



ARCHDIOCESE OF LIVERPOOL

INSPECTION REPORT

ST. JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

LEIGH

Inspection Date 14th November 2017

Inspectors Mrs. Denise Hegarty, Mrs. Angela Williams

Unique Reference Number 106501

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 210

Chair of Governors Mrs. Angela Blenkinship

Headteacher Miss Michelle Daley

School address Mather Lane,
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Date of last inspection 20th 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

- St. Joseph's School is a smaller than average sized Catholic primary school situated in the Leigh area of Wigan, serving the parish of St. Edmund Arrowsmith.
- There are two hundred and ten children on roll of whom two hundred and eight are baptised Catholic, one child comes from another faith or religious tradition and one has no religious affiliation.
- There are eight teachers at the school, all of whom are baptised Catholic. Seven teachers teach Religious Education. Five teachers have a suitable qualification in Religious Education.
- Since the last inspection, both the headteacher and Religious Education subject leader are new to their posts.

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

St. Joseph'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 appreciate and actively participate in the Catholic Life and mission of the school. They willingly take on responsibilities that contribute to the Catholic character of the school and prepare them to be upright citizens of the future. They are great ambassadors for their school and at interview children informed the inspector that their Mission Statement, 'helps us to be good people living in harmony and peace.'
- Pupils participate in the school's evaluation of its Catholic Life and mission and are part of planning improvements to it. Every year, they appreciate the opportunity to investigate and discuss what their Mission Statement means to them. Following their discussions, they depict the statement pictorially showing how they can live it out in the day to day life of school. Beautiful displays of this work grace the entrance area and many classrooms.
- Pupils show a respect for themselves and others as made in the image and likeness of God. They show an understanding of the need to forgive, be forgiven and have a good understanding of right and wrong. The school visitor book, letters and cards are testament to the excellent behaviour and attitude of pupils both in and out of school as they show kindness and consideration of others.
- Pupils accept the responsibilities of living within a Catholic school community. As a result, they are regularly involved with those activities which promote the Catholic Life and mission of the school both within school and the wider community. They are aware of the needs of others and seek justice for others within and beyond the school community. Each year group within the school explores a key principle for Catholic Social Teaching and proudly displays the work they undertake as a consequence. Children in Reception, for example, looked at how they could promote peace. They held a 'Friendship Afternoon' to investigate ways of trying to get along with each other. Year 4 showed their concern for the poor by collecting and taking food to a local food-bank after investigating how to make sure all people had a fair share and how to take care of the most vulnerable in society.
- Pupils put their faith into action by initiating and supporting many fund raising activities for local and global charities e.g. Guide Dogs for the Blind and CAFOD. They undertake small acts of kindness e.g. by making poppies to sell for the British Legion and collecting toys for Wigan and Leigh Hospice's Christmas Toy Appeal. These acts of kindness are recognised and celebrated in the school's 'Acts of Kindness' Book.
- Pupils value the opportunity to participate in the Rosary Club in May and October. They participate well in a variety of celebrations and in sacramental preparation.

