children use art, drama and dance to enhance their liturgical celebrations.

Cross curricular approaches with RE permeate through the curriculum enhancing their understanding and knowledge of faith. A good example of a cross curricular link was demonstrated through history and RE joining together to look at the Roman customs for meal times alongside the last supper. Although displays are on the whole good, there is a need to enhance individual class reflection areas.

The quality of teaching in the lessons observed was good. The school is currently working to ensure consistency in all teaching and therefore the outcomes for pupils. A scrutiny of books showed satisfactory progression with some examples of good progression. A more consistent standard of expectation is needed. Assessment and academic guidance in religious education has been prioritised as a key area for development.