

Archdiocese of Cardiff

Inspection Report

Christ the King Catholic Primary School

Inspection dates	6 - 8 October 2008
Reporting Inspectors	Mrs. M. E. White Mrs. S. Robb
Type of school	Primary
Age range of pupils	4 - 11
Number on roll	208
Appropriate Authority	Cardiff County Council
Chair of Governors	Mrs. V. Camilleri
School Address	Everest Avenue Llanishen Cardiff CF14 5AS
Tel. no.	029 20754787
Fax no.	029 20689883
E-mail address	Bhancock@cardiff.gov.uk
Parishes served	Christ the King St. Brigid & St. Paul St. Teilo
Date of previous inspection	2002
Head teacher	Mrs. B. Hancock

Canonical Inspection under Canon 806 on behalf of the Archdiocese of Cardiff and Inspection of denominational education under Section 50 Of the Education Act 2005

Description of the School

Christ the King Primary School is situated within the parish of Christ the King, North Cardiff. It also serves the parishes of St. Brigid and St. Paul and St. Teilo. The school functions under the trusteeship of the Archdiocese of Cardiff and is maintained by Cardiff County Council.

The school's wide catchment area includes Llanishen, Lisvane, Cyncoed, The Heath, Thornhill, Rhiwbina and Whitchurch to the north and Pontprennau to the east, of Cardiff. Housing ranges from established residential areas to new housing and social housing.

The socio-economic background of the area is neither very affluent nor disadvantaged. A minority of pupils come from homes which are considered to be economically disadvantaged. 3.8% of the pupils are registered as entitled to free school meals.

Christ the King caters for pupils between the ages of four and eleven. There are two hundred and six Catholic pupils on roll and two pupils are fellow Christians.

Baseline assessment indicates that pupils' ability on entry is above the Local Education Authority's average. As of September 2008, 14.9% of pupils are identified as having special educational needs. The majority of pupils are of white ethnic background. English is the first language of most pupils in the school. Just over 5% of the pupils speak English as an additional language, with five identified languages. One child receives support teaching for English as an additional language.

The school was last inspected in 2002. Staffing changes include four retirements, the appointments of a religious education coordinator in 2003, the deputy head teacher in 2005, four additional learning support assistants and an increase in clerical assistance.

Of the eight full time teachers and five part time teachers, twelve are Catholic. Five teachers hold the *Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies* and five are studying for it. Three of the five learning support assistants are Catholic.

The school site includes spacious grounds with a large area for sport, athletics and recreational activities. The environmental studies area and large secluded pond is teeming with wildlife. Both key stage, separate, playgrounds have a fitness track and age appropriate play equipment. Outdoor provision for the foundation phase is in the process of development.

Christ the King's achievements include: *Basic Skills Quality Mark, Investor In People, Eco School's Green Flag, Fair Trade School, Cardiff Gold Arts Mark, University of the First Age, LEA Assessment Quality Assurance Award and University of Exeter Thinking Schools Status.*

Inspection grades

An overall judgement for each question is made using the following grades:

Grade 1: good with outstanding features

Grade 2: good features and no important shortcomings

Grade 3: good features outweigh shortcomings

Grade 4: some good features, but shortcomings in important areas

Grade 5: many important shortcomings

Table of grades awarded

Key question	Inspection grade
How effective and efficient is the provision of Catholic education in meeting the needs of learners and why?	1
1. How effective are leadership and management in developing the Catholic life of the school/college?	1
2. How good is the provision for prayer, collective worship and the liturgical life of the school/college?	1
3. How well do learners achieve in religious education?	1
4. How effective are teaching and learning in religious education?	1
5. How well does the religious education curriculum meet the needs and interests of learners?	1
6. How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners in religious education?	1

The diocesan reporting inspectors wish to express sincere thanks to governors, head teacher, staff, pupils and parents, and to the registered inspector and inspection team, for the courtesy and co-operation received during the inspection.

Overall Effectiveness

How effective and efficient is the provision of Catholic education in meeting the needs of learners and why?

Christ the King is a very good Catholic school with many outstanding features such as its leadership and management, its quality of provision for worship and its effective teaching.

Christ the King's, vision "Learning to love, loving to learn", encompasses the mission and aims of the school. It creates a distinctively Catholic ethos made explicit in a lively and stimulating environment.

Leaders at all levels have a clear sense of purpose and provide direction for the Catholic life of the school.

