



## ARCHDIOCESE OF LIVERPOOL

### INSPECTION REPORT

### ST. ALBERT'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

#### KNOWSLEY

---

|   |                                   |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| Inspection Date   | Tuesday 16 May 2017               |
| Inspectors  | Mrs Pat Peel   Mr. David Williams |
| Unique Reference Number   | 104467                            |
| 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          | 192 (Excluding Nursery)                                     |
| Chair of Governors      | Fr. David Potter  |
| Headteacher             | Mrs. Lorraine McEvoy  |
| School address          | Steers Croft<br>Stockbridge Village<br>Liverpool<br>L28 8AJ |
| Telephone number        | 0151 447 8560   |
| E-mail address          | stalbert@knowsley.gov.uk                                    |
| Date of last inspection | May 2012  |

# 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. Albert's is a smaller than average sized Catholic Primary School situated in Stockbridge Village, Knowsley mainly serving the parish of St. Albert's.
- There are 192 children on roll of whom 147 are baptised Catholic, 24 come from other Christian denominations and 21 have no religious affiliation. (This does not include 42 in nursery and 8 Alby tots 2 year old provision.)
- There are 11 teachers of whom 9 teach Religious Education. Ten teachers are Catholic. Three teachers have a suitable qualification in Religious Education.
- Since the last inspection, the school has de-federated with St. Brigid's Catholic Primary School, a new governing body have been appointed and the associate headteacher has been appointed to the post of headteacher.
- The deputy head leads Religious Education. She has recently returned from maternity leave.

### Key for inspection grades

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

---

© 2017 copyright – Archdiocese of Liverpool. This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school.

## Overall effectiveness:

St. Albert's Catholic Primary School is outstanding in providing Catholic Education.

## Inspection Judgements

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

- Pupils are outstanding in the way in which they contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life at St. Albert's.
- There is a shared vision for Catholic Education which is embraced by the whole school community and reinforced in the school's Mission Statement "*Educating the children and serving the community in the love of Jesus Christ*" and in the motto which is derived from it; Learn, Serve and Love. It is lived, loved and owned by everyone in this most inclusive school community.
- Pupils have an excellent sense of belonging to the school. Its values and ethos are visibly reflected in the exemplary attitudes and relationships between all members of the community. St. Albert's is an oasis of calm where everyone feels safe and is loved.
- The learning environment is vibrant and stimulating and enriches pupils' sensory experiences.
- The school has extensive outside areas which are well resourced and utilised including an allotment. A recent addition is a prayer garden which is a focal point for the whole school community.
- Pupils are encouraged to take on roles of responsibility by becoming school councillors, prefects, worship warriors and more recently Mini-Vinnies.
- In the wider community pupils act as ambassadors of the school during off site visits i.e. on visiting church in support of parish events, residential visits and hosting carol services for the local community.
- Pupils are actively involved in developing the Catholic character of the school by the work they undertake in fundraising for numerous charities e.g. CAFOD, Mission Together, Comic and Sports Relief to name but a few and buying teddies in support of Willowbrook Hospice and hosting a 'Onesie Day for Type One Diabetes'.
- The school hosted a CAFOD volunteer to speak to the children about the Big Fish campaign fundraiser.
- Pupils benefit from participation in annual residential outdoor activities. Year 6 pupils had a visit to London, Year 5 pupils have an opportunity to visit Boreatton Park Activity Centre, Shrewsbury.
- Pupils have an excellent sense of right and wrong and apply this in their personal relationships. SEAL and Jigsaw is used to support this aspect of the curriculum.
- Education for personal relationships has fostered positive attitudes in pupils. The school has recently reviewed their Relationships and Sex Education policy and resources. Governors have ratified the decision to use Journey In Love to support work in this area.
- Pupils benefit from an extremely caring and nurturing environment. The school employs two learning mentors whose primary role is to support vulnerable pupils and their families in all aspects of school life.
- Pupils take an increasing responsibility for themselves and their actions and enthusiastically praise and celebrate each other's achievements at their weekly assemblies where certificates are awarded. The school hosts an annual awards ceremony.

- Pupils embrace opportunities to meet their potential in all aspects of school life. Pupils say that they are very proud of their school and are reflective and enquiring.
- Pupils are involved in service to the local Faith and religious communities by becoming altar servers, taking an active part in parish liturgies, undertaking choral events in the immediate neighbourhood served by the school and outreach in the wider community by collecting for the Knowsley Foodbank and more recently service to the St. Vincent de Paul Society via 'Mini Vinnies'.
- The school community comes together with St. Brigid's throughout the year to support parish events and school celebrations i.e. May Day procession, Leavers masses etc.

