



ARCHDIOCESE OF LIVERPOOL

INSPECTION REPORT

ST. FRANCIS DE SALES CATHOLIC INFANT AND NURSERY SCHOOL

WALTON

Inspection Date Tuesday 3rd February 2015

Inspectors Mrs Pat Peel Mrs. Ann McNally
Mrs. Dorothy Martin

Unique Reference Number 104651

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

Type of School Catholic Primary

Age range of pupils 3 - 7

Number on roll 292(392 including Nursery)

Chair of Governors Fr. John Thompson

Headteacher Miss Clare Suffield

School address Margaret Road
Walton
Liverpool
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Date of last inspection 22 June 2010

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. Francis De Sales is a larger than average sized Catholic Infant and Nursery School situated in Walton serving the parish of St. Francis de Sales.
- There are 292 children on roll(392 Including Nursery) of whom 247 are baptised Catholic, 22 come from other Christian denominations. There are three pupils from another faith or religious tradition and twenty pupils who have no religious affiliation.
- There are 23 teachers of whom 16 teach Religious Education. Thirteen teachers are Catholic. Eight teachers have a suitable qualification in Religious Education.
- Since the last inspection a new deputy headteacher has been appointed.

Key for inspection grades

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

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Overall effectiveness:

St. Francis de Sales Infant and Nursery School is outstanding in providing Catholic Education.

Inspection Judgements

The extent to which the pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life of the school.

- Pupils are outstanding in the way in which they contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life at St. Francis'.
- There is a shared vision for Catholic Education which is embraced by the whole school community and reinforced in the school's Mission Statement "We walk, learn, love and smile together with Jesus." This is enhanced by a school Mission song composed by a member of staff.
- Pupils have an excellent sense of belonging to the school. Its values and ethos are visibly reflected in the exemplary attitudes and relationships between all members of the community. St. Francis' is an oasis whereby everyone feels safe, nurtured and loved.
- The learning environment is vibrant and stimulating and enriches pupils' sensory experiences.
- Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are encouraged to take on roles of responsibility by becoming councillors. They are keen to share how they have helped to make improvements in the school i.e. painting walls, getting a climbing frame and developing the library by asking for more books.
- In the wider community pupils act as ambassadors of the school during off site visits i.e. on visiting church in support of parish events, Archbishop Beck High School for sports events and singing at a choral event at the Liverpool Philharmonic Hall.
- Pupils are actively involved in developing the Catholic character of the school by the work they undertake in fundraising for numerous charities e.g. CAFOD, Good Shepherd, MacMillan Cancer Support, Operation Christmas Child and the Royal British Legion to name but a few.
- Pupils have an excellent sense of right and wrong and apply this in their personal relationships.
- Education for personal relationships has fostered positive attitudes in pupils. The school has recently invested in the Massage In Schools Programme and also offers play therapy for vulnerable pupils.
- Pupils benefit from an extremely caring and nurturing environment. Some staff have undertaken bereavement training to support children and families in this area. A group of children all echoed the same sentiment that they "Were all friends and loved coming to school to see their teachers."
- Pupils take an increasing responsibility for themselves and their actions and enthusiastically praise and celebrate each other's achievements at their weekly assemblies.
- Pupils are involved in service to the local Faith and religious communities by taking an active part in parish liturgies and choral events including attendance at a service at the Metropolitan Christ the King Cathedral with Archbishop Beck. The immediate neighbourhood served by the school through collection and distribution of food during Harvest, giving gifts to pensioners at Christmas and outreach in the wider community by fundraising for numerous causes.

- Pupils attend Mass every fortnight at church with the local community. They are actively involved throughout i.e. reading, offertory procession, singing etc.
- The school hosts regular coffee mornings for parents.