The head teacher is committed to creating an innovative and vibrant learning community. Strongly supported by a team of proactive governors, she has established an effective workforce.

The religious education coordinator, who motivates and inspires staff and pupils, plays a key role in developing the Catholic life of the school.

The commitment of the teaching and support staff is a strength of the school. They cooperate to share and refine their practice, embrace change and strive for continuous improvement. Relationships throughout the school community are commendable.

The parish priest, who is also the link governor for religious education, is a regular and welcome visitor to the school. He plays a significant role in the spiritual life of the community. As a celebrant, he finds the school congregation to be attentive and responsive.

Governors understand the life of the school, its aims, standards and aspirations. They work well with parents for the common good of their pupils. The school maintains very good links with parents, its three parishes and the local community.

Prayer is central to the life of the school. Pupil's liturgical formation is well planned through a comprehensive programme of whole school Masses, class Masses, acts of worship and presentations, which are enhanced with creativity and flair. Taken together, they make a very good contribution to the spiritual and moral development of the pupils and impact on relationships and behaviour.

The quality of teaching and learning is good with outstanding features. Attainment for all pupils is at least good, often very good, with examples of outstanding work across all age groups. Pupils are gaining knowledge, understanding and skills at a good rate, and make consistent progress.

Due to well-embedded quality assurance processes, all aspects of religious education are kept under review. Detailed reports celebrate the school's strengths and identify areas for further development.

Internal day to day arrangements are well-established and ensure high quality pastoral care of pupils at all times.

Improvement since the last inspection

The key issues from the last inspection have been addressed in full.

Very positive changes have resulted in improvements to the learning environment.

The building has a new roof, outer doors and improved safety and security measures. Interior works include: improved fire security and equipment; refurbished toilets, classrooms, libraries and flooring; reallocation of space to

create a resources room and special educational needs room, an updated computer suite, installation of interactive whiteboards and a school website.

Recent work in the school grounds includes the removal of the chimney stack and providing a bin store, cycle rack and external storage. Facilities now include a fruit and vegetable garden, a pond area, upgraded playground amenities, foundation phase outdoor provision and disabled access.

Development planning has resulted in:-

- a review of the mission statement
- quality assurance processes that are embedded
- the appointment of a Teaching and Learning Responsibility postholder for collective worship
- a policy, and guidelines, for collective worship
- prayer foci
- creating a staff area for reflection
- revised planning, assessment, pupil tracking linked to revised *NBRIA Levels of Attainment*
- additional resources for religious education
- attendance at the *Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies* course
- a wider range of teaching and learning strategies
- effective use of information communication technologies
- Performance management targets linked to religious education
- more effective communication with parents and parishes.

Capacity to improve

Leaders at all levels have a shared vision and provide clear direction for the Catholic life of the school.

The head teacher is committed to creating an innovative and vibrant learning community. She expresses an aspirational view of the life she wants for the pupils of Christ the King school and inspires her staff to achieve it.

Teachers are committed to the school's aims and support senior management.

Well-established quality assurance processes result in detailed reports which celebrate strengths and provide an agenda for continued development.

Governors are keen, knowledgeable, well organised and fulfil all responsibilities. They target resources effectively to achieve challenging goals.

As a result of leaders' actions, very good improvements have been achieved.

Grade: 1

What the school should do to improve further

- ❖ Continue to develop planning, devising a wide range of challenging activities and teacher assessment strategies to meet the demands of the revised *NBRIA Levels of Attainment*.
- ❖ Address the areas for development outlined in the self-evaluation report and religious education action plan.

THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL/COLLEGE

Leadership and Management

1. How effective are leadership and management in developing the Catholic life of the school/college?

Good features

The leadership and management of the Catholic life of the school are good with outstanding features.

Leaders at all levels have a clear sense of purpose and provide direction for the Catholic life of the school.

The head teacher is committed to creating an innovative and vibrant learning community. There is a strong focus on promoting high standards and the fullest personal development of all pupils. Together with her school improvement leadership team, and strongly supported by dedicated staff and governors, the head teacher has established an effective workforce.

The religious education coordinator, who motivates and inspires staff and pupils, plays a key role in developing the Catholic life of the school.

Teaching and support staff cooperate to share and refine their practice. They embrace change and strive for continuous improvement. Morale is high.

The very good relationships that exist among all members of staff are an excellent example for pupils and help to create a positive learning environment.

