



**DIOCESE OF LANCASTER EDUCATION SERVICE**

**DENOMINATIONAL INSPECTION  
REPORT (Section 48)**

**Alston Lane  
Catholic Primary School  
Longridge**

**Preston**

**DENOMINATIONAL INSPECTION  
REPORT (Section 48)**

on

**THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL  
AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

**School:**

**Alston Lane Catholic Primary School Longridge**

**Address:**

**Preston Rd,  
Longridge  
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**School URN:**

**119635**

**Headteacher:**

**Mr Mark FitzGibbon**

**Chair of Governors:**

**Jan Wilson**

**Lead Inspector:**

**Mrs Adrienne Delaney**

**Team Inspector:**

**Mrs Mia Barlow**

**Date of Inspection:**

**10<sup>th</sup> October 2018**

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Alston Lane is a Catholic voluntary aided primary school in the Diocese of Lancaster. The school mainly serves the parish of Our Lady and St Michael's. It is a below average-sized primary school with currently 199 pupils on roll. The number, including the nursery, is 225. Approximately 76% are of baptised Roman Catholic Christian background. There is little mobility and few children from minority faith and cultural backgrounds.

The school has undergone some change in the past three years and the school has no permanent deputy or permanent assistant headteachers. There have also been significant changes within the teaching staff.

PUPILS	YR	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Total
Number on roll	30	20	30	30	30	30	29	199
Catholics on roll	16	13	19	22	25	22	23	149
Other Christian denomination	4	5	6	5	6	6	6	32
Other faith background	1	2	1	0	0	2	0	6
No religious affiliation	9	0	4	3	2	1	0	11
No of learners from ethnic groups	2	2	1	0	0	1	0	5
Total on SEN Register	1	3	1	4	2	2	3	16
Total with Statements of SEND								

Exclusions in last academic year	Permanent	0	Fixed term	3
Index of multiple deprivation	C			

PARISHES SERVED BY THE SCHOOL	
Name of Parish	No of Pupils
Our Lady and St Michael's	97

TEACHING TIME FOR RE	Rec	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Total
Total teaching time (Hours)	CP	2 hrs	2.5hrs	2.5hrs	2.5 hrs	2.5 hrs	2.5 hrs	16
% of teaching time	10%	10%	12%	10%	10%	10%	10%	10%

TEACHING TIME FOR ENGLISH	Rec	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Total
Total teaching time (Hours)	CP	5h	5h	5h	5h	5h	5h25m	31.15
% of teaching time	CP	20%	20%	20%	20%	20%	20%	20%

TEACHING TIME FOR MATHS	Rec	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Total
Total teaching time (Hours)	CP	5h25m	5h25	5h25	5h25	5h25	5h25	33%
% of teaching time	CP	26%	26%	23%	24%	24%	24%	25%

STAFFING	
Full-time teachers	7
Part-time teachers	4
Total full-time equivalent (FTE)	11.1
Classroom Support assistants	10

ORGANISATION	
Published admission number	30
Number of classes	7
Average class size	28

Number of Catholic teachers FTE	4.5
Number of teachers teaching RE	10
Number of teachers with CCRS or equivalent	2
Number of teachers currently undertaking CCRS	0
Chaplaincy staffing	
Teachers with CTC	

<b>EXPENDITURE (£)</b>	<b>Last financial year 2016/17</b>	<b>Current financial year 2017/18</b>	<b>Next financial year 2018/19</b>
Total expenditure on teaching and learning resources	£10 000	£10 000	£11 500
RE Curriculum allowance from above	£160	£1 000	£1 000
English Curriculum allowance from above	£3 000	£3 000	£3 000
Total CPD budget	£4 000	£4 000	£4 000
RE allocation for CPD	CPD delivered by HT or LLDE	CPD delivered by HT or LLDE	CPD delivered by HT or LLDE

#### **How the school has developed since the last inspection**

All aspects for improvement since the last inspection have been addressed and, during a period of change over the past three years, the school has maintained standards in the Catholic Life and curriculum RE. An improved baseline assessment and a more detailed tracking system across school have been put in place and the established and newly appointed governors are well informed and able to monitor attainment and progress in curriculum RE.

