



ARCHDIOCESE OF LIVERPOOL

INSPECTION REPORT

ST. LAURENCE'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

KIRKBY

Inspection Date 26 November 2014

Inspectors Mrs. Denise Hegarty, Mrs. Maria Eves,
Ms. Julie Mosinski, Mr. Tony Ford

Unique Reference Number 104461

Inspection carried out under Section 48 of the Education Acts 2005 and 2011

Type of School Catholic Primary

Age range of pupils 3 - 11

Number on roll 351

Chair of Governors Rev. Fr. Nicholas Wilde

Headteacher Mr. Paul Cronin

School address Leaside Avenue,
Southdene,
Kirkby,
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Date of last inspection 26 February 2009

Introduction

This inspection was carried out under Section 48 of the Education Acts 2005 and 2011

The report of the inspection is produced for the Archbishop of Liverpool (Code of Canon Law 804 and 806) and for the governors of the school.

The inspectors are members of the Christian Education Department and their associates approved by the Archbishop of Liverpool for this purpose.

Information about this school

- St. Laurence's school is a larger than average sized Catholic Primary School situated in Kirkby in the Knowsley district of the Archdiocese. It serves the parish of St. Joseph and St. Laurence, Kirkby.
- There are 351 children on roll, all of whom are baptised Catholic.
- There are 21 teachers at the school of whom 17 have a suitable qualification in Religious Education and 4 others are currently undertaking the *Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies*. Nineteen teachers are baptised Catholic and 17 teach Religious Education.
- Both the headteacher and the subject co-ordinator were in post at the time of the last inspection.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Requires Improvement
Grade 4	Inadequate

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Overall effectiveness:

St. Laurence's is an outstanding school in providing Catholic Education.

Inspection Judgements

The extent to which the pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life of the school.

- The extent to which the pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life of the school is outstanding.
- Pupils know and understand the school Mission Statement and their own motto. They have been involved in their evaluation and understand the part they play within both and really strive to be the best that they can be in all areas.
- Pupils have a great sense of pride in belonging to this school community; they are very happy coming to school and see it as a close family unit. Interpersonal relationships across the school are outstanding as shown in how pupils value and respect their peers. Year 6 prefects are allocated to infant classes to read to younger pupils. They also support them in their play by modelling good behaviour.
- Pupils are encouraged to take on roles of responsibility in the school and wider community e.g. as school councillors where they act as 'bully busters' and as part of their duties, give annual reports to the governing body. Other pupils are digital leaders and devote their free time to help younger pupils improve their digital imagery skills in the computer suite. Within such roles, they develop organisational skills and discover the importance of communication and the need for supporting each other.
- Pupils are actively involved in developing the Catholic character of the school. They strive for justice and fairness e.g. by holding 'Fairtrade Fridays', collecting food for Kirkby Food Bank and distributing harvest hampers.
- Pupils benefit from participation in a good number of away days and residential activities. They enjoy visiting the pine woods and Formby Point and gain much from the Knowsley Mayor's Award Camp at Moel Famau, Wales: Year 6 three day residential at Colomendy. These experiences greatly impact on their social, moral and spiritual development as they gain an understanding of the importance of working together, grow in confidence and develop an awareness of the wonderful world around them.
- Pupils have an excellent sense of right and wrong and apply this in their personal relationships. They take an increasing responsibility for themselves and their actions. At interview, a Year 6 child said, 'This is a loving place to be.' Another child from Year 2 explained how we, 'care for all people as Jesus cares for us.'
- Education for pastoral care and personal relationships has fostered positive attitudes and a sense of self-respect in pupils. They are becoming equipped with the skills and values to help them cope with their lives in school and in society.
- The children who have been recently bereaved are extremely proud of the animations they have produced with the 'Twin Vision' Project. These animated films celebrate how much the people they have lost have meant to their producers and how they touched their lives. This work has had a profound effect on how the children concerned have dealt with their loss and has enabled them to cherish happy memories.
- Pupils are justly proud of the work they have done to design and complete a sculpture which was commissioned in memory of their former deputy head teacher who died very suddenly in post. This sculpture, which represents the school, encapsulates how she inspired the children to be the best that they could be by developing and using their gifts

and talents to the full. Pupils consequently seize opportunities to meet their potential in all aspects of school life.

