



Catholic Schools Inspectorate inspection report for
Our Lady Star of the Sea

URN: 104929

Carried out on behalf of the Most Rev. Malcolm McMahon, Archbishop of Liverpool on:

Date: Wednesday 22 - Thursday 23 March 2023

Overall effectiveness The overall quality of Catholic education provided by the school.....	2
Catholic life and mission (p.3) How faithfully the school responds to the call to live as a Catholic community at the service of the Church's educational mission.....	2
Religious education (p.5) The quality of curriculum religious education.....	2
Collective worship (p.7) The quality and range of liturgy and prayer provided by the school.....	2
The school is fully compliant with the curriculum requirements laid down by the Bishops' Conference	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
The school is fully compliant with all requirements of the diocesan bishop	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
The school has responded to the areas for improvement from the last inspection	Fully

Summary of key findings

What the school does well

- The school serves its community with love, compassion and hope and provides a safe and loving environment for all pupils.
- Staff are positive role models for pupils, showing love and care for one another, and bearing witness to the Catholic life and mission of the school.
- This is a highly inclusive school which welcomes all pupils and families, including those from other faiths and backgrounds, and those with special educational needs and disabilities, in a spirit of respect and hospitality.
- All pupils, including those with special educational needs, are supported to achieve well in religious education and they enjoy the range of creative tasks in lessons.

- School leaders have excellent links with the parish priest and they prioritise events within the liturgical calendar to offer pupils regular opportunities for worship which supports their spiritual and moral development.

What the school needs to improve:

- Leaders should further review the impact of actions currently taken in Catholic life and mission, religious education, and collective worship. More searching analysis can then lead to well-planned, strategic actions with outstanding outcomes.
- Continue to focus on developing pupils' oracy in religious education lessons so they are confident to articulate their knowledge and understanding. Enable all pupils to become engaged in discussions to deepen their learning in religious education.
- Leaders should ensure that pupils are given the opportunity to respond to the purple questions and feedback in their religious education books, to enable them to make further progress.

Catholic life and mission

How faithfully the school responds to the call to live as a Catholic community at the service of the Church's educational mission.

Catholic life and mission key judgement grade:.....	2
Pupil outcomes The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school	2
Provision The quality of provision for the Catholic life and mission of the school	2
Leadership How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic life and mission of the school	1

Pupils clearly know and feel that they are valued as individuals, made in the image and likeness of God. Pupils say they feel safe, secure and happy in school due to the exceptional care they receive. This is a direct result of all the school does to cater for and support families and the needs of the community it serves. Pastoral support is available to pupils and families and pupils confirmed that there is ‘always someone to talk to.’ One pupil explained their mission as ‘shining the light of Jesus’ and how they fulfil this by acting ‘like a microphone for God.’ Pupils talk enthusiastically about achieving the Live Simply Award. This is an expression of the commitment to Catholic Social Teaching and supporting those in need. Pupils take an active role in raising money for charities such as CAFOD and organising a cake sale to support the communities in Syria and Turkey affected by earthquakes. Eco council representatives speak proudly of their responsibilities, especially representing their school at the Southport Eco Centre in a bid to help their school, and the world, to be a better place. Our Lady of the Sea achieved the Laudato Si award as a result of many activities which demonstrate the commitment to caring for our common home. Pupils understand that their school community is committed to following the teachings of the Gospels and explained, ‘that is what Jesus wants us to do.’ Pupils would benefit from further opportunities to develop their articulation of the theology which underpins their actions.

There is an embedded culture of welcome for all those who join the school. All pupils, including those from different cultures and beliefs, are welcomed wholeheartedly. School is fully inclusive and makes provision for children from other faiths to have fidelity to their own commitments, showing respect for one another. Pupils acknowledge that ‘no-one is treated any differently and everyone is welcome in our school.’ The school has a clear focus on fostering a supportive

community, where everyone is valued without exception. This is also evident in the relationships between pupils who articulate their respect for the various cultures and belief traditions within their school. Pupils celebrate and speak positively about the supportive and caring spirit of hospitality offered to everyone. The Pastoral Manager, along with all staff, provide the highest levels of love and care for pupils, particularly those with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) and pupils who are most vulnerable. Staff are excellent role models for pupils. Relationships are built on a foundation of genuine love and care which bear witness to the Catholic life and mission of the school. Christ is at the centre of the school. The school environment reflects the Catholic identity of the school. The provision for relationships, sex, and health education is carefully planned so that connections are made with teaching in religious education. Leaders have also created a clear map of where links are made to learning across other areas of the curriculum.

