



ARCHDIOCESE OF LIVERPOOL

INSPECTION REPORT

MUCH WOOLTON CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

LIVERPOOL

Inspection Date 8 May 2019

Inspectors Mrs. Pat Peel Mrs. Maria Eves Fr. Anthony Kelly

Unique Reference Number 104636

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

Type of School Catholic Primary

Age range of pupils 4 - 11

Number on roll 418

Chair of Governors Mrs. Carol Chapman and Mrs Emma Slyner Andres

Executive Headteacher Mr. Matthew White

School address Watergate Lane
Woolton
Liverpool
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Date of last inspection June 2014

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

- Much Woolton is a larger than average sized Catholic Primary School situated in Woolton serving the parish of St. Mary's, Woolton.
- There are 418 children on roll of whom 379 are baptised Catholic, 18 come from other Christian denominations and 17 from other faith or religious traditions. 4 have no religious affiliation.
- There are nineteen teachers. Seventeen of which teach Religious Education. Fifteen teachers are baptised Catholic. Ten teachers have a suitable qualification in Religious Education.
- Since the last inspection the Headteacher has become Executive Headteacher supporting another Liverpool school. The Deputy has become Acting Head of School and the Religious Education Leader has become the Acting Deputy.

Key for inspection grades

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

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OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

Much Woolton is an outstanding school in providing Catholic Education.

CATHOLIC LIFE

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 truly appreciate, value and actively participate in the Catholic Life at Much Woolton. They know, own and live out their Mission Statement, "With Jesus, we love, learn and grow."
- Pupils show a deep respect for themselves and others as made in the image and likeness of God. The behaviour of pupils is exemplary. In proportion to their years they show an ability to listen, to give thanks, to forgive and be forgiven. They are quick to congratulate others and have a very good understanding of right and wrong.
- Pupils enthusiastically embrace the demands that members of the school community entails such as becoming school councillors, Y6 prefects, Mini Vinnies and playground buddies. The school have a dedicated Head Boy and Girl and subsequent deputies who were elected by their peers. Prior to the inspection the Head Girl (Bethany) had written a heartfelt letter outlining many of the Catholic Life opportunities to be found at Much Woolton and the part she plays within that and how she must be a role model for the rest of the children in the school.
- They take a leading role in those activities which promote the schools' Catholic Life and mission both within school and in the wider community such as fundraising for numerous charities e.g. CAFOD, Nugent, NSPCC, Marie Curie and St. Vincent de Paul Society to name but a few. Within the locality they have supported Garston Food Bank, The Whitechapel Centre, a local homeless and housing charity and Alder Hey Children's and the Royal Hospitals.
- Pupils value and fully participate in opportunities provided by the school including a range of after school clubs including gardening, dance, yoga, fencing, gymnastics, music and a host of seasonal sports.
- Pupils take full advantage of the opportunities the school provides for their personal support and development they have an outstanding sense of belonging. As a result, they are happy, confident and secure in their own stage of physical, emotional and spiritual growth. On the day of inspection, a child commented that, "We do love, learn and grow here because we follow Jesus." Another added "We are really lucky because we get lots of opportunities to do things and go to places other schools don't."
- The choir performs at school and many parish and community events including singing at Woolton Grange the local elderly people's home. They have taken part in the Peace Proms concert at the Echo Arena.
- Pupils, appropriate to their age and capability, have begun relationships and sexual development lessons within the context of a Christian understanding but this is in its infancy and needs to be embedded further into school life.

- Pupils across Key Stage 2 have the opportunity to go on residential visits. Year 3 and 4 pupils visit *Barnstondale Educational Centre* on the Wirral, Year 5 children visit *Plas Caerdeon Outdoor Education Centre* in Barmouth, and Year 6 children visit *Kingswood Centre* in Colomendy. Pupils are also enabled to go Skiing with the *Liverpool Primary Ski Association*.
- Pupils enthusiastically embrace a holistic approach to education, understand what it means to have a vocation and recognise the importance of using their gifts in the service of others. Pupils are rewarded with certificates at their weekly celebration assemblies. Each half term two pupils per class are rewarded with a 'values heart' and a card from the Headteacher for displaying how they have lived out their particular value. These are appreciated from both the children and their families.
- Pupils value and respect the Catholic tradition of the school and its links with the parish community and the Archdiocese. As a result, they respect and are involved with St. Mary's parish celebrations and activities, irrespective of their own faith commitments.

