



ARCHDIOCESE OF LIVERPOOL

INSPECTION REPORT

ST. RICHARD'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

SKELMERSDALE

Inspection Date 17 January 2019

Inspectors Mrs Pat Peel Mrs. Louise Morton

Unique Reference Number 119684

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

Type of School Catholic Primary

Age range of pupils 3 - 11 (provision for 2 Year olds)

Number on roll 211

Chair of Governors Mr. P. Rowan

Headteacher Mr. M. Holden

School address Sandy Lane
Skelmersdale
West Lancashire
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Date of last inspection November 2013

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. Richard's is a larger than average sized Catholic Primary School situated in Skelmersdale serving the parish of St. Richard.
- There are 211 pupils on roll of whom 160 are baptised Catholic and 34 come from other Christian denominations. Seventeen pupils have no religious affiliation.
- There are twelve teachers. Nine of which teach Religious Education. Seven teachers are baptised Catholic. Five teachers have a suitable qualification in Religious Education with a further one currently undertaking the Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies.
- Since the last Section 48 Inspection there has been no significant changes in personnel.

Key for inspection grades

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

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OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

St. Richard's 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 St. Richard's. They know, own and live out their Mission Statement, '*We learn to love and grow in Jesus*', every day. They were actively involved in reviewing the Mission Statement and were instrumental in creating a poster to be used to share it.
- Pupils show a deep respect for themselves and others as made in the image and likeness of God. The behaviour of pupils is exemplary. The school uses '*Good to be Green*' as a constant reminder of the high standards of behaviour expected in the school in support of its loving ethos.
- 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 say they enjoy their Friday celebration assemblies where they receive Star of the Week certificates and Headteacher Awards. Pupils earn dojos and receive 'Golden Time' as a reward for working hard.
- Pupils enthusiastically embrace the demands that members of the school community entails such as becoming school, eco and food councillors, Parliament members, prefects, buddies and general classroom helpers.
- 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, Macmillan, Jack's Pack and Pupils in Need to name but a few. Within the locality they support the local Food Bank and the parish St. Vincent de Paul Society by collecting toys. They are alert to the needs of others and seek justice for all.
- Pupils value and fully participate in opportunities provided by the school including a range of after school clubs such as; cooking, knitting, sewing, arts and crafts, dance 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 group of Year 6 pupils commented that they, "*Enjoy school life, helping charities, other people and caring for others!*" This is a heartfelt response which is evident across this close-knit, loving school family.
- The school choir performs at school, church and community events. For the last two years the choir has taken part in the Peace Proms held at the Echo Arena.
- Pupils, appropriate to their age and capability, have begun to understand relationships and sexual development within the context of a Christian understanding but this is in its infancy and needs to be further embedded into school life throughout the year.

- Pupils have the opportunity to undertake outward bound and residential visits. Year 5 attend a 'Rock and River' day at Mawdsley and Year 6 attend PGL at either Winmarleigh Hall in Lancashire or Boreatton Park in Shropshire.
- 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 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 parish celebrations and activities, irrespective of their own faith commitment. Pupils attend the local church for both the celebration of the Eucharist and other liturgies. Some pupils are altar servers.
- Pupils feel able to express a pride in their own religious and cultural identity and beliefs.

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, *'We learn to love and grow in Jesus,'* its aims and objectives are a clear expression of the educational mission of the Church. As quoted: *"...a welcoming, caring and supportive family community..."*, underpins every aspect of 'family life' truly lived out at St. Richard's.
- 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.
- The school is an extremely supportive and joyful community which describes itself as a family and they truly reflect that in all that they do both within and outside 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 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 St. Richard's Catholicity and ethos. This is tangible throughout the school.
- A new extension in the school has created a small space which has been outlined as a dedicated 'prayer and worship' area.
- 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 provides opportunities for the spiritual and moral development of all pupils and staff through prayer and continuous professional development opportunities i.e. accessing and attending SHARES (Skelmersdale Headteachers Association), SKITT (Skelmersdale Initial Teacher Training) and Archdiocesan in-service training days.
- 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 learning mentor and trained councillor are extremely effective and highly valued in the school community for the work that they do in supporting vulnerable pupils and their families.
- 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 school supports the parish, 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 using *Journey in Love* alongside Personal, Social and Health Education. The school has recognised that this is an area which needs to be further developed across the school.
- The school provides before and after school provision throughout the year. This is popular and very well attended.
- The school benefits from two-year-old pre-nursery provision facilities which aids transition into Nursery and mainstream school for families.

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 team 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 family, and this is the key to its success.
- Continuous Professional Development focusing on the Catholic Life of the school occurs and is effective. As a result, staff and governors understanding of the school's mission is outstanding. Everyone is 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, meeting spaces, sends out regular newsletters, and has an up-to-date website with a dedicated Facebook page. As a result, parents and carers have an outstanding understanding of the school's mission and are very supportive of it.
- 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 of the school's mission.
- Governor's have given their unequivocal support to enable the headteacher to share his expertise in working with, and supporting, other schools across 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 and the local community.
- The parish priest is a regular visitor to the school. He presides at Mass and key celebrations throughout the school and liturgical year. He is fulsome in his praise of St. Richard's as a catholic school.
- The school responds well to Archdiocesan policies and initiatives and promotes the Archdiocesan vision throughout the school. However, all policies need to have ratification and renewal dates added to them.
- 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. Teachers routinely use the language of the standards i.e. driver words, during lessons and when questioning to challenge pupils thinking.
- Pupils approach their lessons with interest and enthusiasm. This was evident as pupils quickly settled to tasks and responded positively throughout.
- Pupils enjoy a range of activities and respond 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 and written, is outstanding. Pupils take pride in their workbooks and the presentation is of a very high standard.
- The Early Years portfolios of evidence are exemplars of best practice. They show a range of activities and responses which demonstrates how much the youngest pupils' needs are catered for.
- Nursery and Reception recently undertook a visit to Church as part of the Local Church topic linked to the *Come and See* Religious Education Programme. The assistant priest welcomed the pupils and talked to them about the religious signs and symbols they see inside. The pupils had clearly enjoyed their experience as they recounted the visit during their lessons.