- Pupils benefit from a vast range of extra-curricular activities and after school clubs e.g. various sports, music and children's university. They participate in the Mayor's Award, the Junior Sports Leader Scheme and the Junior Citizenship Award. Through them, they learn the values of commitment, resilience, sportsmanship and taking responsibility for themselves and others.
- Pupils are involved in service to the immediate neighbourhood served by the school as they undertake activities such as 'Circle Time' activities with friends from Bluebell Park Special School, Kirkby and to the wider community through, for example, collecting items for the shoe box appeal for eastern European countries and through their links with a school in Namibia.
- They show respect and understanding of other faiths and religions and have particularly enjoyed learning about Judaism.

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education

- Pupils' achievements and enjoyment in Religious Education is outstanding.
- Their attainment in Religious Education is high.
- They make outstanding progress in relation to their starting points and capabilities.
- On entry to school many children have a limited knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith.
- There is no difference in performance between pupils of different gender.
- Outcomes for pupils with additional or special needs are also outstanding.
- Analysis of assessments undertaken provides evidence of pupils generally attaining appropriate levels for their age and stage of development in each key stage with some exceeding expectation.
- Pupils are becoming increasingly more religiously literate. Their knowledge, understanding and skills are developing appropriate to their age or capacity.
- They are developing the skills that enable them to reflect spiritually, think ethically and theologically and are becoming more aware of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life.
- Pupils' engagement in and enjoyment of their learning is outstanding as shown by their interest, enthusiasm and excellent behaviour. They listen attentively to adults and to each other. They answer questions respectfully, work co-operatively and productively with their partners and remain on task throughout their independent work.
- Pupils have developed high expectations of themselves and have aspirations for the future. They co-operate exceptionally well together in paired and group activities, respond enthusiastically to the challenges set by their teachers and take great pride in the work they produce by presenting it beautifully.
- Pupils are encouraged to work independently and collaboratively. They are anxious to learn and improve their knowledge, understanding and skills. In discussions, they spoke confidently and earnestly about the topics they have been studying and showed great insight.

How well pupils respond to and participate in Collective Worship

- Pupils' response to and participation in Collective Worship is outstanding.
- They demonstrate great interest, respond really well and actively participate in Collective Worship.

- They act with utmost reverence and are keen to participate in a variety of gatherings suitable for their age and capacity, including Masses and liturgies.
- Pupils' knowledge of prayer and liturgy is increasing appropriately as they progress through the school.
- They have become familiar with a variety of prayer styles. They appreciate and are open to the Word of God in the Scriptures.
- They sing joyfully, reflect in silence and join in community prayers appropriately and with confidence.
- In worship observed on the day of inspection, children showed great respect throughout. They gathered calmly, listened attentively, reflected purposefully and responded appropriately.
- Pupils are becoming increasingly more confident preparing and leading worship. They are able to create a prayerful atmosphere as they gather together. They select ways to respond to the message from Scripture and ways to take this message forth into their lives. In particular, pupils thoroughly enjoy preparing and celebrating the 'Rejoice' part of the process in '*Come and See*' when they can use the curriculum to create worship for themselves.

The quality of teaching and how purposeful learning is in Religious Education

- The quality of teaching and purposeful learning in Religious Education is outstanding.
- It is consistently effective in ensuring that pupils are interested, engaged and make outstanding progress.
- A very positive climate for learning is created across the school with children gaining in confidence and esteem as they are continually affirmed for good attitudes and behaviour.
- Teachers display excellent subject knowledge and deploy a range of teaching styles to motivate and inspire pupils. All members of staff either have a qualification in Religious Studies, or are currently studying for the *Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies*. This commitment has a very positive impact on subject knowledge and understanding.
- Teaching encourages pupils' enjoyment of and enthusiasm for Religious Education. Classroom observations on the day of inspection showed many examples of children working keenly and excitedly in their lessons. High levels of engagement and independence were encouraged.
- Teachers take into account pupils' prior learning and ensure tasks are differentiated when planning so that the work consolidates, builds and extends their knowledge and understanding.
- Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to work independently and collaboratively. Excellent use is made of time and high quality resources including a generous number of additional adults. Information and Communication Technology is deployed to maximise and enhance learning. Pace of lessons is swift so there is no time slippage and pupils are kept fully on task throughout.
- Pupils are informed of their progress and how to improve both orally and through marking. Marking is celebratory, affirming and appropriately developmental indicating the next steps needed for learning. This builds up pupils' self esteem and develops self-confidence. Effort and achievement are celebrated.
- Teachers use the 'driver words' from the *Levels of Attainment* well to challenge pupils and promote higher attainment.
- The assessment of pupils' work in Religious Education is very good.
- The school has very good assessment strategies which provide accurate and detailed information on the achievement of all the pupils.
- Teachers are able to identify how well pupils are achieving and tackle any underachievement. Moderation meetings take place within and across phases.

