



DIOCESE OF LANCASTER EDUCATION SERVICE

**DENOMINATIONAL INSPECTION
REPORT (Section 48)**

**The Willows Catholic Primary
School, Kirkham**

**DENOMINATIONAL INSPECTION
REPORT (Section 48)**

on

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

School:	The Willows Catholic Primary School
Address:	Victoria Road Kirkham Preston PR4 2BT
Telephone Number:	01772 684371
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School URN:	119626
Headteacher:	Mrs Sharon Barnett
Chair of Governors:	Mrs Gerrie Byrne
Lead Inspector:	Mr Philip Bates
Team Inspector:	Mrs Adrienne Delaney
Date of Inspection:	17 June 2015

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The Willows Catholic Primary School is a smaller-than-average school with 149 pupils on roll. The majority of pupils are from Christian backgrounds with 62% being Catholic.

Pupils are currently taught in six classes across school. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is significantly lower than the national average.

The majority of pupils live within 'The Parish of The Holy Cross'. On leaving The Willows a significant majority of pupils transfer to St Bede's Catholic High School in Lytham.

	YR	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Total
Number on roll	23	20	25	18	18	24	21	149
Catholics on roll	11	10	17	13	12	13	16	92
Other Christian denomination	7	5	6	5	5	7	3	38
Other faith background	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
No religious affiliation	5	5	2	0	1	4	2	19
No of learners from ethnic groups	2	2	2	2	1	0	1	10
Total on SEN Register	2	3	4	2	2	4	5	22
Total with Statements of SEN	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	3

Exclusions in last academic year	Permanent	None	Fixed term	None
Index of multiple deprivation	B			

PARISHES SERVED BY THE SCHOOL	
Name of Parish	No of Pupils
The Parish of The Holy Cross	78
Our Lady of the Assumption, Blackpool	1
Our Lady Star of the Sea, St. Annes	5
Holy Family Warton	5
St Mary's, Lea	2
St Anne's, Westby	1

TEACHING TIME FOR RE	YR	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Total
Total teaching time (Hours)	2 hours	2 hours	2 hours	2.5 hours	2.5 hours	2.5 hours	2.5 hours	16 hours
% of teaching time	10%	10%	10%	10%	10%	10%	10%	10%

TEACHING TIME FOR ENGLISH	YR	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Total
Total teaching time (Hours)	n/a	5 hours	30 hours					
% of teaching time	n/a	25%	25%	25%	25%	25%	25%	25%

TEACHING TIME FOR MATHS	YR	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Total
Total teaching time (Hours)	n/a	5 hours	35 hours					
% of teaching time	n/a	25%	25%	25%	25%	25%	25%	25%

STAFFING	
Full-time teachers	7
Part-time teachers	2
Total full-time equivalent (FTE)	7.4
Classroom Support assistants	8
Percentage of Catholic teachers FTE	78%
Number of teachers teaching RE	8
Number of teachers with CCRS or equivalent	5
Number of teachers currently undertaking CCRS	1
Chaplaincy staffing	0

ORGANISATION	
Published admission number	28
Number of classes	6
Average class size KS1	23
Average class size KS2	27

EXPENDITURE (£)	Last financial year 2013-14	Current financial year 2014-15	Next financial year 2015-16
Total expenditure on teaching and learning resources	£12,000	£11,500	£11,500
RE Curriculum allowance from above	£1,000	£1,000	£1,000
English Curriculum allowance from above	£750	£1,500	£1,000
Total CPD budget	£5,765	£5,100	£5,800
RE allocation for CPD	£500	£740	£720

How the school has developed since the last inspection
<p>The Willows Catholic Primary School was previously inspected in June 2011. Since the last inspection all the development points have been achieved.</p> <p>During this inspection, rigorous tracking systems were examined to confirm they are firmly embedded throughout the school. The impact of these systems ensures all children make rapid and sustained progress in Religious Education. At the start of the inspection, pupils from the Year 3 and Year 4 class led a whole school liturgy. Pupils independently prepared and led this celebration inviting the whole school family to reflect on the Gospel message. This was an inspirational and deeply spiritual reflection.</p> <p>The outstanding leadership of the headteacher, working together with an outstanding chair of governors, continues to highlight relevant and challenging areas for development. The school's leadership team works collaboratively with a dedicated and highly effective governing body. Together they accurately identify aspects of the school's curriculum for future development to ensure that all pupils have access to outstanding provision.</p>

INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

1

CATHOLIC LIFE

1

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

1

KEY FINDINGS

The Willows is an outstanding Catholic Primary School. The first class leadership of the headteacher, together with a highly committed governing body, ensure that the overall effectiveness for sustained Catholic provision at The Willows is outstanding. The school leadership team, parish priest, chair and vice chair of governors, demonstrate absolute belief in the ability of the headteacher to ensure that The Willows will continue to provide outstanding Catholic education. Pupils, parents and parishioners are extremely proud of their school. Christ is at the centre of the school community and Gospel values permeate throughout.