The school has a good capacity to sustain these improvements. The dedication of the governors together with the commitment of the headteacher, teachers and support staff, demonstrate the capacity to improve further. Inspection has shown that self-evaluation is good and issues arising from in-house moderation meetings and cluster meetings have identified areas for development in curriculum RE.

## INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

**OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS**

**2**

**CATHOLIC LIFE**

**1**

**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

**2**

**OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS**

Alston Lane Catholic Primary School is a good Catholic school. It is a very welcoming learning environment that promotes inclusion. Pupils enjoy attending Alston Lane and they demonstrate positive attitudes to their learning. On the day of the inspection a pupil described her experience of the school as one where 'faith shines through everything'. Pupils deepen knowledge of their faith as they progress through the Key Stages and gain a firm understanding of Catholic practice. The school daily lives out its Mission Statement which states that children are 'learning and growing as children of God'. After a period of change governors and senior leaders are focussed on their vision for the direction of their Catholic school. Recommendations since the last inspection have been addressed and work on them remains ongoing. The headteacher and school governors have been conscientious in their efforts to ensure that the Catholic Life of the school remains the central focus of all aspects of school life.

The commitment of governors, headteacher, support staff and parish clergy interviewed on the day of inspection was palpable. This has ensured that the Catholic Life of the school is good and that pupils are supported in their prayer life and helped to grow in their faith. Staff show good example to pupils and staff spoken to on the day of inspection stated that they work well together. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is good and has an impact on everyday life at Alston Lane School. This can be seen through pupils' responses to each other and in their understanding of the notion of the common good in their world. They become involved in a variety of activities, including being responsible for their own school environment and supporting their own and the wider and global community. These activities contribute to pupils' social, emotional and moral development. Gospel values permeate school life and pupils are helped to make the most of their abilities and encouraged to grow as Catholic citizens.

Opportunities for Prayer and Liturgy are good. Pupils act with reverence and join in prayers with confidence. They were observed singing hymns joyfully at a whole school Prayer and Liturgy and at liturgies observed during the day of inspection. They make full use of resources available to them and appreciate the opportunities offered e.g. Masses with the parish, class and school Masses and shared liturgies.

The quality of curriculum RE is good and improving. Pupils are provided with appropriate learning opportunities to deepen their faith, to understand Catholic traditions and practices, and make good progress in their learning. Most pupils enjoy RE lessons and staff have developed action plans that aim to continue to further raise attainment and achievement.

Work undertaken with staff to regularly update teachers' subject knowledge has had an impact on the delivery of curriculum RE and is greatly appreciated by teachers. The professional development opportunities within the local cluster of Catholic schools is effective in terms of subject knowledge, assessment and monitoring, and in raising expectations. The curriculum is continually being developed to meet the needs of all learners in line with diocesan and national recommendations.

Governors and leaders take account of the '*Fit for Mission? Schools*' guidance and whole staff training has taken place on Human Relationships and Sex Education (HRSE) and it is being incorporated into the curriculum.

The commitment of leaders and governors ensure that the school's capacity for sustained improvement is outstanding.

#### **WHAT THE SCHOOL NEEDS TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER**

To improve further the school needs to:

- incorporate teaching about Judaism and Islam into the curriculum so that children are aware of other monotheistic faith practices
- further refine the school's tracking system in RE so that the progress of all groups is readily identified

Celebrate successes by:

- further embedding a creative approach to the teaching for RE so that the needs of all learners are met
- ensuring that all children are skilled and confident in acts of Prayer and Liturgy by encouraging older pupils to mentor the lower age groups
- ensuring that continued staff development includes deeper pedagogy and understanding of the Catholic faith

## PART A: CATHOLIC LIFE

### THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

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

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The inspection judges that the Catholic Life of the school is outstanding.

Pupils make an excellent contribution to the Catholic Life of the school and benefit from this. Gospel values are at the centre of school life and pupils are helped to grow in faith, are encouraged to make the most of their abilities and to become the best they can be. Pupils' faith growth is at the heart of a culture of care and concern promoted by governors, the headteacher, and the staff team. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. On the day of inspection they were consistently seen to be polite and considerate towards each other. A positive behaviour policy, coupled with an emphasis on personal responsibility, encourages a culture of praise and respect for each other and for their neighbours. It has forgiveness and reconciliation at its heart so as to ensure good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. On the day of inspection one child stated that 'being in a Catholic school is all about forgiveness'.