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education

- Pupils' achievement and enjoyment in Religious Education is outstanding.
- On entry to school many children have a very limited knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith.
- The school has embraced the *Come and See* programme and the needs of all the pupils are being met. The range of activities provided for the pupils are very effective in engaging and enthusing pupils from their earliest years.
- The open plan environment is used to great effect to maximise pupil's learning experiences.
- Pupils' attainment in Religious Education is outstanding. They make excellent progress in relation to their starting points and capabilities.
- There is no difference in performance between pupils of different gender.
- Outcomes for pupils with additional or special needs are outstanding and their support is very effective.
- Assessments undertaken to date and scrutiny of workbooks provides evidence of pupils attaining a very good level for their age and stage of development.
- Pupils are becoming increasingly more religiously literate as they become familiar with key words from the topics. Their knowledge, understanding and skills are developing appropriate to their age or capacity. Talking partners are used well to develop this.
- They are on the way to developing the skills that enable them to reflect spiritually, think ethically and theologically and are becoming more aware of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life.
- Pupils' engagement in and enjoyment of their learning is outstanding as shown by their interest and exemplary behaviour. This is a real strength of the school.
- Pupils work extremely well independently, in pairs and collaboratively in small groups.
- The school has developed 'learning logs' to engage parents at home in Religious Education. Working together as a family has had a marked impact on pupils' outcomes.

How well pupils respond to and participate in Collective Worship

- Pupils are outstanding in responding to and participating in Collective Worship.
- Pupils are extremely respectful, act with reverence and are keen to participate in a variety of gatherings.
- On the day of inspection pupils were thoroughly engaged and gave heartfelt responses when praying, singing and signing during worship. Mime was used effectively as the Gospel was proclaimed.
- Pupils are becoming familiar with a variety of prayer styles and their knowledge of liturgy is increasing.
- Pupils sing joyfully, reflect in silence and join in community prayers appropriately and with confidence.
- The school is making good use of materials provided by the Archdiocese.

The quality of teaching and how purposeful learning is in Religious Education

- The quality of teaching and purposeful learning is outstanding in ensuring that pupils are interested, engaged and make excellent progress.
- Teachers' planning is effective in meeting the needs of the pupils. The way in which teachers plan for and manage the continuous provision is of particular note in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Teachers take into account pupils' prior learning when planning Religious Education lessons.
- Teachers display very good subject knowledge and deploy a range of teaching styles. There is lots of evidence of pupils being challenged and inspired which enriches their enjoyment of Religious Education; this was evident through the use of musical instruments.
- Excellent use is made of time and resources e.g. interactive white board, God's Story, audio and visual media etc. The school is very effective in deploying teaching assistants to enhance lessons for those children who require additional support.
- Pupils are very positively affirmed throughout their lessons and relationships are excellent. Marking is positive and informs pupils of their progress. Driver Words from the Levels of Attainment are used, however this needs further development. Verbal feedback is much more effective than a written comment especially with the youngest pupils. Effort and achievement are celebrated.
- The school has implemented assessment strategies which provide information on the achievement of all pupils. The school has recognised the need to develop this further and clustering with nearby schools to share moderation and best practice would help this.
- The tracking of pupils' work in Religious Education is in place and is used effectively to inform staff and governors of pupil progress.

The extent to which the Religious Education Curriculum promotes pupils' learning

- The Religious Education curriculum is outstanding in promoting pupils' learning. Staff and governors see Religious Education as the core subject and at the very heart of the curriculum.
- The school using the *Come and See* programme recommended by the Archdiocese meets the requirements of the Curriculum Directory for Religious Education. Appropriate levels of the programme are being followed in different classes. This ensures complete Religious Education entitlement for each child and meets National and Archdiocesan requirements.
- Of the total curriculum time 10% is allocated to Religious Education. This fulfils the requirements of the Bishops of England and Wales.
- Planning ensures full coverage of the Religious Education programme. Termly newsletters are provided for parents and carers and there is further information on the school website.
- The school implements new curriculum developments as appropriate and the programme is embedded securely across the school. *Come and See* engendered in pupils a real sense of engagement and enjoyment.
- Enrichment activities during and after school such as mat ball, multi-skills, choir, cookery, gardening and art club etc have a positive impact on the curriculum.
- The school facilitates a breakfast club run by After School UK.
- The Religious Education curriculum provides good opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral development and vocation.

- Children have explored the beliefs and values of another faith – Islam. Judaism will be taught during the Summer Term. This helps to promote tolerance and respect for those who think differently.

The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school.