- Pupils respond well to the opportunities the school provides for their personal support and development. As a result, they are happy, confident and secure in their own stage of physical, emotional and spiritual growth. During their PGL Outdoor Pursuit visits to Boreatton Park, pupils create memorable experiences which develop their confidence, their social skills and their sense of teamwork. The Eco-Councillors learn to care for the environment and how to be stewards of the earth. Pupils take their respective roles of responsibility as school councillors, play leaders, class monitors and prefects seriously and commit to them wholeheartedly.
- Pupils, appropriate to their age and capability, have a good understanding of loving relationships within the context of a Christian understanding.
- They embrace a holistic approach to education, have an understanding of what it means to have a vocation and recognise the importance of using their gifts in the service of others. Pupils in Year 6 have explored how to put their faith into action by raising money for the community as they tried to think of others besides themselves. Those in Year 3 considered how they could make life better for their brothers and sisters around the world and sold cakes to raise money for CAFOD.
- 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 and diocesan celebrations and activities, irrespective of their own faith commitments. 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, 'Love Jesus, Love Learning, Love Life', clearly expresses the educational mission of the Church and is based on chapter 10, verse 10 of John's Gospel. It is known, owned and lived by the whole community and regularly reviewed.
- Staff members are committed to its implementation across the curriculum and the whole of school life. They participate in school activities which reflect the Catholic Life and mission of the school, such as the promotion of Catholic Social Teaching principles, regular staff prayer, Continuous Professional Development on Catholic Life.
- There is a clear sense of community at all levels, evident in the outstanding relationships throughout the school and the centrality of prayer to the whole community. The Friends of St. Joseph's meet frequently and plan regular events that bring the community together. The school's website and class twitter accounts share events that happen in the Catholic Life of the school with parents, governors and the wider community.
- Following an appeal from the headteacher, who wanted to improve the environment for staff and pupils, members of the local community, including parents, governors, parishioners and local businesses decorated and refurbished the school during a school holiday.
- The school environment reflects its mission and identity through obvious signs of its Catholic character. Lovely displays and devotional areas grace the school and grounds.
- Staff members promote high standards of behaviour and are good role models of mutual respect and forgiveness for pupils. A positive behaviour policy praises children for behaving well and treating others respectfully. Adults correct any poor behaviour in a reassuring, sensitive and encouraging manner.
- The curriculum reflects a commitment to Catholic Social Teaching, to care for our common home and to the dignity of every human person. Great use is made of CAFOD materials including the El Salvador Geography pack and One Climate; One World campaign to ensure cross curricular links are made.

- The school provides many opportunities for the spiritual and moral development of pupils and staff. The children are encouraged to 'fill buckets' with ideas and practical ways that they can help others. Travelling Cribs are sent home during Advent to engage families and to share and celebrate the Christmas story.
- The parish priest is highly effective in supporting and promoting the Catholic Life of the school. He ensures there are strong links with the parish community and is very generous with his time in school.
- Policies and structures are in place, which provide outstanding pastoral care to pupils, and there is a commitment to the most vulnerable and needy in both policy and practice.
- The school has a regard for the pastoral needs of staff and pupils whose needs are understood and catered for. Initiatives such as 'Well-being Wednesdays' have been introduced to support staff and pupils. The school's highly effective Pastoral Manager is a strong link between families and the school and promotes their emotional health and well-being. Vulnerable families receive wrap-around care and are signposted to any support they might need.
- Pastoral programmes, Personal, Social Health Education and Relationships and Sex Education are planned, well taught and reflect 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 for the Catholic Life of the school.
- They are deeply committed to the Church's mission in education and are a source of inspiration for the whole community. They are well regarded as models of Catholic leadership by both staff and pupils. The development of the Catholic Life of the school is viewed by leaders and governors as a core leadership responsibility. There are high expectations and aspirations for all members of the community.
- The provision for the Catholic Life of the school is given priority by leaders. This is reflected in the school's self-evaluation which involves monitoring, analysis and self-challenge and is clearly focused on the school's Catholic Life and Mission Statement.
- This leads to planned improvements to further enhance the Catholic Life of the school.
- The Mission Statement, '*Love Jesus, Love Learning, Love Life*' is regularly reviewed at an in-service day at the start of every school year. Members of the community are very clear as to how they live their mission through their particular roles.
- All relevant policies and procedures pertaining to the school's Catholic Life are fully in place and regularly reviewed.
- 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 excellent. They share its purpose and are keenly and actively involved in shaping and supporting it and consider it to be at the heart of everything that goes on in the school. Staff members are actively encouraged to undertake the *Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies*.
- The school has strategies for engaging with parents/carers to the benefit of pupils, including those who might traditionally find working with the school difficult. As a result, parents/carers have a very good understanding of the school's mission and are supportive of it. A weekly newsletter keeps parents informed about school and special parish events and invites them to take part. Their views are regularly sought and considered.