The majority of pupils in the school are baptised Catholics who are proud of their beliefs. However, they would benefit from learning about faiths and cultures different from their own in order to further understand the world in which they live. They are very aware of the needs of the local and global community and seek to support others through prayer and fund raising. Pupil behaviour is commendable. Pupils were seen to treat others with respect and to acknowledge that their behaviour always has consequences. A member of the school council told inspectors, 'Jesus wants us to love everyone and anyone, so you forgive them' There is an atmosphere of reconciliation where pupils learn to forgive and start each day anew and grow together in faith and love. One pupil stated that 'God wants us to forgive because God forgives all the time' Another stated 'when we look at scriptures we try to do what Jesus says'.

Governors and school leaders are committed to the Church's mission in education as expressed in the 'Fit for Mission? Schools' document. Governors make a significant contribution to the Catholic Life of the school and they possess the experience needed to drive the school forward. They are committed to their school and able to challenge as well as to support. They are involved in monitoring and evaluating the Catholic Life of the school. Continued professional development is having a positive effect on the Catholic Life and on curriculum RE. All staff are supported in developing the Catholic Life of the school and have attended training from a

Diocesan Leader of Education and the cluster of local Catholic Schools. The number of teachers who have accessed or are currently accessing CCRS training may aid pedagogy and intrinsic knowledge of the Catholic faith. Governors, clergy, the headteacher, teachers and support staff and parishioners work together to ensure that the Prayer and Liturgy of the Catholic Church are central to the life of the school and a key part of school celebrations. They plan the school calendar around the liturgical seasons and feasts, bringing them to life and deepening knowledge and understanding of them. Pupils interviewed on the day could talk confidently about the liturgical year and how it impacts on their lives, in particular prayer and giving during Lent. They are assisted and supported in their prayer life and they are becoming confident in preparing and leading communal prayers. Pupils enjoy school liturgies and they welcome being given time to pray, to celebrate and to reflect. They appreciate the opportunities offered to them, for example Masses and liturgies. On the day of the inspection Key Stage 2 pupils were able to discuss the Catholic Life of the school with inspectors. A Key Stage 2 pupil told inspectors 'We focus on Mary. We are deeply into scripture. We learn about the saints'.

The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school is outstanding. Alston Lane School is a welcoming, friendly community with a family ethos where everyone is given an opportunity to grow in faith and to use their individual gifts and talents. The school community focuses on responding to the fundamental needs of the human person in terms of spiritual, intellectual, physical, emotional and social growth. There is a palpable expression of the relationship between faith and action and pupils are encouraged to understand that the Catholic community is one of love and care, tolerance and forgiveness, welcome and celebration, and forgiveness for all. A Key Stage 2 pupil spoke of fundraising on the day of inspection, saying: 'God wants everyone to be treated the same'. They raise money for local and global causes including the local food bank, CAFOD, the NSPCC, and various spontaneous child led charities. The school is remarkable in its understanding of the need to look after God's world. One Key Stage 2 child said 'God made this world and he doesn't want it ruined'. Several upper Key Stage 2 pupils could speak about Pope Francis and his *Laudato Si* encyclical and how their Eco School status reflects this.

Staff interviewed and observed on the day of inspection set good examples, are proud of their school and value the support and challenge given by their leaders. They work well together and appreciate the headteacher's support and the support of their colleagues. The governors work to promote the stability and aims of the school. There are positive relationships with the clergy, parishioners, parents, governors, staff and pupils. The parish priest is a regular and very welcome visitor to the school and fulfils his role both canonically and pastorally. The school works closely with the clergy and parish laity to prepare pupils for the sacraments of Reconciliation, Eucharist and Confirmation. The priest aids the understanding that teachers and pupils have of the faith and encourages and supports the Prayer and Liturgies that are planned for special times in the school and liturgical year. The school develops and expresses its ecclesial dimension through partnership with the diocesan family of schools and parishes and is active in facilitating training and support.