### **How well pupils' achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education**

- Pupils' achievement and enjoyment in Religious Education is good.
- The school has embraced the Come and See programme and the needs of all the pupils are being met. The range of activities provided is effective in engaging and enthusing pupils. This was particularly evident in Year 3 where children shared their learning from throughout the topic.
- Pupils' attainment in Religious Education is good. They make excellent progress in relation to their starting points and capabilities.
- There is no difference in performance between pupils of different gender.
- Outcomes for pupils with additional or special needs are good and their support is effective.
- Assessments undertaken to date and scrutiny of workbooks provides evidence of pupils generally attaining a good level for their age and stage of development and some pupils exceed expectations.
- Pupils are becoming increasingly more religiously literate as they become familiar with key words from the topics. Driver words from the Levels of Attainment are used in planning but not routinely in some lessons. 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 very good as shown by their interest and exemplary behaviour. This is a real strength of the school.
- Pupils work extremely well independently, in pairs and collaboratively in small groups.
- Some assessment for learning strategies were observed in lessons.

### **How well pupils' respond to and participate in Collective Worship**

- Pupils are outstanding in responding to and participating in Collective Worship. They recognise prayer is a fundamental part of life at St. Albert's and are open to the Word of God in scripture.
- Pupils regularly prepare and lead worship with confidence and enthusiasm in a variety of gatherings from their earliest years. They are extremely respectful and act with reverence.
- Some pupils supported by a Teaching Assistant have become Worship Warriors which has greatly enhanced their experience of prayer and worship. This is beginning to have an impact on the rest of the school as children are given opportunities to lead celebrations.
- Pupils are becoming familiar with a variety of prayer styles and their knowledge of liturgy is increasing.

- Pupils sing joyfully, reflect in silence and join in community prayers appropriately and with confidence.

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

- The quality of teaching and purposeful learning is good in ensuring that pupils are interested, engaged and make excellent progress.
- Teachers consider pupils' prior learning when planning Religious Education lessons.
- Teacher's planning is effective in meeting the needs of the pupils. However, whilst 'driver words' appear in planning they are not consistently being used by all teachers as part of their repertoire in the classroom. This needs to be further developed.
- Teachers deploy a range of teaching styles. On the day of inspection, most lessons observed were good with a couple outstanding. In some lessons the pace was not quick enough and in others there is a need to reduce teacher talk.
- In the best lessons, there is lots of evidence of pupils being challenged and inspired which enriches their enjoyment of Religious Education. This needs to be shared.
- Effective use is made of time and resources e.g. interactive white board, Information Technology, God's and Church's Story, audio and visual media etc.
- The school is good in deploying teaching assistants to support lessons for those children which require additional input. This could be enhanced further by teachers using support staff more creatively during lessons to challenge pupils.
- Pupils are very positively affirmed throughout their lessons and relationships are excellent. Marking is positive and informs pupils of their progress and in lots of books the next steps. Effort and achievement are celebrated.
- The school has implemented assessment strategies which provide information on the achievement of all pupils.
- The tracking of pupils' work in Religious Education is in place and shows trends over time.

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

- The Religious Education curriculum is good in promoting pupils' learning.
- 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 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.
- Planning ensures full coverage of the Religious Education programme.
- Termly newsletters are provided for parents and carers and there is key information on the school website to support Religious Education.
- The school implements new curriculum developments as appropriate and the programme is embedded securely across the school.
- The school runs 'Alby Tots' which is dedicated nursery provision for sixteen 2 year olds. This is well subscribed and the school houses the provision next to reception so that the children are seamlessly introduced into school life.
- Enrichment activities such as dance, choir, Mini Vinnies, worship warriors and seasonal sports have a positive impact on the curriculum.
- The Religious Education curriculum provides good opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral development and vocation.

- Children have explored the beliefs and values of Judaism and Islam. This needs to be developed further to ensure pupils have the opportunity to visit other places of worship and/or listen to visitors of other Faiths or religions. This helps to promote tolerance and respect for those who think differently.
- The school offers wrap around care in the form of an extremely popular breakfast and after school club.
- The friends of St. Albert's (FOSA) support the school in both fundraising and social events.

### **The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school.**

- The Collective Worship provided by the school is outstanding in reflecting the Catholic character of the school.
- Collective Worship has a high profile and is central to the prayer life of St. Albert's.
- Collective Worship plays a key part in meeting the Spiritual needs of this worshipping community.
- Opportunities are provided to enable full, active and conscious participation of the whole school community.
- Pupils are enabled to pray formally and informally using a variety of prayer methods and styles.
- Opportunities are provided for parents and carers to participate in a variety of celebrations of the 'Come and See' programme.
- The parish priest is a regular visitor to the school and presides at both school and church celebrations of Mass throughout the Church's liturgical year.
- The school has invested time and resources to support Worship Warriors and Mini Vinnies – the children's arm of the St. Vincent de Paul Society. Both of these initiatives are impacting on the 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.**