The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school

- The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school is outstanding.
- The school Mission Statement, '*With Jesus, we love, learn and grow.*' its aims and objectives are a clear expression of the educational mission of the Church. It underpins every aspect of school life at Much Woolton.
- All staff are fully committed to its implementation across the curriculum. They enthusiastically participate in school activities which reflect the Catholic Life and mission of the school.
- There is a keen sense of community at all levels, evident in the high-quality relationships and the centrality of prayer to the whole community. The school is an extremely supportive and joyful community.
- The school environment reflects its mission and identity through concrete and effective signs of the school's Catholic character. The displays, classroom focus' and sacred reflective spaces all create an overwhelming yet calm ambience which exudes Much Woolton catholicity and ethos. This is tangible throughout the school.
- Staff promote high standards of behaviour and are exemplary role models of mutual respect and forgiveness for pupils inside and outside of the classroom.
- The entire curriculum reflects a commitment to Catholic Social Teaching, to care for our common home and to the dignity of every human person through its fundraising, eco stewardship and numerous outreach opportunities. This is a real strength in the school.
- The school runs '*Mini Vinnies*' the children's version of the St. Vincent de Paul Society. Pupils have a real commitment to the cause and understand the work that they can do in supporting others. This is having a real impact in the school.
- The school provides opportunities for the spiritual and moral development of all pupils and staff through prayer and continuous professional development opportunities such as attendance at Archdiocesan in-service days and accessing training for new staff.
- Clear policies and structures are in place, which provide the highest levels of pastoral care for pupils, and there is an explicit and concrete commitment to the most vulnerable and needy in both policy and practice. The Children's mentor is effective and highly valued in the school community by pupils and parents.
- The school is equally attentive to the pastoral needs of members of staff and pupils and ensures that every member's needs are understood and catered for.

- The parish priest is a frequent visitor to the school. Catechists recruited from the parish and governors support the pupils and their families undertaking the With You Always Sacramental programme.
- All the relevant documentation is in place and the school has made a commitment to support Relationships and Sex Education alongside Personal, Social and Health Education. This is an area the school has recognised needs to be further developed over the coming year to embed it fully.
- The school provides before and after school provision throughout the year. This is popular and well attended

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school

- Leaders and governors are outstanding in promoting, monitoring and evaluating the provision for the Catholic Life of the school.
- The schools' leadership is deeply committed to the Church's mission in education. Leaders are energised by the task and are a source of inspiration for the whole community. The development of the Catholic Life of the school is viewed by leaders and governors as a core leadership responsibility.
- The provision for the Catholic Life of the school is given priority by leaders and is reflected in the school's self-evaluation document which is a coherent reflection of monitoring, analysis and self-challenge and is clearly focused on the Catholic Life of the school.
- Relationships at every level are outstanding. The school operates exclusively as one team, and this is the key to its success. *"Each of us is a brick in the foundation of Much Woolton,"* is how the Head of School described the family approach created in the school.
- Continuous Professional Development focusing on the Catholic Life of the school occurs and is effective. As a result, staff understanding of the school's mission is outstanding. Staff are involved in shaping and supporting it.
- The school has successful strategies for engaging with parents and carers to the benefit of pupils, including those who might traditionally find working with the school difficult. The school offers an open-door policy, sends out regular newsletters including the *Wednesday Word* and has an up to date website with a live Twitter feed. As a result, parents and carers have an outstanding understanding of the school's mission and are supportive of it. One commented, *"It is clear that Much Woolton demonstrate these values everyday in the way the children are cared for, the environment in which they learn and in the rapport they establish with their teachers and other pupils."*
- There is a very active Parent Teacher Association who organise fundraising activities to support the needs of the school and socialising events.
- As leaders, the governing body is highly ambitious for the Catholic Life of the school and leads by example in the way it emphasises Catholic Life as a school improvement priority. Many of the governors are active in the parish and they make a valuable contribution to the Catholic Life of the school. They are very supportive to the school's mission.
- Governor's have given their unequivocal support to enable the Headteacher to share his expertise in working with, leading, and supporting another school in the Archdiocese. His drive, passion, and commitment in living out the Gospel values and sharing the Good News with others is commendable. He is an inspirational leader in the school.
- The school responds well to Archdiocesan policies and initiatives and promotes the Archdiocesan vision for the Archdiocese throughout the school.
- Leaders and governors have made a commitment to further develop Relationships and Sex Education throughout the school alongside Personal, Social and Health Education.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education