Excellent relationships and communication between home, school and parish are key strengths. Parents and parishioners have a high regard for their school and welcome the opportunity to participate in school life. They regularly join the pupils and teachers for class and whole school Masses as well as participating in whole school liturgies. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is very good.

School leaders work tirelessly to focus on ensuring that opportunities for prayer and liturgy are central to the life of the school. Pupils have grown in their ability to prepare and lead high quality reflections. There are regular opportunities for the oldest pupils to skilfully guide younger pupils in preparing these reflections: this was observed during the inspection when four Year 6 pupils led the Reception class liturgy to teach the younger pupils how they could learn to lead their own liturgy. The skilful and timely support offered by the class teacher enabled all pupils to be at ease during this period of reflection.

As the children grow in their understanding, they confidently articulate their faith and are keen to learn more and to ask searching questions about their own and other people's faiths.

The teaching of Religious Education throughout the school is outstanding. The curriculum is carefully planned and continually evaluated to ensure the academic needs of all learners are met. Teachers are highly skilled in teaching RE; there is continual investment in good quality professional development. This investment is supported fully by the governing body.

Rigorous analysis of attainment clearly demonstrates rapid and sustained

progress. The proportion of pupils making two levels of progress from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2 over the past three years has been 100%. Three levels of progress from the end of Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2 over the same period has grown to 63%. Attainment at the end of the 2014 Key Stage 2 cohort demonstrated 100% of pupils achieving Level 4 with 81% achieving Level 5.

The school's RE curriculum is designed to ensure that all pupils are challenged and inspired during their lessons. Observations of teaching and learning by the headteacher and the chair of governors, along with regular book scrutiny and pupil discussions confirm this. Teaching is consistently at least good and this is in line with other core curriculum subjects. The curriculum effectively provides pupils with a deep insight into the life and teachings of Jesus Christ and the relationship between faith and life.

WHAT THE SCHOOL NEEDS TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER

To improve further the school needs:

- To give pupils more opportunity to deepen their understanding of the faith and traditions of other cultures as a basis for understanding and respecting them by:
 - Promoting these issues through the curriculum;
 - Working alongside other schools, including those of other faiths, to develop active learning opportunities.
 - Developing the use of new technologies to maximise these learning opportunities.
- To further deepen the theological development of the pupils' faith by:
 - Continuing to celebrate the effective involvement of the parish priest in the life of the school.
 - Continuing to deepen pupils' understanding of scripture through sharing pupil led 'Lectio Divina' with other age appropriate year groups.

PART A: CATHOLIC LIFE

THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

1

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

1

1

1

The mission statement for The Willows Catholic Primary is 'God Loves Me, God Loves Everyone'. All pupils, teachers, governors and parents are completely supportive of the Catholic ethos of this school and their mission is deeply embedded in all aspects of school life.

Pupils take full advantage of every opportunity provided for personal support and development. They speak with great enthusiasm, eloquence and pride about their involvement in their school and in the wider community. They can articulate clearly how their Catholic Faith gives them a secure sense of belonging to the school and to the wider community and enjoy the opportunities provided by the school to practise their faith. Examples include: commitment to celebrating Mass, the Rosary, Devotions to Our Lady, Benediction and Stations of the Cross.

Prayer is central to the life of the school and pupils prepare and lead liturgies with confidence and enthusiasm. Due to the outstanding leadership of the school, the quality of the prayer and liturgy is outstanding. The headteacher, staff and pupils lead vibrant acts of worship that inspire pupils, parents and teachers to periods of deep thought and heartfelt response. All pupils act with utmost reverence and respect during times of prayer and reflection.

Relationships within the school are excellent. Pupils confidently explain their school mission statement and explain that: 'Everyone always makes sure that nobody would ever feel unhappy'; and that, 'Teachers always go out of their way to look after us'. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are a clear reflection of the secure Catholic ethos that permeates all aspects of school life.

Pupils are given different responsibilities throughout school and thrive on them. They are very proud of their roles and look forward to growing into positions of greater responsibility. During the inspection a girl in Year 2 explained how she was looking forward to being in Year 4 so that she could be an altar server like her brother.

Discussions with pupils confirm that they really enjoy visiting church, talking to Father Andrew, the Parish Priest, and learning about their faith. Older pupils

discussed how they really enjoy discussing difficult questions about their Catholic Faith and are interested in learning about different cultures and people's faith in more detail. Pupils explain that they feel it is really important that they understand why people practise different faiths as we live in a multi-cultural society. They cite the use of technology as a vehicle to facilitate this learning. This important area of provision could usefully be extended further through the curriculum and other learning opportunities.

Governors and school leaders are totally committed to the Church's mission in education and are a source of inspiration for the whole community. The governors and the headteacher lead the school with the school's mission clearly guiding their work. Governors challenge and support the headteacher to ensure, through rigorous self-evaluation, that they hold the school to account for its Catholic Life. The headteacher and her deputy lead by example. They promote a culture where care, based on the Gospel values, is deeply embedded.