- 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. Governors make an outstanding contribution to the Catholic Life of the school. They are totally committed to the school's mission, are involved in its evaluation and are ready to challenge as well as support where necessary. Together with the senior leadership team, governors have an annual away day to discuss the School Improvement Plan.
- Governors frequently attend and participate in whole school liturgies, acts of worship and Masses. Each governor is assigned a class to work with during the year and is invited to attend a termly governor afternoon.
- A 'Good Shepherd' Award in memory of a former, much loved, chair of governors is awarded at the end of the school year to a deserving child who goes the extra mile to help and support others.
- Theme weeks, such as 'Awe and Wonder Week' and 'Poetry Week' also contribute to the children's spiritual and moral development.
- The school responds well to Archdiocesan policies and initiatives. Both the head and deputy participate in Spirituality conferences facilitated by the Archdiocese.

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 make at least very good progress in each key stage in relation to their varied starting points and capabilities.
- Groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs, are also making progress comparable to the progress of other pupils. There is no significant difference between pupils of different gender.
- 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. As a consequence, pupils are fully 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, in order to further develop as competent learners.
- Pupils concentrate exceptionally well, have a great understanding of how they are doing, know what they need to do to improve, and can fully articulate how they have made progress.
- Pupils approach their lessons with interest and enthusiasm. Pupils enjoy challenging activities, and respond well to opportunities which extend their learning. Behaviour in lessons is excellent because pupils enjoy Religious Education and disruptions in lessons are unusual.
- Pupils' attainment, as indicated by teacher and formal assessments, is outstanding. Pupils achieve at least average attainment and most achieve above average. This has been sustained over time and is an improving trend.
- The quality of pupils' current work, both in class and in written work, is excellent.

- On the day of inspection, children all settled to work quickly and enthusiastically tackled the activities they were directed to. In their group work, they were considerate of other learners and worked exceptionally well together. Those working independently did so sensibly and soon became engrossed in their work maintaining attention and concentration throughout. As they answered questions posed by the teacher and during class or group discussions, pupils used core vocabulary from the topic eloquently and accurately. Behaviour for learning across the school was outstanding.
- In Year 6, children confidently appraised and evaluated each other's work kindly and sensitively.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education is outstanding.
- Teachers consistently plan exciting lessons linked to pupils' current assessment so that pupils learn well. They build on prior knowledge exceptionally well consistently across the school. Teachers deploy a variety of creative teaching and learning strategies to engage and inspire pupils. As a result of this, on the whole, teaching is excellent.
- Teachers are confident in their subject expertise and have a great understanding of how pupils learn. As a consequence, pupils apply themselves well and make very good progress in lessons and over time.
- Positive relationships between adults and children lead to a climate that is conducive to learning where children can thoroughly enjoy their Religious Education lessons.
- Teachers employ a range of suitable approaches, including individual and collaborative work. Subsequently, pupils are highly motivated and concentrate very well in lessons.
- Teachers ensure pupils are involved in evaluating how well they are achieving. This contributes to their progress and increases their confidence in making further improvements. The *Driver Words* from the current *Levels of Attainment in Religious Education* are used very well to ensure work is pitched at the appropriate level so tasks given to pupils are suitably differentiated to consolidate and extend their learning.
- Teaching is consistently effective in engaging children through a rich and varied curriculum. Creative use is made of role play, drama, hot seating, circle time and art.
- In the Reception class, as far as possible, the activities provided for the children relate to their Religious Education topic. Cross curricular links are also made in other classes across the school. This indicates the school's commitment to this core subject as they place it at the heart of the general curriculum.
- Teachers manage time exceptionally well to secure excellent learning in lessons and across sequences of lessons. Pace of lessons is swift and there is no time slippage sending children off to complete their tasks. Lessons are well-structured to maximise learning. There are clear and efficient routines in all classes.
- Teachers make outstanding use of observation and questioning during lessons in order to adapt tasks and explanations, so improving learning for pupils. Excellent use is made of the 'Big Questions' in Religious Education to prompt discussion and investigation.
- In most classes, plenary sessions are used highly effectively to celebrate and move learning on to the next level. Many opportunities are taken here to enable the children to apply what they have learned to their lives.
- Excellent resources, including other adults are used highly effectively to optimise learning for pupils. Pupils are well-supported and encouraged throughout their lessons. Excellent use is made of Information and Communication Technology by both staff and pupils.
- Teachers communicate high expectations about Religious Education to their pupils, who respond positively. Children take a great pride in their work and interactive displays celebrate the work they produce throughout each topic.