Leaders and Governors clearly articulate the Church's mission and are committed to exercising their duty as guardians of the Catholic life and mission of the school. They are fastidious in ensuring that this remains their core purpose. Leaders and governors have a dedication to care for our common home, serving those in greatest need. The Live Simply award is testimony to this. Governors make a significant contribution to the evaluation of Catholic life and mission and have levels of expertise in offering support and challenge where necessary. They are ambitious for the school to remain 'a beacon of hope and joy for the community it serves.' In this respect, the mission, 'shining in the light of Jesus', is lived out. Leaders and governors should continue to share this expertise with staff to further raise pupil outcomes and provision for Catholic life. Leaders value the positive links with the parish priest who is a regular visitor and offers class masses once a fortnight in school. He is enthusiastic and committed to further developing the relationship between home, school and parish and plans opportunities to do this. For example, Reception pupils are invited for a teddy bears picnic at church. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the Catholic life and mission of the school and value the care staff give to the wellbeing of all pupils. Pupils would benefit from effective strategies for the engagement of parents/carers in supporting the schools' mission and strengthening the partnership between home and school. The head teacher and governors show a commitment to the wellbeing of all staff. Staff commented on the positive support they have for each other. Leaders support new staff with a team approach for their professional development. The impact of Catholic life and mission needs to be monitored and evaluated to inform strategic planning for improvement. Self-evaluation should include the views of pupils and provide opportunities for staff to be involved in shaping the school's mission.

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade:.....

2

Pupil outcomes

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education.....

2

Provision

The quality of teaching, learning, and assessment in religious education.....

2

Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor, and evaluate the provision for religious education.....

2

Pupils say they enjoy their learning in religious education. As a result, behaviour in lessons is good. Consequently, pupils' achievement is in line with their attainment in Maths and English. Pupils produce good work in religious education and their books evidence progress and coverage of the curriculum. Pupils are religiously literate. This develops throughout school and is appropriate to their age and capacity. In one lesson, a pupil recognised that 'Jesus loves us and died on the cross' when talking about Good Friday. Through effective questioning, older pupils were able to reflect spiritually and ethically on the Stations of the Cross. They discussed why Christians remember the events of Good Friday and why it is important to them. Pupils have the opportunity to present their work in a variety of creative ways, through drawing, colouring, painting, and role play. In one lesson, chrome books were used to provide opportunities for pupils to record their work in religious education. In another class, pupils engaged in role play to re-enact the story of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday. In one class, a painting of the Garden of Gethsemane was used as a stimulus for discussion. Pupils sometimes lack the confidence to speak about what they have learned in religious education. In some religious education lessons, pupils sit and listen for long periods and do not have the opportunity to engage in discussions and share their knowledge. In these lessons, teachers provide a summary of prior learning. More opportunities for pupils to recall their knowledge would also develop their confidence in speaking about their learning in religious education. Developing pupils' fluency to articulate key concepts and subject-specific vocabulary, and enabling them to ask good questions, would help to deepen their learning in religious education.

Teachers have confidence in the delivery of religious education and show a commitment to the value of religious education within the curriculum. Adults are used effectively to optimise and support the learning for pupils with special educational needs. In lessons where questioning is

most effective, pupils demonstrate full participation in lessons and pupils' oracy is skilfully developed. In some lessons, pupils contribute to discussions to build on learning from previous lessons to deepen their knowledge and understanding. The consistent implementation of active engagement strategies would allow all pupils to be involved in each part of the lesson, thus improving learning for most pupils. When lessons lack sufficient pace, pupils are passive for too long and there is a lack of engagement and challenge for them to reflect spiritually and theologically. Planning and books show that the curriculum is suitably adapted for the different needs of pupils. In some lessons, pupils are supported with word banks to aid their written work. The policy for marking and feedback allows pupils to understand what they can do to make further progress in learning. Where this is applied consistently, it enables pupils to know what they need to do to improve. Teachers must ensure that pupils are consistently given the opportunity to respond to purple questions in books. Teachers recognise the impact religious education has on the moral and spiritual development of pupils. In one lesson, pupils were given the opportunity to reflect upon the beatitudes and how they are applied to their own lives. For example, times when they may need to act as a peacemaker.

Pupils are developing their knowledge, understanding, and skills that reflect the requirements of the *Religious Education Directory*. The subject leader has a clear vision for teaching and learning in religious education. As a result, teaching is usually at least good. The leader for religious education provides effective support for staff new to school. New staff access appropriate professional development and training. Leaders ensure the curriculum is sequenced so that pupils progress through subject content appropriately. Leaders of religious education follow a monitoring and analysis cycle, which enables leaders and governors to identify the school's strengths and areas for development. Religious education leaders have developed a rigorous system for tracking and assessment so there is a clear oversight of attainment and standards. This allows all staff to identify pupils who require further support. Senior leaders ensure internal moderation is planned and all staff receive effective guidance from leaders to ensure the accuracy of assessments. Staff said they would appreciate and benefit from the opportunity to moderate assessments with other schools. Leaders and governors ensure that religious education is comparable to other core subjects in terms of professional development, resourcing, and timetabling. Leaders and governors should evaluate the impact of the trial blocking for religious education in some classes, ensuring it has equal prominence with other core subjects. Leaders and governors should review the self-evaluation document to analyse the impact of actions currently taken so that more searching analysis can lead to well-planned strategic actions and outstanding outcomes.

