



ARCHDIOCESE OF LIVERPOOL

INSPECTION REPORT

ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

LITTLE CROSBY

Inspection Date 13 November 2018

Inspectors Mrs Pat Peel Mrs. Chris Mason

Unique Reference Number 104927

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 108

Chair of Governors Mr. John Kelly

Headteacher Mr. P. M. Hennessy

School address Back Lane
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Date of last inspection June 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. Mary's is a smaller than average sized Catholic Primary School situated in Little Crosby serving several surrounding parishes.
- There are 108 children on roll of whom 96 are baptised Catholic, 9 come from other Christian denominations and 1 from another faith or religious tradition. Two have no religious affiliation.
- There are six teachers. Four of which teach Religious Education. Six teachers are baptised Catholic. Three teachers have a suitable qualification in Religious Education. A further two are currently undertaking the Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies.
- Since the last inspection a new Religious Education subject leader has been appointed. She has recently been promoted from Assistant to Deputy Head.

Key for inspection grades

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

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OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

St. Mary's is a good 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 good.
- Pupils appreciate, value and actively participate in the Catholic Life at St. Mary's. They know their Mission Statement, *'Follow the Gospel and the way of knowledge'*.
- Pupils show respect for themselves and others as made in the image and likeness of God. The behaviour of pupils is exemplary. They are kind and considerate to each other.
- 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 good understanding of right and wrong.
- Pupils enthusiastically embrace the demands that members of the school community entails such as becoming school councillors, classroom monitors and buddies.
- 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, Help for Heroes, Samaritan's Purse and Macmillan *to name but a few*. Within the locality they support the local foodbank, parish Harvest Festival and Jospice. 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 lunchtime and after school clubs e.g. choir, crafts, gardening, Irish dancing and a range of seasonal sports.
- Pupils take full advantage of the opportunities the school provides for their personal support and development they have a good 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 child in Year 6 commented that, *"I didn't always come to St. Mary's, but I love it here. I am really happy in the school!"*
- Pupils, appropriate to their age and capability, have begun Relationships and sex Education within the context of a Christian understanding.
- Pupils in Year 6 have benefitted from the opportunity to undertake a residential stay at *Condoval Hall Activity Centre* 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 are rewarded with stickers and Star of the Week certificates at their weekly assemblies. On a termly basis pupils receive book tokens along with trophies for citizenship, knowledge, progress and 'Stars of Little Crosby' awards.
- Pupils value and respect the Catholic tradition of the school and its links with the parish community and the Archdiocese. Pupils recently took part in the annual Harvest Festival activities and during the summer undertook a procession of the Blessed Sacrament. As a result, they respect and are involved with parish celebrations and activities, irrespective of their own faith commitments. Pupils attend their local church for celebrations of Mass on a weekly basis and for key celebrations throughout the Church year.

- Pupils have been visited by members of St. Luke's Church of England 'Assembly Team' who enable pupils to experience and engage fully with bible stories through puppets and drama.

The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school

- The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school is good.
- The school Mission Statement, '*Follow the Gospel and the way of knowledge,*' underpins every aspect of school life at St. Mary's. However, there needs to be a full review of the current Mission Statement, its aims and objectives, to reflect where the school is now. This needs to incorporate the views of all who form part of the school community including governors, pupils, parents and support staff.
- 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.
- There is a keen sense of community at all levels, evident in the high quality of 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 and classroom focus areas support St. Mary's catholicity and ethos. The entrance porch has a Remembrance focal area and a prayer tree. A small area is dedicated to a parent at the school who died. This is lovingly maintained by the children.
- 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 curriculum reflects a commitment to Catholic Social Teaching, to care for our common home and to the dignity of every human person through its eco stewardship, fundraising, 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 such as attendance at Archdiocesan in-service days and by accessing current training for the subject leader.
- Clear policies and structures are in place which provide good levels of pastoral care for pupils and their families and there is an explicit and concrete commitment to the most vulnerable and needy in both policy and practice.
- The school is equally attentive to the pastoral needs of members of staff and ensures that every member's needs are understood and catered for.
- The school supports 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 alongside Personal, Social and Health Education. This is an area the school has recognised needs to be further developed to embed it fully into the curriculum.
- Some staff have been trained to support '*Rainbows*' a family bereavement programme.
- The school provides both a breakfast and an after-school club throughout the year. These are popular and well attended.

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school

- Leaders and governors are good in promoting, monitoring and evaluating the provision for the Catholic Life of the school.