Christ the King's vision, "Learning to love, loving to learn," encompasses the mission and aims of the school. It acts as a touchstone for all policies and practices and underpins the school's values aims and expectations. The mission statement, developed in consultation with the whole school community, including the parish council, is displayed prominently in all areas of the school. It is regularly referred to in acts of worship, in times of reflection and in classroom practice. It forms the basis of class rules.

The parish priest, who is also the religious education link governor, is a regular and welcome visitor to the school, playing a significant part in the spiritual life of the community. Communication is good. Substantial discussion with the head

teacher and religious education coordinator takes place before whole school celebrations. The parish priest commented that he is impressed with the creativity brought to Masses, the high degree of enthusiasm and the dedication to doing things well. As the celebrant, he finds the pupils to be particularly attentive and responsive.

Communication between the school and the three parishes is good. The head teacher serves on the parish council of Christ the King. Teachers actively support sacramental preparation and children's liturgy. The school visits the three parishes to celebrate Sunday Mass once a term. These occasions help to strengthen bonds with the parishes, which enjoy the school's characteristic creativity. The school and Christ the King parish are mutually supportive of social and fundraising events.

The proactive governing body provides very good support to the school through its sound knowledge of policy and practice. Governors understand the life of the school, its aims, standards and aspirations. They work well as a body, in sub-committees and as individuals. They are kept well-informed via head teacher reports, presentations by teachers, subject coordinator talks and participation in "learning walks". Governors know the school's strengths and priorities for development. They contribute to the strategic direction of the school, analyse data, monitor improvement planning, manage finances and are involved in self-evaluation processes. Local Education Authority and Diocesan training are accessed to keep abreast of local and national initiatives.

Individual governors contribute to the life of the school by attendance at acts of worship, school and class Masses, assemblies, prayer services for adults, school events and celebrations.

Governors work with parents for the common good of pupils, such as the concern about road safety issues, which resulted in the installation of traffic calming measures.

Christ the King creates a distinctively Catholic ethos made explicit in a lively, colourful and stimulating learning environment. Artefacts used in the foyer, staffroom, hall and on prayer tables, are selected thoughtfully. These signs, symbols and displays reflect *Here I Am* topics or the liturgical year. At the time of inspection, the foyer display included an attractive prayer table devoted to Our Lady and the rosary and a lectern displaying a relevant text and letters of welcome from year six pupils to their reception class buddies.

Relationships throughout the school community are commendable. Internal day to day arrangements are well-established and ensure high quality pastoral care of pupils at all times.

Leaders ensure that there is no stereotyping of activity and diversity is respected.

Teachers and support staff have high expectations of good behaviour of pupils who respond accordingly in class and at play.

Pupils are encouraged to develop independence, exercise responsibility and take an active part in the life of the school. The school council enjoys a high profile and is consulted on school matters. Councillors organised and participated in a 'behaviour learning walk', which impacted on how the school playground could be used and behaviour improved. The eco-committee was proactive in introducing and monitoring *Healthy Eating* initiatives at playtimes, and the provision of air fresheners and liquid soap in toilet areas.

Christ the King has established good links with up to sixteen pre-school settings, neighbouring primary schools, the cluster of Catholic schools and the receiving High School. Pupils participate in the life of the local community in activities such as netball and football tournaments, the Handicapped Children's Pilgrimage Trust fête and parish events. Visits and visitors enrich curriculum experiences.

Pupils are given opportunities to understand those less fortunate than themselves in their support of charities such as Mary's Meals, Christian Aid, CAFOD and disaster appeals.

Parents are kept well-informed via newsletters, curriculum overviews, meetings, presentations and a comprehensive website. They are invited to attend a range of acts of worship, award assemblies and social events. They are active in the life of the school and provide much needed funding to support developments, such as the computer suite. The planned social events help to build harmonious relationships.

Discussions at the pre-inspection meeting, and responses to the questionnaire, indicate that parents are proud of their school. They are very happy with the spiritual and moral development of pupils and the values and attitudes promoted. Parents believe that the religious life of the school is excellent.

Christ the King is a busy school that reflects a place of happiness, flexibility, perseverance, joy and fulfilment, whilst striving for success at all levels.

Shortcomings

There are no shortcomings in important areas.

Grade: 1

Collective Worship

2. How good is the provision for prayer, collective worship and the liturgical life of the school/college?

Good features

The provision for prayer, collective worship and the liturgical life of the school is good with outstanding features and all statutory requirements are met.