- High quality, constructive feedback leads to the engagement, interest, achievement and progress of pupils. Pupils are often given the opportunity to respond to written and oral feedback, thus improving their understanding of what they need to do to make further progress.
- Achievement and effort are often celebrated leading to 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 and evaluating the provision for Religious Education.
- In using the *Come and See* programme recommended by the Archdiocese, leaders and governors ensure that the Religious Education curriculum meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference in every respect and in each key stage.
- They safeguard the required amount of curriculum time given to Religious Education across the school and have a programme of enrichment activities that augment the curriculum e.g. sports, music and arts clubs.
- Leaders and governors ensure that Religious Education has full parity with other core curriculum subjects, in terms of professional development, resourcing, staffing and accommodation.
- Any additional requirements and policies of the Archdiocese regarding the Religious Education curriculum are fully implemented. Support for children with special or additional educational needs - including those who speak English as an additional language – is given a high priority and enables the learning needs of all to be met.
- Leaders and governors ensure that Religious Education is consistently imaginatively and creatively structured and planned to meet the needs of different groups of pupils and to secure coherence across different key stages and phases.
- Leaders' and governors' self-evaluation of Religious Education is a reflection of frequent assessment, tracking, monitoring, analysis and self-challenge. This results in strategic action taken by the school which leads to excellent outcomes in Religious Education. Religious Education is always the first priority on the general School Improvement Plan and informs other subjects taught across the curriculum.
- An excellent monitoring and evaluation programme is in place and has been highly effective over time in raising standards and improving teaching and learning in Religious Education.
- The curriculum leader for Religious Education has a clear vision for teaching and learning and shows a high level of expertise in securing this vision. She attends all Archdiocesan briefings, leads staff meetings and models good practice. An excellent handbook guides and directs all staff in the subject.
- *Come and See for Yourself* sessions are undertaken by staff before the start of every theme to enable them to fully understand its roots and where the topics they are teaching fit in.
- Newsletters are sent home each term to keep parents informed about what their children are learning in their Religious Education lessons. These give an overview of the themes to be covered in the programme and share ideas as to how the parents can help. They also provide information about the church's liturgical seasons and feasts. Parents are regularly consulted and views and their views and opinions valued. They are also invited to 'Meet the Teacher', 'Learning Forward' or 'Inspire' meetings which enable them to become more informed about their children's work and progress.

- Excellent use is made of visits and visitors to enhance the curriculum. The parish priest is a frequent and welcome visitor. He generously gives of his time, both in school and in church, to enrich Religious Education lessons in all classes.
- The Religious Education link governor and chair of governors are both experienced and knowledgeable about the subject. They are passionate about the children's Religious Education and are very supportive of school leaders' endeavours to secure improvements and maintain high standards.

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.
- They act with reverence and are keen to participate in Collective Worship. They respond in an exemplary manner by singing joyfully, reflecting in silence and joining in community prayer appropriately and with confidence.
- Pupils regularly prepare and lead worship, in an age appropriate manner, with confidence, enthusiasm and a degree of independence. They are thoughtful in their planning of liturgy and show an excellent understanding of the liturgical structure for worship. Other pupils are engaged and inspired by the worship opportunities planned by their peers.
- Pupils use a variety of approaches to prayer which includes scripture, religious artefacts, liturgical music and other forms of prayer both traditional and contemporary.
- Pupils value and participate voluntarily in liturgy and prayer e.g. praying the Rosary during May and October in a 'Rosary Club' run by a member of the parish and by spending time in school Prayer Spaces. There is an enthusiastic response to the 'Messy Church Club' and to the Travelling Crib each Advent.
- Pupils have an excellent understanding of the Church's liturgical year, its seasons and feasts and the approaches this requires in the planning of appropriate worship opportunities. They appreciate the many opportunities provided for Mass at various key times in the church and school year. An increasing number of children are becoming altar servers.
- The experience of living and working in a faithful, praying community has a positive impact on the spiritual and moral development of all pupils, irrespective of ability or faith background.
- On the day of inspection, pupils gathered respectfully and listened attentively to their readings from scripture. They responded reverently through quiet reflection, joyful singing and heartfelt prayer. They clearly understood the message from the chosen scripture they had heard and had many ideas as to how they could live it out in their daily lives.