- St. Mary's leadership team is fully committed to the Church's mission in education. They are regarded by staff and pupils as models of Catholic leadership. The development of the Catholic life of the school is viewed as a core leadership responsibility.
- The provision for the Catholic Life of the school is given priority by leaders. The school is using the new Self Evaluation Document.
- Relationships at every level are very good across the school. It is a small team at St. Mary's, but everyone plays their part in developing the warm, welcoming ethos and 'family' feel across the school.
- Leaders and governors have shown a commitment to training and further development of staff. Continuous Professional Development focusing on the Catholic Life of the school takes place. As a result, staff members understanding of the school's mission is good and will be enhanced further following the Mission Statement review process.
- The school has developed successful strategies for engaging with parents and carers to the benefit of pupils. The school offers an open-door policy, sends out regular newsletters and has an up-to-date website. As a result, parents and carers have a good understanding of the school's mission and are very supportive of it.
- There is a newly appointed link governor with responsibility for Catholic Life and Religious Education. He is keen to ensure that he undertakes the role effectively. The school has recognised that this role needs to be further developed.
- The school responds well to Archdiocesan policies and initiatives and promotes the Archdiocesan vision throughout the school. Some policies need to be standardised with dates and renewal information.
- Leaders and governors have made a commitment to further develop Relationships and Sex Education throughout the school alongside Personal, Social and Health Education. It is recommended that the school adopts a different way of recording evidence for activities undertaken during Relationships and Sex Education lessons.
- Leaders need to begin mapping out Relationships and Sex Education to show where this is being delivered across the whole school curriculum.

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 good.
- Pupils, from their varied starting points, make excellent progress in each key stage.
- Groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs, are 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.
- During lessons and interviews pupils were incredibly articulate about both their learning in Religious Education and aspirations for themselves and the school.
- Pupils are actively engaged in lessons and are committed to improving their knowledge, understanding and skills to further develop as competent learners.
- Most pupils concentrate well and understand how well they are doing. This can be improved further by teachers and other adults using the language of the standards i.e. driver words routinely 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 good because pupils enjoy Religious Education and disruptions in lessons are unusual.
- The quality of pupils' current work, both in class and in written work, is good. Presentation in books is very good.
- Pupils' attainment, as indicated by teachers is good. Most pupils achieve at least average attainment using Archdiocesan data.
- Pupils are undertaking formal assessment in line with Archdiocesan guidance and evidence of this is kept.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education is good.
- On the day of inspection there was some outstanding practice observed with nothing less than good. All teachers and other supporting adults need to use the language of the standards i.e. driver words more as part of their repertoire.
- Teachers are confident in their subject knowledge and have a very good understanding of how pupils learn. However, they need to provide much more opportunities for greater depth and challenge by using the driver words throughout lessons especially in Key Stage two.
- Teachers employ a range of appropriate strategies, including individual, paired and collaborative work. Consequently, pupils are interested, motivated and concentrate well in lessons.
- In books there is evidence of continuity in lessons and across sequences of lessons. However, timetabling needs to be looked at to ensure that children are not taught in blocked periods across the afternoon.
- In the best lessons observed teachers used questioning techniques very well. However, there was limited open ended and adapted explanations using the language of the standards i.e. driver words, to cater for the needs of all pupils. This needs to become routine practice in all classes especially as they are all mixed age groups. This will ensure greater depth and challenge for the most able pupils.
- High quality resources e.g. *Come and See* website, *God's* and *Church's Story*, audio and visual media are employed to engage pupils in their learning.
- Other adults are used effectively to optimise learning for pupils who need their intensive support.
- Evidence in books shows that marking is always positive but not always linked concisely enough to the lesson objective. Occasionally, next steps are used. These inconsistencies will diminish as staff become much more adept at using the standards when planning from the *Come and See* programme.
- In the best lessons, achievement and effort are celebrated immediately leading to good levels of motivation from pupils.
- The school needs to create learning journals for all classes. This is to enable staff to evidence all aspects of the *Rejoice* week of the topic culminating in the class celebration itself which is an opportunity to further develop links with parents as they can be invited to share in the celebration.

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

- Leaders and governors are good in promoting, monitoring and evaluating the provision for Religious Education.