Worship in Christ the King is concerned with giving glory, honour, praise and thanks to God. It is a loving response, in word and action, to God's invitation to

enter into relationship, made possible through the work of Jesus Christ and the witness of the Holy Spirit. Worship is at the very heart of the school and reflects something special or separate from ordinary school activities.

Pupils' liturgical formation is well-planned through a comprehensive programme of whole school Masses, class Masses, acts of worship and prayer services, which are planned with creativity and flair.

The seasons of the Church's year, especially Christmas and Holy Week, are marked with special assemblies and dramatic presentations. For the past two years, Holy Week reflections have been broadcast by BBC Wales.

The informative worship policy provides teachers with useful guidelines and practical examples to support their practice. Class-based worship is supported by a helpful planner, which identifies the main elements of liturgy and includes evaluation. An outstanding example was seen in which pupils were studying the fruits of the Holy Spirit. Pupils gathered around the prayer focus – a large bowl of water surrounded by fruits and the names of "fruits" of the Holy Spirit. The teacher explained that as fruit needs water to grow so the fruits of the Spirit need to be nurtured to flourish. With "*Holy Spirit rain down*" gently playing in the background, the teacher invited pupils to dip a finger into the water, cradle the water in their hands and return to the circle to meditate on the gifts of the Holy Spirit in need of growth. Pupils were very responsive and sustained concentration throughout.

The 'Welcome Mass' marks the beginning of the school year, when the community gathers to welcome new pupils and their parents into the school family of Christ the King. The theme of the Mass attended was "Though we are many, we are one body". Pupils of all ages were involved in setting the theme, procession of the Word, proclaiming the Word, leading intercessions, and the offertory of the gifts of bread, wine and symbols of belonging to a Christian community. Pupils read confidently and with expression. Effective use was made of Information Communication Technology to help create moments of reflection with words and images. The video clips of year six pupils' role play of the washing of the feet at the Last Supper enhanced the gospel reading. The singing was joyful and exuberant, or quietly reflective, as appropriate. Younger pupils were withdrawn to celebrate separately at an age appropriate level. The Mass culminated with the procession of reception children accompanied by their year six 'buddies'. All leaders promoted and fostered a sense of belonging to the family of Christ the King and the global Christian family. It was an uplifting celebration, well-attended by parents and parishioners.

Class Masses are celebrated on a fortnightly basis at Christ the King parish church. Key stage two pupils plan the celebrations and undertake all ministries with confidence, in a respectful manner. The Mass attended was class three's first experience of taking responsibility and ownership of the occasion. Particularly touching was the way in which year four pupils sponsored their year three 'buddies' during communion. The post communion reflection, when pupils were invited to place a votive candle on a poster illustrating the quality they needed to improve in order to live as a child of the light, helped to bring prior learning to life.

Both of the key stage acts of collective worship focused on Our Lady and the rosary because it was the month of October. As pupils gathered to “*Ave Maria*” or “*The air that I breathe*”, all eyes were drawn to the focal point – a beautiful presentation of the statue of Our Lady, surrounded by a number of small votive candles and a large wooden rosary. At key stage one, the link was made between “*The Finding in the Temple*”, and worry and prayer. At key stage two, the link was made between “*The Visitation*” and how pupils can see the hidden presence of Jesus in the world around them. The content was child-centred and well presented. Periods of quiet reflection were embraced by all pupils and adults. In response to the invitation to join the Rosary Club, a number of key stage two pupils gathered the following day for prayer in the outdoor reflection area by the pond.

Prayer is central to the life of the school. Formal prayers are said at relevant times of the day and are an integral part of classroom religious education. Pupils are encouraged to compose their own prayers in a variety of forms. A prayer focus is a feature in every class.

From an early age, pupils are involved in planning class assemblies. Participation in the process increases as they move through the school. By the end of key stage two, pupils present their assemblies in a variety of ways. They choose hymns, readings, stories, focal points and music. They play instruments, write sketches, choreograph dances and make cards to reinforce the assembly’s message.

In 2007, the school held its first Mission. Pupils were encouraged to find Jesus in scripture, the Eucharist, the poor and in many other situations. The diverse activities of the week were well organised to sustain momentum. It involved visitors from other schools and parishioners. All activity fed into a final joyful Mass of celebration. The event was successful in developing spirituality and in drawing together the whole school community.

Opportunities for staff prayer are woven into the life of the school and a small area for staff reflection has been set up in the resources room.