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. Teachers and other adults use the language of the standards i.e. driver words routinely as part of their repertoire to enhance pupils growing awareness of challenge during lessons.
- Staff are using the most up to date Archdiocesan template for planning Religious Education lessons. They plan very good lessons and routinely use the language of the standards i.e. driver words to differentiate activities to meet the needs of all pupils.
- Teachers are confident in their subject knowledge and have a very good understanding of how pupils learn.
- Teachers employ a range of appropriate strategies, including individual, paired and collaborative work. Consequently, pupils are motivated and concentrate extremely well in lessons.
- In books there is evidence of continuity in lessons and across sequences of lessons from the *Come and See* programme.

- Throughout lessons teachers used questioning techniques very well to illicit pupils' prior knowledge and further develop their skills and understanding. They adapted explanations and tasks using the language of the standards i.e. driver words catering for the needs of all pupils.
- Enjoyment of, and enthusiasm for, Religious Education is promoted using high-quality resources e.g. The *Come and See* website, *God's and Church's Story*, Information Communication Technology, audio and visual media etc. In Early Years a mini church has been created for the Local Church topic complete with a range of appropriate resources to engage and encourage role play.
- Other adults are used very effectively to optimise learning for pupils who need their support during lessons. During activities they work hard to develop pupils' confidence in undertaking and completing tasks.
- Evidence in pupils' workbooks show that marking is very positive and clearly linked to the lesson objective.
- Achievement and effort are celebrated immediately leading to outstanding levels of motivation from pupils. Class dojos are awarded.
- Pupils' are undertaking termly formal assessment tasks in line with Archdiocesan guidance. Whole school data tracking is in place. However, evidence suggests that some pupil data is over inflated particularly at Key Stage 2. This will improve as teachers become more adept at using the new standards and moderating pieces of work across the school.
- Pupils have studied Judaism and Hinduism as part of their Religious Education lessons. They have been visited by members of the Jewish and Hindu communities who shared their experiences with the pupils. This helps to promote tolerance and respect for others of different Faiths and religions.

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.
- There is a commitment from Leaders and governors to encourage staff to undertake the Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies.
- 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.
- Whole school tracking is in place. Considering the Bishops' Conference directive to implement the new standards of assessment, the school is currently looking at ways to develop whole school tracking in line with other core curriculum subjects. Its accuracy will improve significantly 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 and staff highly value the support and guidance that she gives to them. She has an inspiring vision of outstanding teaching and learning and a high level of expertise to secure that vision across the school. She is enthusiastic and wholly committed to the role. Since the monitoring visit she has continued to drive forward the subject and 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 all pupils.
- There is a link governor for Religious Education who supports the subject leader in her role. Her drive, passion and commitment as a foundation governor in supporting the school in many ways is commendable.

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 outstanding.
- Pupils are developing a firm foundation for liturgy.
- 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.
- Pupils are involved in planning, preparing and leading worship with confidence, enthusiasm and a degree of independence.
- 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 taking part in it.
- Pupils have an outstanding understanding of the Church's liturgical year, its seasons and feasts and the approaches this requires in the planning of appropriate worship opportunities.
- 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 another Faith or religion.
- Pupils experience Collective Worship outside in the grounds when the weather permits.

The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school

- The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school is outstanding.
- Collective Worship is a core part of the life at St. Richard's and prayer is included in all school celebrations. Praying together is part of the daily experience for pupils and staff.
- 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 collated for monitoring purposes.
- Staff have become more skilled in helping pupils to plan and deliver quality worship and are providing opportunities for pupils to develop a firm foundation for liturgy. They facilitate the Collective Worship opportunities in line with Archdiocesan guidance.

- Collective Worship has a purpose, message and direction. Evidence suggests these experiences for both pupils and staff are reflective, prayerful experiences.
- Relevant staff have an excellent understanding of the Church's liturgical year, seasons and feasts and ensure that pupils have outstanding experiences of the Church's liturgical life.
- Opportunities for Collective Worship are planned in a manner that facilitates attendance by other adults associated with the pupils i.e. pick up and pray or stay and pray. However, the response to this is varied.

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

- Leaders and governors are outstanding 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 a policy in place for Collective Worship, but this needs ratification and renewal dates adding to it.
- High quality resources have been purchased to enhance Collective Worship experiences and sacred spaces around the school.
- Leaders have an excellent understanding of the Church's liturgical year, seasons and feasts.
- Leaders of Collective Worship within the school are appropriate models of good practice for staff and pupils.
- Staff promote pupils' planning and leading Collective Worship. Leaders ensure they always facilitate it this to ensure meaningful, quality experiences are delivered to the pupils.

What the school needs to do to improve further

- Further develop the work being undertaken in Catholic Life by:
 - continuing to embed '*Journey in Love*' into lessons to support Relationships and Sex Education;
 - look at other resources i.e. '*No Outsiders*' to support and enrich Relationships and Sex Education.
- Raise the standards of attainment in Religious Education further by:
 - further develop a new tracking system for Religious Education considering the changes to assessment regarding the new Standards in line with the requirements of the Bishops of England and Wales;
 - continuing to address the areas identified on the Self Evaluation Document ensuring that it reflects the school in all its fullness.

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	1
The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school	1
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship	1

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