- The extent to which pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education is outstanding.
- Pupils, from their varied starting points, make excellent progress in each key stage.
- Groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs, are also making progress comparable to the progress of other pupils.
- Pupils, relative to their age and capacity, are religiously literate and engaged young people; they use their knowledge, understanding and skills, to reflect spiritually, and to think ethically and theologically. Pupils are aware of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life.
- Pupils are actively engaged in lessons and are committed to improving their knowledge, understanding and skills to further develop as competent learners.
- Pupils concentrate well and understand how well they are doing because they are very familiar with the Driver Words.
- Pupils approach their lessons with interest and enthusiasm. This was evident as pupils quickly settled to tasks and responded positively throughout. This was particularly evident in Year 4 where pupils were challenged to consider the journeys of St. Paul as part of their Pentecost Topic. They looked at maps from the time and thought about both the difficulties of the movement from one community across land and sea to another and the personal struggles Paul encountered along the way i.e. rejection, imprisonment.
- Pupils enjoy a range of activities and respond extremely well to opportunities which extend their learning. Behaviour for learning is exemplary because pupils enjoy Religious Education and disruptions in lessons are unusual.
- The quality of pupils' current work, both orally in class and in written work, is outstanding. Pupils take pride in their workbooks and the presentation is of a very high standard.
- The Rejoice celebration journals are testament to the wealth of work pupils have undertaken throughout topics.
- Pupils' are undertaking formal assessment in line with Archdiocesan guidance and evidence kept.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education is Outstanding.
- On the day of inspection there was some outstanding practice observed with nothing less than good.
- Staff are using the Archdiocesan template for planning Religious Education, but these could be improved further by becoming more succinct. The school has recognised this and moving on has provided staff with a new revised template to enhance this.
- Some teachers plan very good lessons and do use the language of the level descriptors i.e. driver words, but not enough is linked to pupils' current on-going assessment. This best practise needs to be shared.
- Teachers are confident in their subject knowledge and have a very good understanding of how pupils learn. Some staff need to provide more opportunities for greater depth and challenge by using the driver words not just in the lesson objective but throughout lessons including in the plenary. This will enable the most able children to pre-empt the next steps in their learning.

- Teachers employ a range of appropriate strategies, including individual, paired and collaborative work. Consequently, pupils are inspired, motivated and concentrate extremely well in lessons.
- In books there is evidence of continuity in lessons and across sequences of lessons. Parents are routinely invited to the Rejoice celebration assembly aspect of the topics.
- In the best lessons observed teachers used questioning techniques very well. They adapted explanations using the language of the new standards i.e. driver words catering for the needs of all pupils.
- High quality resources e.g. Come and See website, God's and Church's Story, audio and visual media, laptops and iPads etc. are employed to engage pupils in their learning. However, on the day of inspection the use of **Information and Communication Technology** was not observed.
- Other adults are used very effectively to optimise learning for pupils who need their support and encouragement to maximise their outcomes. They are a real strength in the school.
- Evidence in books shows that marking is always positive but not always linked to the lesson objective. Next steps and reflections are used by some teachers. These inconsistencies can be eradicated by sharing best practise in the school.
- Achievement and effort are celebrated immediately leading to outstanding levels of motivation from pupils. House points are used as a motivation strategy.

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education

- Leaders and governors are Outstanding in promoting, monitoring and evaluating the provision for Religious Education.
- Leaders and governors ensure that the Religious Education curriculum meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference in every respect in each key stage.
- Leaders and governors ensure that Religious Education has full parity with other core curriculum subjects including professional development, resourcing, staffing and accommodation. The subject leader regularly attends Archdiocesan in-service training and meets together with other schools to support monitoring and evaluation of the subject.
- Since the last inspection the *Come and See* programme has been fully implemented across the school and all relevant documentation e.g. planning, monitoring and tracking are fully embedded.
- Leaders' and governors' self-evaluation of Religious Education is a coherent reflection of rigorous assessment, tracking, monitoring, searching analysis and self-challenge which is informed by best practice in Religious Education. This will be enhanced further if governors are presented with the data simply using the language of the standards i.e. driver words. This will enable them to challenge more effectively.
- Whole school tracking is in place and the school has begun to adopt a different approach in line with the Bishop of England and Wales directive regarding the new standards. Further analysis of the standards will greatly improve day to day practice when staff are more confident using the language of the standards more succinctly on a daily basis.
- The subject leader is a real strength in the school. She has an inspiring vision of outstanding teaching and learning and a high level of expertise in securing this vision. She is enthusiastic and committed to the role. Since the monitoring visit she has been on maternity leave, become the acting deputy in the school and still continued to drive forward the subject. She is endeavouring to improve teaching and learning in Religious Education further.