During Advent and Lent, parish clergy lead a weekly Morning Prayer session for staff, parents or friends of the school. Due to its success, this has been extended to offering a monthly prayer service. The session attended consisted of stilling, meditation and a reflection, using PowerPoint presentations, on God’s Creation.

The school seeks to improve the quality of worship. Teachers have access to training, which is disseminated to all staff. The religious education coordinator ensures that good quality artefacts and resources are available to promote worship. Pupils are given the opportunity to evaluate collective worship, which helps to provide an insight into the messages received. Teachers evaluate class worship in their planners. During in-service training or in-school improvement learning team meetings, prayer provision is reviewed. Visitors to the school are asked to comment on what they have witnessed in the “*Celebrating Together*” book.

Christ the King supports the preparation for the sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Communion in the delivery of the *Here I Am* programme. Teachers actively support the parish-based preparation and celebrations.

The acts of collective worship, prayer and liturgies make a very good contribution to the spiritual and moral development of the pupils and impact on relationships and behaviour.

Shortcomings

There are no shortcomings in important areas.

Grade: 1

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Achievement and Standards

3. How well do learners achieve in religious education?

Good features

Learners' achievement in religious education is good with outstanding features. The head teacher, religious education coordinator and governors articulate high expectations of pupils.

Opinions expressed in the parents' pre-inspection meeting, and responses from the questionnaires, overwhelmingly confirm that parents believe that standards of work in religious education are very good. Parents are happy with the information they receive about their children's progress.

As Christ the King admits pupils from up to sixteen pre-school settings, reception children enter school with a range of different experiences. Children's attainment on entry, using baseline scores, is above the Local Education Authority average; however, the percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs in individual classes ranges from six percent to twenty six percent.

In lessons observed, the standard of work achieved was good and often very good. Scrutiny of previous work in pupils' books and in the religious education portfolio indicates that attainment is at least good and often very good, with examples of outstanding work across all key stages. In the end of key stage teacher assessments for July 2008, half of the year six cohort achieved level five, using the revised *NBRIA Levels of Attainment* – a judgement which was quality assured in cross-phase moderation.

The religious education portfolio contains end of topic differentiated levelled pieces of work from pupils' books and folders. The portfolio's facing sheet indicates how the level was achieved and the next steps required. This is a useful tool to help teachers in their assessment and planning processes.

Teachers have an understanding of individual pupils' abilities. Well-planned lessons include indicating the learning objective, highlighting key words, providing opportunities for prayer, thinking skills, key skills, assessment for learning, and using teaching points and differentiated tasks. Pupils record their work in a variety of ways. From their earliest years, pupils make very good use of thinking skills maps to extend their thought processes and record work in a diagrammatic format. Evidence confirms that pupils also communicate their knowledge and understanding through role play, hot seating, freeze frames, dance, music and art. Teachers plan opportunities for pupils to express themselves in extended writing using a variety of genres, including narrative, retelling, dialogue, interview, storyboard, poetry, leaflets and prayer forms. Good use is made of ICT to research, record and present work. The choice of method of recording increases as pupils move through the school.

Pupils demonstrate good and very good, understanding of the topics studied and can apply what they have learned to their own lives. The groups of pupils interviewed were knowledgeable, articulate and reflective in discussion. They listened respectfully and were confident in sharing experiences, ideas and opinions.

Pupils are encouraged to link behaviour with the mission statement. The school's proactive Personal and Social Education framework, which includes *SEAL*, *Philosophy for Children*, and *Circle Time*, helps pupils to make right choices. Behaviour in class is very good. When given a task, pupils set to work quickly and remain focussed and as a result little time is lost. Pupils are very understanding and thoughtful in accordance with their age. They care about being kind, helping, doing what is right, developing a conscience and contributing to school life.

The curriculum is enriched by a comprehensive Education in Personal Relationships Programme, including sex education, using the Archdiocesan recommended *All That I Am* materials.

Pupils are given time to think spiritually through participation in worship and in the *Rejoice* element of *Here I Am*, when they recognise and reflect on how learning relates to their everyday lives.

Teachers and pupils make regular use of incidental Welsh throughout the day. Welsh is used in prayers, hymns and simple Mass responses. A reward system is in place to encourage the use of the language. The school enlists the support of parents with Welsh phrases of the week publicised in the newsletter and posted on the website. Welsh saints are designated to each class. Each year group is introduced to the background teachings of its saint and is given opportunities to research and celebrate the feast day.