- Teachers enable pupils to evaluate their own work. Feedback is built into each lesson so children can assess how they are performing.

The extent to which the Religious Education Curriculum promotes pupils' learning

- The extent to which the Religious Education Curriculum promotes pupils' learning is outstanding.
- The school using the '*Come and See*' programme recommended by the Archdiocese meets the requirements of the Curriculum Directory for Religious Education. Appropriate levels of the programme are being followed in different mixed-age classes. This ensures complete Religious Education entitlement for each child and meets National and Archdiocesan requirements.
- Of the total curriculum time 10% is allocated to Religious Education. This fulfils the requirements of the Bishops of England and Wales.
- The curriculum is customised very well to meet the needs of groups and individuals.
- Planning ensures full coverage of the Religious Education programme. Imaginative and well planned strategies are deployed to enrich pupils' learning.
- The school implements new curriculum developments as appropriate.
- A vast range of extra-curricular activities e.g. various music, sports and crafts clubs enhance and support learning and are available for every year group. These promote respect for the gifts and talents of each individual and help to raise self esteem.
- Enrichment activities such as educational trips and visitors e.g. from Nugent Care, various theatre groups and CAFOD all have a positive impact on the curriculum, provide memorable learning opportunities and are thoroughly enjoyed by pupils.
- The Religious Education curriculum provides outstanding opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral development and vocation. It is also augmented with additional input from anti-bullying, coping with conflict and internet safety presentations and with transition projects, with the local high school, to name but a few.
- Children have explored the beliefs and values of other faiths and religions including Judaism and Sikhism using a variety of artefacts, websites and visitors. This helps to promote tolerance and respect for those who think differently.

The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school.

- The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school is outstanding. It reflects the Catholic character of the school and takes into account the variety of backgrounds among the pupils.
- Collective Worship has a high profile and is central to the life of the school.
- Collective Worship plays a key part in meeting the spiritual needs of the pupils. Opportunities are provided to enable full, active and conscious participation of the whole school community.
- Children are enabled to pray formally and informally using a variety of prayer methods and styles.
- The school provides opportunities for staff to develop the skills in planning, leading and evaluating Collective Worship.
- The teachers must now continue to consistently provide the necessary resources and opportunities to help children to develop the skills necessary to plan, lead and participate in Collective Worship across the school and to evaluate it effectively.
- Many opportunities are provided for parents, carers the local and wider faith communities to participate in a variety of celebrations of the '*Come and See*' programme and the Church's liturgical year.

How well leaders, governors and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic life of the school and plan and implement improvement to outcomes for pupils.

- Leaders, governors and managers are outstanding in promoting monitoring and evaluating the provision for the Catholic life of the school and in the way they plan and implement improvement to outcomes for pupils.
- This is reflected in the school's own Mission Statement which is at the heart of all that the school does and permeates every aspect of its life. All who form part of the school community including parents, clergy, governors and children were involved in the development and review of the Mission Statement. Its aims and practical objectives direct and guide every aspect of school life and are a useful tool by which the school can evaluate its effectiveness.
- Leaders, governors and managers are very good in the way they use monitoring data to evaluate the schools performance, celebrate, and plan future improvements.
- Outstanding opportunities are provided for the staff and pupils to play an active part in Catholic life and Mission of the school. They all know, believe and fully live out their Mission Statement.
- The head teacher is an inspirational leader in the school. He leads with passion and great humility and is a true servant of the community. Staff members, in their turn, are caring and considerate. They work hard to provide outstanding pastoral care for all pupils and to fully meet their needs in all areas of their development. All members of the school community encourage and inspire pupils to have high aspirations for their future.
- The Self Evaluation Document provides evidence of the schools monitoring, searching analysis and self challenge. It is accurate in content and in identifying targets, timescales and lines of accountability but modest in judgements.
- The analysis of the SED provides a sound basis to celebrate the school's strengths and outline areas for development.
- The school provides very good induction and in-service training to enable staff to further understand the Church's Mission in Education and play their unique part in it.
- The quality of Collective Worship is a priority for the school. It is effectively monitored and evaluated by leaders, governors and managers. A Collective Worship book of observations is kept that contains many photos which indicate the value given to it. An up to date policy is in place and embedded into practice.
- A range of opportunities for spiritual and moral developments are provided for staff and pupils. The school mentor plays a significant role here. He co-ordinates the 'Twin Vision' Project and conducts 'Circle Time' activities with groups of children including those from a local special school.
- Policies for the spiritual and moral development of pupils are in place and there is outstanding documentation kept which indicate the provision the school makes for the spiritual, moral, social, emotional and cultural development of its pupils. The school is outstanding in the way it strives to promote the holistic development of each child.
- There are extremely positive relationships at every level within the school. A contributing factor to this is the fact that adults make time to deal with any concerns a child or parent might have.
- The school provides breakfast and after-school clubs to ensure that all the needs of children and their parents are met. These opportunities are appreciated by all concerned.
- Leadership at all levels respects difference, values diversity and ensures equal opportunities for all.
- Prayer, liturgy and worship are all of paramount importance to the school. The children frequently have the opportunity to participate in Masses and liturgies as appropriate to their age and capacity.