Collective worship

The quality and range of liturgy and prayer provided by the school.

Collective worship key judgement grade:.....

2

Pupil outcomes

How well pupils participate in and respond to the school's collective worship

2

Provision

The quality of collective worship provided by the school

2

Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for collective worship

2

Pupils respond positively to opportunities for prayer and liturgy provided by the school. They say they like worship as it is a time when, 'we all join in, sing and gather together.' Pupils participate with reverence, they can reflect in silence, and join in communal prayer and singing. Worship follows the pattern of the liturgical year and pupils articulate how this influences the focal areas and the prayer life of the school. Pupils know and explain how different colours reflect the different seasons in the liturgical year. Prayer ambassadors are proud of their role and enjoy the responsibilities of preparing focus worship tables, reading scripture and leading prayers which are appropriate to the season. Prayer ambassadors would benefit from further support to enable them to have a more active role in preparing and leading prayer and liturgy. This would help them to evaluate the quality of the prayer experiences they plan whilst developing their role within school. Pupils are willing to undertake liturgical ministries and have taken responsibility for reading and serving during school and parish masses. Pupils found it difficult to reflect on how their experience of prayer and liturgy has an impact on their lives. They struggled to give concrete examples of how prayer and liturgy leads to them taking action.

Prayer has a central place in the daily life of school and it reflects the prayer life of the church. Scripture is selected to enable pupils to reflect upon, and actively respond to, in their own lives. For example, pupils speak about Oscar Romero as their patron saint and the connections to their parish. Pupils can recount the details of his life and how he inspires them to, 'aspire to be more not to have more.' This enhances the pupils' aspiration and ambition for themselves and their lives. Music and singing are integral to prayer and liturgy and enhance the joyful experiences of worship for all pupils. One class sang 'Gather together' as they prepared for worship and were encouraged to reflect on the significance of Oscar Romero's words. Mass is celebrated in school on a regular basis and this allows time for the parish priest to enhance the pupils' experiences of

worship. Displays and spaces within the school are reflective of the attention and care devoted to prayer. For example, the prayer tree is a wonderful expression of the prayer life of the school. The school has a prayer garden which leaders recognise could be utilised more frequently as a focal point for spontaneous, outdoor worship. Leaders need to find more opportunities to involve parents and families in the prayer life of the school as parents say they are rarely invited to be involved in this aspect of school.

The leader for collective worship has carefully planned whole school themes for prayer and liturgy to match the cycle of the liturgical year. Key times are set aside for celebrations as well as regular class masses in school. Themes also reflect significant days and events in the church calendar. For example, teachers plan worship to mark the feast day of Oscar Romero as this is significant to the school and parish. Leaders ensure there is a consistent approach to the planning and delivery of collective worship. This enables pupils to have some involvement in planning prayer and liturgy themselves. The head teacher and senior leaders act as role models, ensuring all staff understand the importance of prayer and liturgy and new staff are supported well to lead worship. The parish priest is instrumental in supporting staff in their understanding of liturgical formation. Leaders, governors and the voice of pupils are involved in the self-evaluation of collective worship. Leaders need to evaluate the quality and impact of prayer and liturgy so that strategic planning and support can be offered to all staff to ensure high quality experiences of worship are consistently delivered for all pupils.

Information about the school

Full name of school	Our Lady Star of the Sea
School unique reference number (URN)	104929
Full postal address of the school	Kepler Street, Seaforth, L21 3TE
School phone number	0151 9283158
Name of head teacher or principal	Mrs Joan Jenkins
Chair of governing board	Anne-Marie Grant
School Website	https://www.ourlady-starofthesea.org.uk/
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	Click or tap here to enter text.
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age-range of pupils	3-11
Trustees	Click or tap here to enter text.
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	29 th September 2015
Previous denominational inspection grade	2

The inspection team

Cathie Williams	Lead inspector
Fiona Brownsey	Team inspector
Name of inspector	Lead/team
Name of inspector	Lead/team

Key to grade judgements

Grade	England	Wales
1	Outstanding	Excellent
2	Good	Good
3	Requires improvement	Adequate and requires improvement
4	Inadequate	Unsatisfactory and in need of urgent improvement