Pupils learn about other faith practices, namely Judaism and Islam. They learn about other cultures during *Respect Week* and through their link with St. Cuthbert's Catholic Primary School.

Pupils make a positive contribution to school life in many ways, such as the school council, eco committee, buddy systems and the HELP group which coordinates charity fundraising events.

Shortcomings

There are no shortcomings in important areas.

Grade: 1

Quality of provision for religious education

4. How effective are teaching and learning in religious education?

Good features

Inspection findings agree with the school's judgement of good with outstanding features.

Teaching follows the recommended Archdiocesan programme *Here I Am*, thus fulfilling the requirements of the *Curriculum Directory for Catholic Schools*. The quality of teaching is good with outstanding features. The commitment of the teaching and support staff is a strength of the school. Teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith, of the aims of religious education and of the *Here I Am* programme. Attendance at Archdiocesan religious education courses, and school based in-service training, ensure that teachers are aware of current initiatives and good practice.

In recent years, continued professional development has focussed on the pedagogy of teaching through creative and playful approaches to learning. The effectiveness of strategies and tools to develop thinking enhance the teaching and learning in religious education. Through consistent use of *Habits of Mind*, pupils are independent in their learning and if in difficulty, are clear about what strategies to use.

The planning format currently in use has been adapted from Arundel and Brighton materials. Short-term planning indicates differentiated activities and levels of support to meet the needs of all learners. Use is made of exemplar materials produced by the Archdiocese of Cardiff – revised *NBRIA Levels of Attainment* guidance for topics, suggested activities for *Remember, Rejoice, Renew* and ideas for the foundation phase. Teachers plan together, using *Before You Begin*, at the start of each topic, enabling them to discuss and reflect on any issues involved in the programme to be delivered.

Assessment for learning is well-embedded and consistently applied. Pupils are involved in the process. Self-assessment using *Mrs. Potter's Questions* helps them to evaluate their own learning and what needs to be done to improve. Marking is related to the learning objective. At key stage two, pupils often respond to their teachers' comments. There is also evidence that pupils self-correct their writing. Pupils' work is assessed at the end of each topic against the revised

NBRIA Levels of Attainment descriptors. Progress is tracked on a grid. In-house and cross-phase moderation exercises have affirmed the accuracy of levelling.

At the foundation phase, teachers' highly expressive and dramatic storytelling of 'Rosemary's Special Day' captured the interest of all pupils. While the teacher worked with the focus group to re-enact the story of the baptism, learning support assistants lead the enhanced sequencing activity, making baptism cards, decorating a collage of a cross to be used in baptism and making baptism candles to take home. The highly effective classroom management enabled all pupils to be fully involved in the planned activities.

Very effective storytelling also captured the pupils' attention in class two. Excellent use of the teacher's dramatic voice and actions reinforced the significance of key words, such as oil, to make him 'strong', accompanied by 'strongman' actions mimicked by the children. Their responses in word and action showed a depth of understanding of being welcomed into the Church family.

In class one, effective use was made of a PowerPoint presentation using pictures and captions from *The Church's Story*, which illustrated a lively reading of 'Invitation Day'. Laminated class books of the presentation supported the independent activities. The highlight was the role-play of a baptism in the church, constructed in the outdoor area. Children engaged in all activities could remember the sequence of events, and the important words and phrases used in baptism.

Lower key stage two pupils can identify actions and behaviours which demonstrate how to live as a child of the light. The work undertaken in class formed the basis of their shared Mass the following week. Their understanding of the topic was demonstrated in their bidding prayers and accompanying posters. Their deliberation of the actions displayed on the posters, before placing their votive candles on the display, demonstrated how seriously they made decisions about their own need for growth.

Pupils in upper key stage two are able to discuss scripture, analyse its meaning and apply it to their own experiences. They can identify the fruits of the Holy Spirit in their own and others' lives, explain how they have demonstrated qualities and give examples of how those qualities could be used. Older pupils can explain the meaning and purpose of Confirmation.

Pupils are well behaved within an environment of shared support and cooperation. They work well independently, in pairs and in a variety of groupings.

Good use is made of well placed prayer focal points. Lessons incorporate prayer, music, periods for reflection and frequent opportunities to draw upon pupils' experiences and prior learning.

