



ARCHDIOCESE OF LIVERPOOL

INSPECTION REPORT

OUR LADY OF LOURDES CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

BIRKDALE

Inspection Date	14 November 2017
Inspectors	Rev D Melly, Mrs M Buckley, Mrs M Eves, Mr J Riley
Unique Reference Number	104916
Inspection carried out under Section 48 of the Education Acts 2005 and 2011	

Type of School	Primary School
Age range of pupils	4-11
Number on roll	537
Chair of Governors	Mr I Beck
Headteacher	Mrs M Hillsdon
School address	Grantham Road Birkdale Southport PR8 4LT
Telephone number	01704 565779
School e-mail address	admin.ourladyoflourdes@schools.sefton.gov.uk
Date of last inspection	6 November 2012

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

- Our Lady of Lourdes school is a larger than average sized Catholic primary school situated in Birkdale serving the parish of Our Lady of Lourdes, St Teresa and St Joseph.
- There are 537 children on roll of whom 377 are baptised Catholic, 72 come from other Christian denominations and 9 from other faith or religious traditions. 79 have no religious affiliation
- There are twenty-six teachers baptised Catholic. Nineteen teachers have a suitable qualification in Religious Education.
- Since the last inspection a new deputy headteacher and an assistant headteacher have been appointed.

Key for inspection grades

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

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Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

Our Lady of Lourdes school is outstanding 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.
- All pupils appreciate, value and actively participate in the Catholic Life and mission of the school. They have been actively involved in developing and evaluating the Mission Statement and now show an outstanding commitment to living out Our Lady of Lourdes mission to *Live, Love and Learn*.
- All pupils show a deep respect for themselves and others as made in the image and likeness of God. The behaviour is exemplary at all times because they recognise that they belong to a community where they are respected, cared for and nurtured and so can *Live, Love and Learn*. 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.
- All pupils enthusiastically embrace the demands that membership of the school community entails. As a result, they take a leading role in those activities which promote the school's Catholic Life and mission both within school and in the wider community – planning and leading Collective Worship, being members of a very active school council and being buddies, peer mentors, and prefects. Year six pupils demonstrated great excitement for the forthcoming announcement of the 2017 prefects. They are alert to the needs of others and seek justice for all within and beyond the school community as evidenced by the recent achievement of the CAFOD Live simply award – the first in the country.
- All pupils highly value the visits to school of the parish priest.
- Almost all pupils take full advantage of the excellent opportunities the school provides for their personal support and development. All the adults are most caring and supportive. As a result, they are obviously happy, confident and secure in their own stage of physical, emotional and spiritual growth.
- Pupils, appropriate to their age and capability, have an excellent understanding of loving relationships within the context of a Christian understanding. An Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) programme has been recently been put in place which is meeting their needs and is recognising the age and maturity of the pupils.
- All pupils enthusiastically embrace a holistic approach to education; have a profound understanding of what it means to have a vocation and they joyfully offer their gifts in the service of others. Year six are currently studying vocation and were able to articulate, in a mature way, the true meaning of vocation.
- All pupils deeply value and respect the Catholic tradition of the school and its links with the parish community and the Archdiocese. They attend services in church and invite parents and members of the community to celebrations in school. This is greatly appreciated by the community as evidenced by the messages of appreciation in the entrance hall. As a result, they are enthusiastically and regularly involved with parish and Archdiocesan celebrations and activities, irrespective of their own faith commitments. Almost all pupils are confident in expressing 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 is a clear and inspiring expression of the educational mission of the Church: *Live, Love and Learn*. This is relevant, understood and lived by all who make up the school community.
- All staff are obviously fully committed to its implementation across the curriculum and the whole of school life. They enthusiastically participate in school and extra curricular activities including supporting sacramental preparation and attending monthly family Masses.
- There is a strong sense of community at all levels, evident in the high quality of relationships and the centrality of prayer to the whole community. This will further be enhanced by the proposed development of the outdoor worship area. The school is a very supportive and joyful community.
- The school environment reflects its mission and identity through concrete and effective signs of the school's Catholic character. There are very high-quality displays which include work done in *Come and See*, focus tables and very tasteful artefacts throughout.
- All staff promote high standards of behaviour and are exemplary role models of mutual respect and forgiveness for pupils. All staff are supportive and have high expectations.
- The entire curriculum reflects a commitment to Catholic Social Teaching, to care for our common home and to respect the dignity of every human person. Pupils from Reception and Year 6 presented a bid to five judges from the Liverpool Echo and British Gas and were successful in securing £50,000 for an eco make-over.
- The school provides extensive opportunities for the Spiritual and Moral Development of all pupils and staff. Opportunities offered by the Christian Education Department and always availed of especially the spirituality days for headteachers and deputy headteachers.
- Clear policies and structures are in place which provide the highest levels of pastoral care to all pupils and there is an explicit and concrete commitment to the most vulnerable and needy in both policy and practice. This is particularly evident in resource provision.
- Pastoral programmes, PSHE and RSE are thoughtfully designed, carefully planned, consistently well taught and celebrate Catholic teachings and principles.