- Leaders and governors are ensuring that the Religious Education curriculum fully meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference.
- Leaders and governors ensure that Religious Education has full parity with other core curriculum subjects. However, timetabling needs to reflect Religious Education is taught across the week in smaller sessions rather than whole school. This will maximise interest and enthusiasm.
- Since the last inspection the *Come and See* programme has been fully implemented across the school and all relevant documentation is embedded.
- Leaders and governors' self-evaluation of Religious Education is good. It is an accurate reflection of assessment, tracking, monitoring, analysis and self-challenge which is informed by current best practice in Religious Education.
- The subject leader regularly attends Archdiocesan in-service training to support planning, monitoring, evaluation and assessment of the subject. This has been effectively cascaded to staff to bring about improvements in teaching and learning and raise standards in Religious Education.
- The subject leader for Religious Education effectively plans improvements to teaching and learning in Religious Education. She is passionate, enthusiastic and has a clear vision for the subject. She has made effective use of assessment and moderation with other cluster schools in the locality to support on-going teaching and learning. There is an action plan for Religious Education in place.
- Whole school tracking is in place. However, considering the changes to the interim standards, recording and reporting will need to be developed further over the coming months to ensure its parity with other curriculum subjects. P Scales are to be used only for those children who are registered as having specific additional needs and are not to be used as a precursor to the interim standards.
- A commitment has been made by leaders and governors to ensure that there is a link governor for Religious Education who can effectively support the subject leader. It is recommended that he undertakes training from the Archdiocese to support his role in this area.

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 good.
- 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 are not yet routinely evaluating Collective Worship, either as a leader or a participant. This needs to be further developed across the school.
- 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 say that they really enjoy taking part in it because it is *"...very peaceful and reflective."* Another pupil added that they particularly like the Going Forth, part of Worship as it was *"...their opportunity to go out and do something for God."*

- Pupils have a very good understanding of the Church's liturgical year, its seasons and feasts. They regularly participate at Mass with the parish community.
- The experience of being a part of a 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 other faiths.
- Pupils have studied Judaism, Islam and Hinduism as part of their Other Faith and Religions topics. They have visited a mosque and had a visit by a practising Hindu who shared her experiences with the children. This helps to promote tolerance and respect for those who think differently to themselves.

The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school

- The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school is good.
- It is recognised that a lot of support and training has been given to further develop Collective Worship across the school. Staff are becoming more skilled in delivering quality Collective Worship and facilitating pupils when planning and delivering quality worship. There is some evidence that leaders of Collective Worship 'question' pupils and invoke a 'hands up' response rather than using rhetoric to help pupils to reflect more deeply on the Word. Sharing best practice will help to eradicate this.
- 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.
- Staff benefit from using the *Come and See for Yourself* Collective Worship materials prior to beginning a new Religious Education topic.
- Staff and pupils benefit from an outside area which has been developed as a peace/prayer garden.
- Collective Worship is given a high priority in the school. However, not all Collective Worship is evaluated by pupils and staff and this needs to become routinely practised in the school.
- Relevant staff have a very good understanding of the Church's liturgical year, seasons and feasts and ensure that pupils have good experiences of the Church's liturgical life.
- Opportunities are not often planned in a manner that facilitates attendance by other adults associated with the pupils and the school. This needs to be further developed to ensure parents and parishioners are welcomed to worship within the school community.
- The parish priest presides at Mass for key celebrations throughout the Church's liturgical year.

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

- Leaders and governors are good in promoting, monitoring and evaluating the provision for Collective Worship.
- Leaders and governors know how to provide policies and guidelines to plan and deliver quality Collective Worship. A policy for Collective Worship is in place. A commitment has been made to support training for Collective Worship for Newly Qualified Staff and senior leaders.
- Leaders and governors have a very good 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.

- A commitment has been made by leaders and governors to ensure that there is a link governor who can effectively support the subject leader in their role. Again, it is recommended that he undertakes training from the Archdiocese to support his role in this area.

What the school needs to do to improve further

- Further develop the quality of teaching and purposeful learning in Religious Education by:
 - ensuring teachers and other adults routinely develop the language of the standards i.e. driver words, into their plan, teach, review cycle and day to day repertoire, to more accurately support pupils;
 - developing a tracking system which supports assessment, reporting and monitoring of Religious Education for the new interim standards in line with other core curriculum subjects;
 - undertaking training to support the link governor in his role.
- Further develop the work being undertaken in Catholic Life by:
 - undertaking a full review of the Mission Statement with pupils, staff, governors and parents to ensure it meets Archdiocesan guidance with clear aims and objectives;
 - continuing to embed 'Journey in Love' into lessons to support Relationships and Sex Education;
 - beginning to develop a curriculum map for Relationships and Sex Education;
 - undertaking training to support the link governor in his role.

INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

How effective the school is in providing Catholic Education	2
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CATHOLIC LIFE

The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school	2
The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school	2
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school	2

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education	2
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education	2
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education	2

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship	2
The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school	2
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship	2

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