- Leaders, governors and managers are outstanding in promoting and developing the Catholic life of the school. They are deeply committed to the Church's mission in education. They are energised by the task and are a source of inspiration for the whole community.
- The current Mission Statement, *"Educating the children and serving the community in the love of Jesus Christ"* and the aims and practical objectives derived from it need a full review following de-federation. This will ensure that they accurately reflect the new leadership vision for the school, takes all stakeholders views into account and becomes a living document which shapes and directs every aspect of school life.
- Excellent opportunities are provided for the staff and pupils to play an active part in the Catholic Life and Mission of the school through prayer, raising awareness of those in need and charitable outreach.
- The parish priest has led retreats for Year 6 pupils and staff to Ladyewell, the Shrine to Our Lady and the Martyrs in Preston.
- The Self Evaluation Document provides evidence of the schools monitoring, analysis and self challenge. It is a comprehensive document which guides the school well in this area.

- The school provides very good training to enable staff to further understand the Church's Mission in Education and play their unique part in it including attendance at Archdiocesan leadership spirituality retreats, Collective Worship and NQT In-service days.
- A range of opportunities for Spiritual and Moral developments are provided for all staff and pupils including celebrations at Mass, Collective Worship and opportunities to join in 'Come and See for Yourself' at the beginning and 'Rejoice' celebrations at the end of each new topic.
- Leadership at all levels respects difference, values diversity and ensures equal opportunities for all.
- Prayer, worship and the liturgical life of the school reflects and respects the religious diversity within the school.
- There are positive relationships at every level leading to a welcoming, happy, safe and caring learning environment for staff and pupils.
- Following de-federation some Governors are new to their role but led by the Chair are becoming more informed about Catholic Life at St. Albert's and discharge their responsibilities in an appropriate manner.
- The governors need to consider promoting the Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies when employing new staff as there are only a small percentage of staff in the school with the qualification.
- Policies related to Catholic Life are in place but need to be dated when ratified and when renewal is due. These also need to be linked to other policies to ensure consistency.
- The school supports the St. Albert's With You Always family catechesis sessions.

**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.**

- The way in which leaders, governors and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education is outstanding.
- In the last year, there has been a significant turnover of staff which has had an impact in the school. Provision has been made for training inexperienced staff but this has sometimes lead to shortfalls which is beyond the control of the school. However, they have recognised this and acted quickly to recruit replacements.
- The Self Evaluation Document is a coherent reflection of where the school is now.
- Teaching and learning is monitored regularly and appropriate feedback and support given as necessary.
- Continuing professional development opportunities are provided for all staff including attendance at Archdiocesan In-service Topic days and subject leader briefing days.
- Formal assessment tasks are undertaken in line with Archdiocesan guidance.
- The school tracks pupil progress in Religious Education and standards are good. During monitoring this was highlighted as an area for development to be shared with Governors. This is now happening and will provide a firm basis for accurate diagnosis of the schools' strengths and areas for development.
- The parish priest is the chair of governors and the link governor with responsibility for Religious Education. This is a key role in ensuring that the full governing body are kept informed of standards in the school.

- Whilst on maternity leave the assistant head took over leadership of Religious Education. She has maintained the high standard of monitoring in the school and continued to drive forward the subject. Now that the Deputy is back they have formed a leadership team. They are both dedicated, enthusiastic and show a real commitment to developing the role further.
- Excellent documentation guides and directs all staff in the delivery of the subject and new initiatives are introduced when appropriate i.e. the planning template.
- Since the implementation of Come and See all the subsequent documentation and policies have been updated.
- Policies related to Religious Education are in place but need to be dated when ratified and when renewal is due. These also need to be linked to other policies to ensure consistency.

## **What does the school needs to do to improve further?**

- Raise the standards of attainment in Religious Education further by:
  - continuing to address the areas identified on the Self Evaluation Document.
- Further develop promoting, monitoring and evaluating the provision for the Catholic Life and Religious Education of the school by:
  - undertaking a full review of the Mission Statement with all stakeholders in the Autumn Term 2017;
  - creating a set of aims and objectives which meet Archdiocesan expectations to drive forward the leadership vision for the school.
- Further develop the quality of teaching and purposeful learning in Religious Education by:
  - developing teachers repertoire by using the language of the level descriptors 'driver words' in classroom practice to challenge pupils;
  - further developing current practice when teaching about another Faith or religion by taking pupils out to other places of worship or inviting authentic speakers into school;
  - sharing good practice across the school.

# INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

## OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

|   |   |
|---|---|
| How effective the school is in providing Catholic Education | 1 |
|---|---|

## 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                   | 2 |
| 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    | 2 |
| The extent to which the Religious Education curriculum promotes pupils' learning | 2 |
| 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**