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 of the Catholic Life of the school.
- The school's leadership is obviously 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 the highest possible priority by leaders. This is reflected in the school's self-evaluation which is an accurate and coherent reflection of rigorous monitoring, searching analysis and self-challenge and is clearly and explicitly focused on the Catholic Life of the school.
- Continuing Professional Development focusing on the Catholic Life of the school occurs frequently and is engaging, well planned and effective. Great use is made of the opportunities offered by the Christian Education and the Schools Department of the diocese. As a result, staff understanding of the school's mission is outstanding. They share its purpose and are keenly and actively involved in shaping and supporting it.

- The school has highly successful strategies for engaging with all parents/carers to the very obvious benefit of pupils, including those who might traditionally find working with the school difficult. There is an open-door policy and all are made to feel welcome. The web site and regular newsletters also play a great role in all of this. As a result, parents/carers have a thorough understanding of the school's mission and are highly supportive of it. One parent wrote that 'the ethos of the school is celebratory and accepting of everyone regardless of creed. Faith is promoted and encouraged through explicit values and attitudes'.
- As leaders, the governing body is highly ambitious for the Catholic Life of the school and leads by example in the way it consistently emphasises Catholic Life as a school improvement priority.
- Governors make a highly significant contribution to the Catholic Life of the school. They are passionate about the school's mission, are actively involved in its evaluation and are ready to challenge as well as support where necessary.
- The school responds positively to Archdiocesan policies and initiatives and actively promotes the vision of Archdiocese throughout the school.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education

- The extent to which pupils achieve and enjoy their learning Religious Education is outstanding.
- Almost all pupils, from their varied starting points, where some have little or no faith background, make outstanding progress in each key stage. On leaving Year 6 almost 95% of pupils achieve at least Level 3. This is a remarkable achievement and is testament to the nurturing high expectation culture in school.
- Almost all groups of pupils, including those with special complex needs, are also making progress comparable to the progress of other pupils. The work in the Resource Provision is certainly outstanding where great care and attention is given to meeting the needs of each individual pupil, ensuring their wellbeing and progress.
- Almost all pupils, relative to their age and capacity, are religiously literate and engaged young people; they use their knowledge, understanding and skills effectively, to reflect spiritually, and to think ethically and theologically. As a consequence, they are fully aware of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life.
- Almost all pupils are actively engaged in lessons and are committed to improving their knowledge, understanding and skills, in order to further develop as competent learners.
- Almost all pupils concentrate exceptionally well, have a clear understanding of how well they are doing, and of what they need to do to improve, and can fully articulate how they have made progress. This is helped by the consistent use of the driver words.
- Almost all pupils approach lessons with great interest, passion and enthusiasm. Pupils enjoy tackling challenging activities, and respond exceptionally well to opportunities which extend their learning. Behaviour in lessons is outstanding because almost all pupils enjoy Religious Education and they are rarely off.
- Pupils' attainment, as indicated by teacher assessment results, is at least good.
- The quality of pupils' current work, both in class and in written work, is outstanding.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education is outstanding.

- Teachers are highly effective in consistently planning high-quality lessons linked to pupils' current assessment and their knowledge of the individual, consolidating and extending pupils' knowledge and understanding, so that they learn extremely well. As a result of this teaching is outstanding.
- Teachers have a high level of confidence because of their subject expertise and their understanding of the breadth of teaching methods. Teachers demonstrate a secure subject knowledge and plan effectively to meet the needs of all pupils. Teaching Assistant's were highly skilled in supporting the learning. Lessons observed demonstrated teacher confidence, effective use of questioning, talking partners and appropriate pace, and resources. As a consequence, almost all pupils are inspired to learn and make rapid and sustained progress.
- Teachers ensure almost all pupils are consistently involved in evaluating how well they are achieving. This contributes to their outstanding progress and provides them with a high level of confidence in making further improvements.
- High quality resources, including other adults and Information Communication Technology, are used very effectively to optimise learning for each pupil.
- Teachers communicate high expectations and passion about Religious Education to their pupils who respond with enthusiasm.
- High quality feedback is frequent, leading to high levels of engagement, interest, achievement and progress. Pupils are given the opportunity to respond in a systematic and planned way, which ensures pupils understand what they need to do to improve. The effective use of the driver words enhances all of this.
- Celebration of achievement and effort are central to the teacher's assessment strategy, securing high levels of motivation from pupils.

