

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 Mary's school is a smaller than average sized Catholic Primary School situated in Scarisbrick serving the parish of St Elizabeth's.
- There are 94 children on roll of whom 69 are baptised Catholic, 20 come from other Christian denominations, and 5 have no religious affiliation.
- There are 6 teachers of whom 6 teach Religious Education and 2 have a suitable qualification in Religious Education. Four teachers are baptised Catholic.
- Since the last inspection there is a new headteacher who is also the Religious Education subject leader.

Key for inspection grades

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

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Overall effectiveness:

St Mary's Catholic Primary School 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's Mission Statement and understand the part they play within it.
- The school is in the process of renewing its Mission Statement and pupils are fully involved in its evaluation.
- Pupils have an outstanding sense of belonging to the school community and value and respect others.
- Pupils embrace opportunities to meet their potential in all aspects of school life.
- Pupils are actively involved in developing the Catholic character of the school.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. They have a good sense of right and wrong and apply this in their personal relationships. They show responsibility for themselves and their actions.
- They have been actively involved in formulating '*We care*' statements and reflect these characteristics throughout the school.
- Pupils are encouraged to take on roles of responsibility in the school e.g. through the school council and eco council.
- Pupils show wider responsibilities through a variety of fundraising events. Funds are regularly raised for CAFOD and Nugent Care.
- Pupils are encouraged to present their own fundraising ideas, a parent commented on how it, '*allowed reflection and developed understanding of Christian values.*'
- Pupils benefit from participation in residential to Tower Wood in the Lake District and there are regular educational visits throughout the school. Pupils visit other school communities to celebrate mass.
- The school is keen to plan for retreat days to develop pupils' spiritual and moral guidance.
- Education for pastoral care and personal relationships has fostered positive attitudes in pupils. St Mary's has excellent pastoral support for its pupils in their *Nurture Group* and *Buddies* programmes.
- Pupils show respect and understanding of other faiths and religions and observe days such as the Holocaust Memorial and the birth of Ghandi.
- St Mary's praise and acknowledge the contribution of others evident in, '*Stars of the Week,*' and lunchtime, '*Captains Table.*' They show a readiness to embrace and celebrate their lived experiences.

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 outstanding.
- They make outstanding progress in relation to their starting points and capabilities.
- On entry to school some 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 outstanding.
- Analysis of assessments undertaken provides evidence of pupils generally attaining appropriate level for their age and stage of development in each key stage.
- The school has worked well in securing levels with additions to formally assessed tasks.
- By using the guidance provided by the Archdiocese the school should now focus on securing and pinpointing particular attainment levels.
- Developing the use of a context sheet when moderating would ensure justification and further raise teachers' understanding of expectations of a particular attainment level.
- 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 behaviour. They particularly show enthusiasm for challenging activities.
- Pupils are encouraged to work independently and collaboratively.
- Pupils are anxious to learn and improve their knowledge, understanding and skills as they become independent learners.

How well pupils respond to and participate in Collective Worship

- Pupils' response to and participation in Collective Worship is outstanding.
- They show interest, respond well and actively participate in Collective Worship.
- Pupils' knowledge of prayer and liturgy is increasing.
- They act with reverence and are keen to participate in a variety of gatherings.
- They are becoming familiar with a variety of prayer styles. They appreciate and are open to the Word of God in the scriptures.
- Older pupils are becoming more confident in developing ways to prepare and lead worship.
- Older pupils have assembled an excellent portfolio of their work and pupils are encouraged and continually supported to participate.
- Developing gradual steps in preparing and leading worship across the school will continue to build on the outstanding practice demonstrated by older pupils.
- A central well presented prayer area is used thoughtfully by the pupils and includes their own prayers which are then included on the weekly newsletter.
- Pupils join in community prayers appropriately and with confidence.
- Pupils know the importance of stillness and silence during times of reflection and prayer.
- On the day of inspection, worship engaged the pupils' interest, inspired reflection and they were able to respond meaningfully.