## PART B: RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

### THE QUALITY OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

<b>2</b>
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- How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education
- How well leaders and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education
- The quality of provision in Religious Education

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The majority of pupils enjoy RE. They have positive attitudes towards their learning and can speak with confidence about their RE lessons. On entry to Foundation Stage, baseline assessment of children shows that most have very little knowledge or understanding of the Catholic faith, or of its traditions. However, they make good progress throughout Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 and by the end of Key Stage 2 standards are in line with national expectations.

Leadership of the RE curriculum is well organised and led by the headteacher. He has continued to support the staff in his vision to continue improvement. Governors are dedicated to raising attainment and have high expectations of pupils. The headteacher, in his role as RE leader, provides much appreciated support to his staff. The staff show resolve in improving their subject knowledge and practice and work well with the leadership using a range of monitoring activities that relate to provision and outcomes in RE. Good marking, including assessment and tracking systems are in place. These now need to be further embedded and honed so that all significant groups of pupils are tracked. This should lead to required strategies and improvements to provision being put in place. Governors have a good understanding of attainment and progress in RE through termly curriculum meetings and regular visits to the school.

The quality of teaching and learning observed during the inspection was good and effective use is being made of experienced support staff to enhance opportunities for learning. Teachers continue to access training so that sound subject knowledge contributes to the pupils' progress as learners. They avail themselves of CPD opportunities and value the support of governors and the headteacher. The headteacher holds a daily Prayer and Liturgy for pupils and also a scriptural study session, so that children and staff greatly enhance their understanding of the Old and New Testament. Biblical knowledge was evident in conversations held with pupils on the day of inspection. Lessons observed and book scrutiny demonstrated a high level of scriptural understanding. The evaluation of planning and lesson observations carried out by the headteacher is having a positive impact on raising the quality of teaching and learning. In RE lessons pupils concentrate, are eager to learn, and achieve well. They were eager to discuss their work on the day of inspection and described next step marking and their targets. There is good quality marking evident and the progress of pupils is enhanced by interactive comments in

books. Pupils are encouraged to further improve their work during 'fix it time'. This good practice is secure across the school.

The governors, leaders and teachers are committed to the school's Catholic mission and its place in Religious Education. The delivery of curriculum RE takes account of the Curriculum Directory and the diocesan document '*Fit for Mission? Schools*' and provides pupils with an insight into the life and teachings of Jesus Christ and the relationship between faith and life. By using a variety of strategies teachers ensure that all pupils are able to make progress. Governors and the headteacher are well aware of the requirements of Catholic curriculum RE. Teachers use a range of teaching and learning activities and resources to ensure breadth and balance to the curriculum. The school uses a variety of resources such as *Come and See* and *CAFOD Social Justice* to enhance the diocesan Curriculum Wheels in order to deliver a scheme of work that meets the needs of learners. The scheme is continually being monitored and evaluated. Leaders now need to ensure that all pupils are able to learn about faiths and cultures that are different from their own, such as Judaism and Islam, in order to provide an appropriate understanding. The religious displays in the hall, in classes and around the school are of a high standard reflecting the Catholic dimension of Alston Lane.

Effective communication exists between the school and parish and involvement is prioritised. Parents appreciate the work of the school, as shown in the parents' questionnaires returned to the diocese for the inspection. They state that their children are happy in school and they are very happy with the provision of RE in the school.

## SUMMARY OF INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<b>Overall Effectiveness</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Capacity for sustained improvement</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Catholic Life</b>	<b>1</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school.</li> </ul>	<b>2</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How well leaders and managers promote and ensure provision for the Catholic Life of the school through monitoring and evaluation.</li> </ul>	<b>1</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school.</li> </ul>	<b>1</b>
<b>Religious Education</b>	<b>2</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education.</li> </ul>	<b>2</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How well leaders and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education.</li> </ul>	<b>1</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The quality of provision in Religious Education.</li> </ul>	<b>2</b>

	<b>Pupil Outcomes</b>	<b>Leadership &amp; Management</b>	<b>Provision</b>	<b>Overall</b>
<b>Catholic Life</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Religious Education</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>