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

- Leaders and Governors are outstanding in promoting, monitoring an evaluation the provision for Religious Education.
- Leaders and governors ensure that the Religious Education curriculum meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference in every respect and in each key stage.
- Leaders and governors ensure that at least the required amount of curriculum time is given to Religious Education 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.
- Any additional requirements and policies of the Archbishop regarding the Religious Education curriculum are embraced and fully implemented, the teaching of RSE being the latest.
- Leaders' and governors' self-evaluation of Religious Education is a coherent reflection of rigorous assessment, tracking, monitoring, searching analysis and self-challenge which is well-informed by current best practice in Religious Education. This results in well targeted planning and strategic action taken by the school which lead to outstanding outcomes in Religious Education.
- The curriculum leader for Religious Education has an inspiring vision of outstanding teaching and learning and a high level of expertise in securing this vision. She is extremely committed and creative in her drive to ensure high standards for the provision of Religious Education. She is very well supported in all of this by the headteacher, other senior leaders and all staff.
- Leaders and governors ensure that Religious Education is imaginatively and thoughtfully planned to meet the needs of different groups of pupils and each phase is creatively structured to build on and enhance prior learning.

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.
- The experience of living and working in a faithful, praying community has a profound and visible effect on the spiritual and moral development of all pupils, irrespective of ability or faith background. They have a deep sense of respect for those of other faiths and this is reflected in the manner in which pupils prepare and participate in prayer and liturgy.
- Acts of Collective Worship engage all pupils' interest and inspire in them deep thought and heartfelt response. There is a genuine enthusiasm for Collective Worship, reflected in the quality of communal singing, in the quality of prayerful silence and the depth of reverent participation in communal prayer. Year 6 spoke of their enjoyment of their planning and participation in Collective Worship. Year 2 regarded Collective Worship as '*quietly peaceful, giving an opportunity to close their eyes and think about people who are special*'. Pupils readily take the initiative in leading worship displaying confidence and enthusiasm as experienced on the day. They are creative and resourceful in their planning of liturgy and want it to be the best it can be. All other pupils are visibly uplifted by the worship opportunities created by their teachers and peers.
- All pupils have an excellent understanding of the Church's liturgical year, seasons and feasts. There is plenty of evidence of this in displays and Collective Worship portfolios. Children demonstrate a maturity and confidence beyond their age and expected ability. They are able to prepare acts of Collective Worship which fully reflects this understanding.
- Pupils display confidence in their use of a wide variety of traditional and contemporary approaches to prayer which uses scripture, religious artefacts and liturgical music.

The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school

- The Quality of Collective Worship provided by the school is outstanding.
- Collective Worship is central to the life of the school for all pupils, whatever their own particular faith background and forms the heart of every school celebration. Praying together is part of the daily experience for all pupils and staff.
- Collective Worship has a clear purpose, message and direction. The themes chosen for worship reflect a deep understanding of the liturgical season and the Church's mission in education.
- Collective Worship is given the highest possible priority in terms of planning, evaluating and resourcing; as a result, experiences of Collective Worship are of such a high quality that they are universally cherished by every member of the community.
- Relevant staff have an excellent understanding of the Church's liturgical year, seasons and feasts, and are passionate about ensuring that pupils have high quality experiences of the Church's liturgical life.
- Staff are highly skilled in helping pupils to plan and deliver quality worship when appropriate. They have had in-service on Collective Worship and have a thorough and comprehensive understanding of the purpose of Collective Worship and the wide variety of methods and styles of prayer.
- Opportunities are planned in a manner that attracts and facilitates attendance by other adults associated with the pupils and school and response to this invitation is outstanding and appreciation has been shown.

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, including the parish priest, have expert knowledge of how to provide policies and guidelines to ensure quality planning and delivery of Collective Worship.
- They have an extensive understanding of the Church's liturgical year, seasons and feasts.
- There is a long term plan of themes provided which is linked to the church's liturgical cycle.
- Leaders are very visible as leaders of Collective Worship within the school. They are models of outstanding practice for staff and pupils.
- They extensively promote pupils' planning and leading Collective Worship in a variety of contexts.
- Leaders place the highest priority on the professional development of staff incorporating liturgical formation and the planning of Collective Worship. Use has been made here of staff from the Department for Christian Education.
- Leaders and governors place the highest priority on the school's self evaluation of Collective Worship as evidenced by the introduction of Collective Worship portfolios.

What the school needs to do to improve further

- Continue to develop the work already begun on Relationships and Sex Education.
- Implement the plan to create the sacred worship space outdoors.

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 Good, Grade 3 Requires Improvement and Grade 4 Inadequate