- The Collective Worship provided by the school is outstanding in reflecting the Catholic character of the school and takes into account the variety of Faith backgrounds among the pupils.
- Collective Worship has a high profile and is central to the prayer life of St. Francis'. Pupils' liturgical formation is really well developed. Music was used effectively to both gather and to greet the Gospel and pupils spontaneously joined in responses to the Word being proclaimed.
- Collective Worship plays a key part in meeting the Spiritual needs of this worshipping community.
- Opportunities are provided to enable full, active and conscious participation of the whole school community.
- Pupils are enabled to pray formally and informally using a variety of prayer methods and styles.
- Children have begun to develop the skills necessary to plan, prepare and lead Collective Worship in some classes but the school has recognised that this needs further developing.
- Opportunities are provided for parents, carers, the local and wider Faith communities to participate in a variety of celebrations of the *Come and See* programme.
- The parish priest is a regular visitor to the school and is heartfelt in his praise of St. Francis' as a 'wonderful, happy school'. He regularly presides at Mass throughout the Church's liturgical year and at key school celebrations.

How well leaders, governors and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic life of the school and plan and implement improvement to outcomes for pupils.

- Leaders, governors and managers are outstanding in promoting and developing the Catholic life of the school. The leadership team is deeply committed to the Church's Mission in education.
- This is reflected in the Mission Statement outlining St. Francis' as a place where everyone truly does "...Walk, learn, love and smile together with Jesus."
- The aims and practical objectives derived from the Mission Statement direct and guide all aspects of school life and are a useful tool by which the school evaluates its effectiveness.
- Excellent opportunities are provided for the staff and pupils to play an active part in the Catholic Life and Mission of the school through prayer, raising awareness of those in need and charitable outreach.
- The Self Evaluation Document provides evidence of the school's rigorous monitoring, searching analysis and self challenge. It is a comprehensive document which guides the school well.
- The school provides very good in-service training to enable staff to further understand the Church's Mission in Education and play their unique part in it.
- A range of opportunities for Spiritual and Moral developments are provided for all staff and pupils including Collective Worship, attendance at Archdiocesan Spirituality days, Come and See for Yourself etc.

- Leadership at all levels respects difference, values diversity and ensures equal opportunities for all.
- Prayer, worship and the liturgical life of the school reflects and respects the religious diversity within the school.
- There are positive relationships at every level leading to a welcoming, happy, safe and caring learning environment for staff and pupils.
- Governors are very well informed about life at St. Francis' and discharge their responsibilities in an appropriate manner. Together they have effectively helped to shape the direction of the school. They are committed wholeheartedly to the Catholic life of the school and are actively involved in its daily life and its monitoring and evaluation processes. There is a link governor for Religious Education.

How well leaders, governors and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Religious Education of the school and plan and implement improvement to outcomes for pupils.

- The way in which leaders, governors and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education is outstanding.
- The Self Evaluation Document is a coherent reflection of rigorous monitoring, analysis and self challenge.
- Teaching and learning is monitored regularly and appropriate feedback and support given as necessary.
- Continuing professional development opportunities are provided for all staff including attendance at Archdiocesan in-service topic days and subject leader days.
- Formal assessment tasks are undertaken in line with Archdiocesan guidance.
- The school tracks pupil progress in Religious Education.
- The subject leader is excellent in guiding Religious Education she is enthusiastic and shows a real commitment to the role. Excellent documentation guides and directs all staff in the delivery of the subject and new initiatives are introduced when appropriate. The school is working to develop the skills of another member of staff to support the subject leader in her role.

What does the school needs to do to improve further?

- Raise the standards of attainment in Religious Education further by:
 - continuing to address the areas identified on the Self Evaluation Document.
- Improve the quality of provision and outcomes for Collective Worship by:
 - enabling all pupils to plan, prepare and lead Collective Worship from the earliest years.

INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

How effective the school is in providing Catholic Education	1
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OUTCOMES FOR PUPILS

How good outcomes are for individuals and groups of pupils	
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school	1
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education	1
How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship	1

PROVISION

How effective the provision is for Catholic Education	
The quality of teaching and how purposeful learning is in Religious Education	1
The extent to which the Religious Education curriculum promotes pupils' learning	1
The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school	1

LEADERS AND MANAGERS

How effective leaders, governors and managers are in developing the Catholic Life of the School	
How well leaders, governors and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school and plan and implement improvement to outcomes for pupils	1
How well leaders, governors and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education and plan and implement improvement to outcomes for pupils	1

Key to judgements: Grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 requires improvement and grade 4 inadequate