A wide variety of books, artefacts and resources, including ICT, are available to deliver the curriculum. Pupils have access to computers in class and in the computer suite. Pupils reported that they particularly enjoy using *God's Story* for

the illustrations and ease of language, which make it easier for them to understand and apply their reading to their own lives.

Christ the King maintains very good communication with parents via *Here I Am* overviews, curriculum outlines, weekly newsletter, homework tasks where appropriate, the school website, progress meetings and an annual written report. Almost all parents are happy with the information they receive about religious education and the majority believe that they can assist in their children's learning in religious education.

Shortcomings

There are no shortcomings in important areas.

Grade: 1

5. How well does the religious education curriculum meet the needs and interests of learners?

Good features

Inspection findings agree with the school's judgement of good with outstanding features.

Of the eight full time and five part time teachers, twelve are Catholic. Five teachers hold the *Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies* and five are studying for it. Three of the five learning support assistants are Catholic.

Curricular provision is very good. Christ the King follows the recommended Archdiocesan programme *Here I Am*, thus fulfilling the *Curriculum Directory for Catholic Schools*. Planning has been structured to accommodate the revised *NBRIA Levels of Attainment*. Well-planned lessons include the learning objective, key words, opportunities for prayer, thinking skills, key skills, assessment for learning, teaching points and differentiated tasks. Detailed planning was produced for lessons observed during the inspection. Pupils' activities are well supported with appropriate resources.

Christ the King has a good range of resources for the delivery of the *Here I Am* programme, including the teaching of other faiths, namely Judaism and Islam. A variety of CAFOD and Fair Trade posters and packs are used to help pupils' understanding of wider world issues. Each class has a prayer focus with suitable artefacts. Resource books and internet sites are available to support teachers' delivery of the religious education programme. Displays and prayer focus tables reflect the topic being taught.

Prayer and reflection in classroom religious education, together with the planned programme for collective worship, Masses, assemblies, *Circle Time*, *SEAL*, and *Philosophy for Children* enhance spiritual and moral development and encourage pupils to listen to others, and reflect on the deeper questions of life. Evidence

viewed confirms that art, music, dance and drama are used as stimulants for religious education to enhance creativity and prompt reflective thought.

The school supports parish based sacramental preparation for, and celebrations of, First Holy Communion in the three parishes.

Pupils are offered many opportunities to develop independence, exercise responsibility and to take an active part in the life of the school. The well established school council and eco-committee enjoy a high profile and are consulted on school matters. School councillors participate in learning walks which have impacted on break-time routines. The playground was zoned, equipment purchased and wet play activities introduced. *Eco Green Flag* and *Fair Trade Status* verify that environmental projects are an important part of school life.

The school is increasingly pro-active in working towards *Healthy School Status*. The fruit tuck shop has been extended, so that first break time, with the support of the school council, is now 'fruit only'. The school has well-supported 'walking buses'. Children are encouraged to walk part-way to school and weekly totals are forwarded to parents.

The governors and staff are keen to help Christ the King pupils to acquire the skills and confidence to be active within the local community as well as developing a sense of responsibility for caring for God's world. Pupils are committed to raising money for charity. Fundraising is coordinated by HELP (Helping Every Little Person), aided by the school clerk. Enjoyable fun activities have supported a host of charities such as Kenya's Child Fund, Water Aid, Burma Appeal and the work of Fr. Tim Greenway.

Working with local schools involves activities such as sporting fixtures, Urdd competitions, road safety quizzes, Cardiff Writers' Group, video conferencing and the North Cardiff public speaking competition. Christ the King is a member of the University of the First Age, which provides opportunities for linking with other schools involved in the same project. Wider community involvement includes the eco-committee giving presentations at conferences.

Christ the King enriches curriculum provision with the many visitors invited to share their expertise with pupils. The list includes emergency services representatives, local magistrates, theatre companies, the forestry commission and Careers Wales, who helped to develop the fruit and vegetable project. An extensive range of school visits, including residential stays, contribute to pupils' academic and social development.

The school enjoys links with the media and the sponsorship of local businesses. It is indebted to the Parents and Friends Association for their fundraising to provide extra resources.

Christ the King has developed a *Personal and Social Education* programme linked to the Archdiocesan *Education in Personal Relationships* guidelines including delivery of *All That I Am*.

Effective induction arrangements enable new children to settle quickly. The agreed programme outlines procedures to make the children's start in school a happy experience. There are well-established transition arrangements with the receiving high school. Joint training days for moderation purposes have included the religious education curriculum.

Shortcomings

There are no shortcomings in important areas.