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.
- Collective Worship has a purpose, message and direction. The themes chosen for worship reflect an excellent understanding of the liturgical seasons and the Catholic character of the school.
- Collective Worship is given a high priority in terms of planning, evaluating and resourcing; as a result, experience of Collective Worship is engaging and all members of the community speak positively about these opportunities.
- A variety of experiences are provided including class, key stage and whole school worship.

- Timings of prayer and worship are suitable for the age and stage of pupils.
- Material delivered by members of staff is lively, interesting and prayerful and thus engages pupils.
- A variety of devotional areas include class focal areas, entrance area, the 'Woodland Wonder' outdoor prayer space and the garden area and the new 'Special Prayer Place'.
- Relevant staff have an excellent understanding of the Church's liturgical year, seasons and feasts and ensure that pupils have suitable, memorable experiences of the Church's liturgical life.
- Staff are skilled in helping pupils to plan and deliver quality worship when appropriate. They understand the nature and purpose of Collective Worship and use a wide variety of methods and styles of prayer.
- 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. These include class assemblies linked to *Come and See* and celebrations throughout the year e.g. Welcome Mass, Harvest Mass, All Saints Mass as well as Remembrance Day, Advent, Christmas, Lent and Easter services etc. Governors regularly attend these liturgies and celebrations.
- The few children who are of another faith or religion are fully included in worship and sensitivity is shown to their perspectives and beliefs.

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. The policy is reviewed annually and shared with staff members and governors. All essentials and fundamentals are fully met and a generous budget allocation allows quality resources to be purchased.
- Although Collective Worship is timetabled to happen during quality time each day, those leading worship are encouraged to be spontaneous and respond to children, situations and events as and when necessary.
- Leaders and governors have an excellent understanding of the Church's liturgical year, seasons and feasts.
- They make these accessible to the pupils in a contemporary context. Children are gradually introduced to the rituals, prayers, language, colours, songs and seasons of the Church in an age appropriate manner.
- Leaders of Collective Worship within the school are appropriate models of excellent practice for staff and pupils.
- A range of high quality, stimulating resources, books and artefacts have been purchased to enhance worship. Each class has a transportable box of suitable resources and a variety of materials in different liturgical colours. Other resources are stored centrally.
- They promote pupils' planning and leading Collective Worship.
- Leaders offer regular professional development of staff incorporating liturgical formation and the planning for Collective Worship and liturgies at dedicated staff meetings.
- Leaders and governors regularly review and monitor Collective Acts of Worship as part of their self-evaluation processes.

What the school needs to do to improve further

- Continue to develop the areas identified in the school's self-evaluation document. These include:
 - Introduce Worship Warriors to facilitate the way children plan and lead worship;
 - Year 6 to participate in the Faith In Action Programme at Pin Level;
 - Review the school's Mission Statement, celebrate the work undertaken in doing so and share with parents via social media;
 - Encourage different governors to attend moderation of work meetings;
 - Continue to develop strategies from the Learning Challenge approach to the teaching of Religious Education to maintain quality, creative lessons;
 - Continue to develop the indoor Prayer Place recently introduced.

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

<i>Key to judgements: Grade 1 is Outstanding, Grade 2 Good, Grade 3 Requires Improvement and Grade 4 Inadequate</i>
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