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 and engaged and make outstanding progress.
- Teachers display good subject knowledge and deploy a range of teaching styles to motivate and inspire pupils.
- Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to work independently and collaboratively.

- Teaching encourages pupils' enjoyment of and enthusiasm of Religious Education.
- In an outstanding lesson observation older pupils' interest and levels of interaction were palpable and was a true celebration in remembering their topic.
- In other lessons observed younger pupils released balloons, symbolic of their letting go of sadness. Pupils also celebrated their topic through lively discussion and creative activities such as t-shirt making and using a pinwheel to express the power of the Holy Spirit.
- Effort and achievement at all stages of learning is celebrated.
- In the Foundation Stage, themes are reinforced through appropriate continuous provision. There is evidence of how Religious Education is promoting and developing many early skills.
- Teaching Assistants and support workers provide outstanding care and support to pupils. They are deployed effectively and show sensitivity to pupils needs. They ensure all pupils in their care reach their full potential.
- Good quality resources are used within lessons and teachers use Information Communication Technology at times to maximise learning particularly through use of the interactive whiteboard.
- Planning is annotated and detailed and show good evaluations.
- Teachers take into account pupils' prior learning and plan for some differentiated tasks so that the work consolidates, builds and extends their knowledge and understanding.
- When planning consistent use of the driver words will emphasise differentiation and extend and challenge pupils learning further.
- Developing planning for *Respond* at the end of topics will allow teachers and pupils to work collaboratively in their understanding and celebration of learning.
- Pupils are given opportunities to discuss their work and sharing learning objectives with pupils was used effectively in some lessons observed.
- Pupils would benefit from consistent assessment for learning strategies within lessons across the school.
- Pupils are informed of their progress and how to improve both orally and at times through marking. Marking shows positive, affirming understanding of the learning focuses.
- Consistent developmental marking for Religious Education using the driver words will allow pupils the opportunity to evaluate their own work and further their learning.
- The school has assessment strategies in place which provide excellent detailed information on the achievement of all the pupils.
- The school tracks the achievement of all the pupils. Teachers are able to identify how well pupils are working and tackle underachievement.

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 curriculum is outstanding in meeting pupils' needs.
- 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. Imaginative and well planned strategies are deployed to enrich pupils' learning.
- The school implements new curriculum developments as appropriate.
- The curriculum is customised to meet the needs of groups and individuals.
- St Mary's has a secure basis from which they can now provide innovative ways of presenting Religious Education through their long term planning of the creative curriculum. This will benefit further opportunities for spiritual, moral and vocational development.
- Enrichment activities such as the wide variety of after school clubs for example, choir; football, dance and infant rugby have a positive impact on the curriculum.
- The school grounds are an outstanding feature of the school. There is a new outdoor classroom that will provide further opportunities to enrich the Religious Education curriculum.
- The school has good links with a cluster of local Catholic primary schools and St Bede's Catholic High School.
- St Mary's welcomes visitors from CAFOD into school to enrich pupils' experiences of global issues. The school is looking to further their global links.
- Children have explored the beliefs and values of other faiths and religions. This helps to promote tolerance and respect for those who think differently.
- Planning for visits to and visitors of those with other faiths and religions will support and give first hand experiences for pupils.

The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school.

- The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school is good. It reflects the Catholic character of the school.
- 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.
- There has been recent training for Collective Worship from the Christian Education Department for all staff.
- The school provides some opportunities for staff to develop the skills in planning, leading and evaluating Collective Worship.
- The school now needs to build a portfolio of collective worship planning and evaluations from across the school to further develop opportunities to share good practice.
- The teachers provide appropriate resources and opportunities to help pupils acquire the skills necessary to plan, lead and participate in Collective Worship.
- Providing a central location to enable pupils to access resources would encourage and develop responsibility and independence when planning and leading their own worship.
- Children are enabled to pray formally and informally using a variety of prayer methods and styles.
- Opportunities are provided to enable full, active and conscious participation of the whole school community. For example, there are regular end of topic *Rejoice* celebrations of the *Come and See* programme and the school hosts an Ecumenical Advent service for local schools.