- There are very close links with the parish. Staff members provide exceptional support for pupils' sacramental preparation. The school newsletter is distributed within the parish and so parishioners can be aware and informed of their activities.
- Parents are consulted regularly especially through the school's weekly newsletter and involved in a variety of ways in the life of the school. They are extremely proud and supportive of their school community and appreciate the headteacher's positive influence. The school website is also an effective tool for communication.
- Governors are outstanding in fulfilling their responsibilities. They have effectively helped to shape the direction of the school through their presence in school and their interest and enthusiasm for the role. They keep their knowledge and skills up to date by accessing relevant training.

How well leaders, governors and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Religious Education of the school and plan and implement improvement to outcomes for pupils.

- Leaders, governors and managers are outstanding in promoting monitoring and evaluating the provision for the Religious Education of the school and in the way they plan and implement improvement to outcomes for pupils.
- Religious Education is very much at the core of the curriculum in this school. There is a positive ethos within the school community with regards to improving and further developing it.
- The Archdiocesan Monitoring Pack is used to good effect to ensure teaching and learning, children's work and teachers' planning are monitored with rigour. Appropriate feedback and support is given as necessary. Good practice is shared and celebrated. The data available is used effectively to evaluate the school's performance and plan for future improvements.
- Continuing professional development opportunities are provided for all. All teachers either have a qualification in Religious Studies or are currently undertaking the *Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies*. This has been a priority for the school and consequently all teachers' subject knowledge has increased. They are given further opportunities to keep up to date in the subject through in-service provided by the subject leader and by the Christian Education Department.
- Assessment information is collated and tracked by the subject leader and shared with the leadership team, governors and parents.
- Formal assessment tasks are undertaken in line with Archdiocesan guidance. Formative assessments are used to inform planning. Summative assessments inform staff and parents.
- The subject leader is outstanding in guiding Religious Education. She leads by example and shows great commitment and enthusiasm for the subject. She regularly attends Archdiocesan training and briefing sessions and has introduced new initiatives and provided in-service when necessary. Excellent documentation guides and directs all staff in the delivery of the subject. This is updated as necessary and shared with governors and parents as appropriate.
- A generous budget is provided and approved by the governors to improve resources and enhance provision.
- The school is well supported by the parish priest who is also the chair of governors. He is a regular visitor.
- Governors are kept very well-informed by the head teacher and subject co-ordinator and offer great support and challenge to create improvement. They are interested and proactively involved.

- Parents receive an annual report on their child's progress and are kept further informed through verbal reports on Parents' Evenings. They are consulted on a variety of issues, given curriculum outlines and encouraged to support their child's learning.
- Achievement and effort are celebrated.

What the school needs to do to improve further?

- Further improve Collective Worship by:
 - providing the necessary resources and opportunities, consistently in all year groups, to enable children to further develop the skills required to plan, lead and evaluate collective worship.
- Further raise standards in Religious Education by:
 - being more robust in the tracking of data to further improve differentiated planning.
- Continue to implement the areas for development identified in the school's own self-evaluation document. These include:
 - Continuing with the current monitoring schedule and making it more rigorous;
 - Ensuring consistency in attainment throughout year groups and across key stages

INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

How effective the school is in providing Catholic Education	1
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OUTCOMES FOR PUPILS

How good outcomes are for individuals and groups of pupils	
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school	1
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education	1
How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship	1

PROVISION

How effective the provision is for Catholic Education	
The quality of teaching and how purposeful learning is in Religious Education	1
The extent to which the Religious Education curriculum promotes pupils' learning	1
The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school	1

LEADERS AND MANAGERS

How effective leaders, governors and managers are in developing the Catholic Life of the School	
How well leaders, governors and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic life of the school and plan and implement improvement to outcomes for pupils	1
How well leaders, governors and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education and plan and implement improvement to outcomes for pupils	1

Key to judgements: Grade 1 is Outstanding, Grade 2: Good, Grade 3: Requires Improvement and Grade 4: Inadequate