Grade: 1

Leadership and management of religious education

6. How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners in religious education?

Good features

Inspection findings agree with the school's view that this area is good with outstanding features.

The governors, head teacher and senior staff share a common vision of the place of religious education at the heart of the curriculum. Clear direction is outlined in detailed subject policies. All aspects of classroom religious education and the Catholic life of the school are kept under review. The cycle of self-evaluation is well embedded into the cycle of quality assurance processes.

The religious education coordinator took up her responsibilities following the previous inspection. She was awarded a teaching and learning responsibility for collective worship in 2006. She has established a well-developed monitoring role, the results of which inform the religious education self-evaluation reports and action plans. She expresses a clear view of how religious education and worship integrate into the life of the school and is proactive in seeking further improvement. She keeps abreast of current initiatives and, with the head teacher, is instrumental in moving policy into practice.

The head teacher and parish priest commented on the impact the religious education coordinator has effected on teaching and learning and worship. She inspires and motivates both adults and pupils. Her artistic temperament has brought creativity, liveliness and joy to religious education, so that it enjoys a special place at the centre of the curriculum.

Leaders ensure that generic developments in teaching and learning strategies such as *Thinking Skills*, *Philosophy for Children*, *Habits of Mind* and *Brain Gym* impact on the teaching of religious education.

The school operates an effective performance management cycle and is able to link outcomes with success criteria that impact on standards in religious education.

The commitment to staff development in religious education is reflected in the provision for and impact of in-service training both in-house and off-site.

The school is well resourced to deliver the religious education curriculum. Priorities in action plans are supported by an effective budget allocation. Very good use is made of ICT. Resources are stored in the server for ease of staff access. These include *God's Story, Church's Story, Here I Am* and *Spirit of Light*.

Of the eight full time and five part time teachers twelve are Catholic. Ten of the teachers hold the *Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies* or are studying for it. Three of the five learning support assistants are Catholic and the majority of ancillary staff are Catholic.

All staff at Christ the King work hard to create a busy school that reflects a place of happiness, flexibility, perseverance, joy and fulfilment where all are, "Learning to love and loving to learn".

Shortcomings

There are no shortcomings in important areas.

Grade: 1

The School's Response to the Inspection

The governing body, staff and pupils welcomes and celebrates the findings of the Section 50 report that Christ the King Primary is a very good Catholic school with many outstanding features such as its leadership and management at all levels, its quality of provision for worship and the quality of teaching and learning. The report, by awarding grade 1's in all six key questions, confirms the judgements made in the school's own self-evaluation report and validates the school's processes and practices.

We are very pleased that the report found that our school's vision "Learning to love, loving to learn," encompasses the mission and aims of the school and that our acts of collective worship and the centrality of prayer in the life of our school make a "very good contribution to the spiritual and moral development of our pupils and impacts upon relationships and behaviour."

The whole school community is proud that their school was found to be "a busy school that reflects a place of happiness, flexibility, perseverance, joy and fulfilment, whilst striving for success at all levels." The significant contributions, commitment and dedication that all staff and governors give, have been recognised by the report, which is very affirming and uplifting for all.

We are delighted that the report confirms that the achievement of our pupils is good with outstanding features and that the effectiveness of strategies to develop thinking has enhanced the learning of all our children.

The school would like to thank Mrs. M. White and Mrs S Robb for their very thorough and professional approach throughout the inspection and courteous manner in which it was conducted. We recognise the work undertaken by them before, during and after the inspection such as the participation in our liturgical celebrations and acts of collective worship.

The findings of the report are valued and the school will continue to work on the recommendations of the inspection as identified in the current year's school improvement plan. The recommendations made will now form part of the School's Post Inspection Action Plan, a summary of which will be distributed to all parents.

Evidence Base for the Inspection

- The school's self-evaluation reports
- Religious education and other related policies
- Pre-inspection meetings with staff and governors
- Pre-inspection meeting with parents and completed questionnaires
- Meetings with the head teacher and religious education coordinator
- Discussions with the parish priest / link religious education governor
- Lesson observations
- Scrutiny of planning and assessment
- Scrutiny of pupils' work
- Scrutiny of prayer foci and displays
- Scrutiny of evidence of previous work
- Attendance at Welcome Mass and class Mass
- Attendance at collective worship and voluntary prayer
- Discussions with the school council and eco-committee
- Discussions with groups of pupils
- Observation of daily routines