Through numerous visits, both formal and informal, the governors ensure that the prayer and liturgy of the Catholic Church are central to the life of the school. The chair of governors leads by example; she is regularly in school actively engaging with whole school liturgies. She ensures that prayer and liturgy are of a high quality and are a key part of every school celebration.

The headteacher and governors plan the school's calendar around the liturgical seasons and feasts making them focal points in the school's life and enabling all within the school community to understand and engage with them.

The headteacher, parish priest and governors demonstrate a relentless drive to ensure that partnerships within the school and the church community work together for the common good. An example of this would be the Stations of the Cross in the church grounds that the children created and use as an aid to reflection.

Governors, leaders and managers are fully committed to partnerships with the diocesan family of parishes and schools. Governors have attended diocesan training and promote the school's involvement in the Catholic Teaching Alliance. The headteacher attends the local Catholic head's cluster meetings to encourage collaborative opportunities for The Willow's pupils.

Provision for the Catholic Life of the school is outstanding. The Willows is a welcoming, inclusive and friendly community with a strong family ethos where everyone is valued and pupils and staff flourish. Governors, leaders and teachers have high expectations and a shared vision with regard to the school's Catholic mission and ethos. There is a tangible sense of family and community in all aspects of school life which is evident in the quality of relationships existing between all stakeholders.

PART B: RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

THE QUALITY OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

1

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

1

1

1

Almost all pupils enjoy curriculum RE. Throughout lessons, pupils are actively engaged in their learning and enjoy the challenges the curriculum offers. Pupils comment on how they 'Really enjoy RE' and how, 'During lessons we can learn exciting information'. Pupils demonstrate an excellent understanding of their Catholic faith and an awareness of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life. During the inspection, pupils demonstrated independent learning and, through discussion with the inspectors, could explain and show examples of work where they had been challenged and inspired.

Baseline assessment indicates that pupils enter The Willows with below average attainment in RE. They make rapid progress through Reception and Key Stage 1 so that by the end of the Key Stage pupils' attainment is broadly in line with or exceeding age-related expectations. Pupils continue to make rapid and sustained progress through Key Stage 2 resulting in standards that are in line with or exceeding, age-related expectations. The headteacher attends external moderation sessions held by the diocese and evidence from these validates the school's judgements.

Extremely rigorous assessment and tracking procedures indicate that pupils with Special Educational Needs make very good progress in RE. All pupils in the school are assessed and tracked and all groups of children make excellent progress: no particular group is underachieving. This confirms the effectiveness of the school's monitoring and evaluating process.

Pupils are encouraged to record and to communicate their ideas using a range of strategies, including posters, prayer and sequencing activities, which assist those with language communication difficulties. Evidence of regular staff meetings to share best practice on developing assessment opportunities, confirm the school's self-evaluation that all staff are committed to individual assessments so that pupils are not disadvantaged by poorer literacy skills in reading and writing.

The growing number of pupils achieving three levels of progress from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2 over the past three years is clear evidence of the first class leadership and teaching of RE. This progress confirms the outstanding leadership

displayed by the headteacher and senior staff.

The RE curriculum meets all the requirements of the Bishops' Conference and is informed by the Curriculum Directory and the diocesan document 'Fit for Mission? Schools'. Governors and school leaders place RE at the centre of the school's curriculum. Governors spoke confidently to confirm how well all leaders and managers, monitor and evaluate provision for Religious Education and this is supported by documentation.

Working together, teachers have grown in confidence to move towards developing a curriculum using a variety of resources. The 'Catholic Curriculum Directory', 'The Way, The Truth and The Life', the 'Diocesan Framework', 'CAFOD's Universal Church Topics' and 'Come and See' are all used confidently along with other resources to enrich the curriculum. This confirms the high quality professional development opportunities provided for staff. Excellent subject knowledge is applied consistently and first class subject leadership underpins continual growth.

Each class has an area of focus for pupils to celebrate Prayer and Liturgy. Recent building work has enabled the development of a designated prayer area as you enter the school for pupils and staff to enrich their own spiritual growth. During the inspection it was clear to see how the school environment has been skilfully designed to facilitate the opportunity to reflect and pray.

The headteacher and chair of governors are actively involved in a cycle of self-evaluation, rigorous monitoring and self-challenge. This demonstrates the school's outstanding capacity for sustained improvement in Religious Education.

Information and communication technology (ICT) is used regularly to support and challenge learning in RE. The development of new technologies will support the school to maximise the opportunities for pupils to continue to increase their knowledge and understanding of other religions. Marking and dialogue between adults and pupils is of a consistently high quality and pupils explained to inspectors how they regularly discuss their academic development with teachers. Pupils actively respond to marking and understand, at an age-appropriate level, how to improve their work.

SUMMARY OF INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

	Pupil Outcomes	Leadership & Management	Provision	Overall
Catholic Life	1	1	1	1
Religious Education	1	1	1	1