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. All who form part of the school community including parents, clergy, governors and children were involved in the development of the Mission Statement.
- The school's Mission Statement is currently under a full review and the whole school community fully involved. The detailed evaluations of the review are currently presented thoughtfully and creatively. The school is fully prepared for the new Mission Statement to direct and guide every aspect of school life.
- The Headteacher provides focused leadership and lives out his vision creating a truly caring community.
- Leaders, governors and managers are outstanding in the way they use monitoring data to evaluate the schools performance, celebrate, and plan future improvements.
- The Self Evaluation Document provides evidence of the schools monitoring, searching analysis and self challenge.
- Analysis of the Self Evaluation Document provides a basis to celebrate strengths and outlines areas for development. There is also detailed evidence of the Catholic life of the school through the Self Evaluation Framework.
- Governors have an outstanding knowledge of the Catholic life of the school and fulfil their responsibilities. They have effectively helped to shape the direction of the school.
- Governors regularly attend training regarding Catholic life and Religious Education.
- Regular updates are received from the Headteacher regarding the Catholic life of the school.
- Governors take pride in the schools' very close and well established links with the parish community.
- The Parish priest visits school regularly and celebrates masses with the school community for liturgical occasions throughout the year and supports Religious Education topics.
- There are excellent home, school, parish links through the monthly Sunday family mass and support for the *With You Always* Sacramental programme.
- Leadership at all levels respects difference, values diversity and ensures equal opportunities for all.
- Opportunities are provided for the staff and pupils to play an active part in Catholic life and Mission of the school. There are positive relationships at every level within the school.
- The school provides valuable induction and regular in-service training to enable staff to further understand the Church's Mission in Education and play their unique part in it.
- Staff regularly attend liturgies for those working in Catholic Education.
- Further opportunities for spiritual and moral developments for staff through, for example, whole staff *Come and See for Yourself* reflections at the beginning of each theme would continue to develop St Mary's caring relationships.
- The quality of Collective Worship is a priority for the school. It is beginning to be monitored and evaluated by leaders, governors and managers. An up to date policy is in place, suiting the needs of the school.
- Parents are consulted regularly and involved in a variety of ways in the life of the school e.g. through regular newsletters, the school website and a variety of liturgical liturgies.

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.
- The headteacher who is also the subject leader is outstanding in guiding Religious Education. He shows great commitment in his role and introduces new initiatives when appropriate.
- He is accurate in his review of strengths and areas for development for Religious Education. He is aware that key members of staff can support the role of subject leader and share outstanding practice to drive the subject forward.
- Training and updates provided by the Archdiocese are attended regularly. Continuing professional development opportunities are provided for staff. Communication with the headteacher, staff, parents and governors is effective.
- The Self Evaluation document identifies targets, timescales and lines of accountability.
- The Religious Education governor, the assistant priest to the parish, is outstanding in his care and commitment to St Mary's. He gives strong effective guidance, reflects on his visits to Religious Education lessons to governors and plays piano for pupils at lunchtime!
- Detailed documentation guides and directs all staff in the delivery of the subject. This is updated as necessary.
- Monitoring data is used effectively to evaluate the schools performance and plan for future improvements.
- Monitoring is timetabled and effective. Opportunities for staff evaluations, self challenge and sharing of outstanding practice will further develop this process.
- Formal assessment tasks are undertaken in line with Archdiocesan guidance.
- Assessment information is collated and tracked by the subject leader and shared with the leadership team, governors and parents.
- Achievement and effort at St Mary's is always celebrated.
- Curriculum outlines are provided for parents who are consulted on different issues depending on the topic being covered.

What the school needs to do to improve further?

- Continue to implement the Self Evaluation Document using the guidance given in this report. This includes minor areas in the following:
 - the quality of Collective Worship;
 - the Catholic life of the school;
 - achievement in Religious Education;
 - teaching and learning in Religious Education;
 - the Religious Education Curriculum.

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	2

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