- Leaders and governors ensure that Religious Education is planned to meet the needs of different groups of pupils. There is a new link governor for Religious Education who has begun to support the subject leader in her role. This role was previously undertaken by the Chair of Governors.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship

- Pupils response to and participation in the school's Collective Worship is good.
- Pupils act with reverence and are keen to participate in Collective Worship.
- They sing joyfully, reflect in silence and join in community prayer appropriately and with confidence.
- The early foundations for worship are clearly evident in the school.
- All pupils are not yet routinely involved in planning, preparing and/or leading worship with confidence, enthusiasm and a degree of independence. This needs further development across the school.
- Occasionally pupils evaluate Collective Worship as a participant, but this needs to be further developed across the school to ensure that all pupils have the opportunity both as a leader and a participant.
- Some pupils have undertaken the *Worship Warrior* training. This can be further developed by sharing those experiences and cascading the ideas across classes particularly at upper Key Stage 2.
- Pupils use a variety of approaches to prayer which includes scripture, religious artefacts, liturgical music and other forms of prayer.
- Pupils value and participate voluntarily in liturgy and prayer and say that they really enjoy Collective Worship and taking part in it. They said that they particularly loved the opportunity to visit the reflective prayer stations set up across the school. A few of the comments; *"We can just have two minutes with God."* *"Praying helps us to be closer to Jesus and our friends."* *"I love that special time to be alone."* *"It's just being here that helps, we know that God is always with us, but I can pray for my own things and I know that he will listen."*
- Pupils have a good understanding of the Church's liturgical year, its seasons and feasts.
- The experience of living and working in a faithful, praying community has a positive impact on the spiritual and moral development of pupils, irrespective of ability or faith background. They have a well-developed sense of respect for those of other faiths.

The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school

- The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school is outstanding.
- Collective Worship is part of the life of the school and prayer is included in all school celebrations. Praying together is part of the daily experience for pupils and staff.
- Listening and responding positively to pupil voice has helped the school to create the most beautiful, reflective prayer spaces around school. Each one different and unique. Lighting, seating and accessories help to create the ambiance conducive to prayer and reflection. Whilst on the main thoroughfare the silence is tangible. Pupils and staff say that they use them regularly and pupils say that they are one of the best features in the school where they can be *'closer to Jesus'*.

- Staff regularly use 'Come and See for Yourself' Collective Worship materials prior to beginning a new Religious Education topic.
- Collective Worship and resourcing are given a high priority in the school and evidence is kept.
- Staff need to become more skilled in helping pupils to plan and deliver quality worship. The school would benefit from undertaking Archdiocesan in-service training to support Collective Worship.
- Collective Worship has a purpose, message and direction although evidence suggests this is not always clear and at times a mini lesson is created rather than a reflective, prayerful experience.
- Scripture must always be chosen by the teacher and they need to facilitate the worship alongside the pupils.
- Relevant staff have a very good understanding of the Church's liturgical year, seasons and feasts and ensure that pupils have good experiences of the Church's liturgical life.
- The themes chosen for worship reflect a good understanding of the liturgical seasons and the Catholic character of the school.
- Opportunities are planned in a manner that facilitates attendance by other adults associated with the pupils and school and response to this invitation is very good.
- The parish priest is a frequent visitor to the school and is fulsome in his praise of Much Woolton. He presides at Mass for key celebrations throughout the Church's liturgical year and supports in class during some Religious Education topics.

How well leaders, governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship

- Leaders and governors are good in promoting, monitoring and evaluating the provision for Collective Worship.
- Leaders know how to provide policies and guidelines to plan and deliver quality Collective Worship. There is an up to date policy in place.
- Leaders have a very good understanding of the Church's liturgical year, seasons and feasts. They make these accessible to the pupils in a contemporary context.
- Leaders of Collective Worship within the school are appropriate models of good practice for staff and pupils. However, it is highly recommended that the school undertakes Archdiocesan in-service training to support staff planning Collective Worship.
- Staff promote pupils' planning and leading Collective Worship but this needs to be further developed in the school to ensure quality experiences are delivered.

What the school needs to do to improve further

- Further develop the work being undertaken in Catholic Life by:
 - undertaking Archdiocesan in-service training for Collective Worship;
 - beginning to develop a curriculum map for Relationships and Sex Education;
 - continuing to embed *Journey in Love and No Outsiders* into lessons to support Relationships and Sex Education.
- Raise the standards of attainment in Religious Education further by:
 - further developing the standards tracking to ensure that analysis feeds back into teachers planning;
 - further develop the language of the standards i.e. driver words to support governors when analysing data in Religious Education. This will help them to challenge and address the areas outlined for improvement much better;
 - continuing to address the areas identified on the Self Evaluation Document.

INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

How effective the school is in providing Catholic Education	1
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CATHOLIC LIFE

The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school	1
The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school	1
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school	1

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education	1
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education	1
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education	1

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship	2
The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school	1
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship	2

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