



# ARCHDIOCESE OF LIVERPOOL

## INSPECTION REPORT

### TWELVE APOSTLES CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

#### LEIGH

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Inspection Date Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> September 2019

Inspectors Mrs Julie Rourke Mrs Anna-Maria Roberts

Unique Reference Number 106503

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

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Type of School Catholic Primary

Age range of pupils 4-11

Number on roll 207

Chair of Governors Mrs J. Riley

Headteacher Mrs S. Newton

School address  
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Date of last inspection 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2014

## 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 Team and their associates approved by the Archbishop of Liverpool for this purpose.

## Information about this school

- Twelve Apostles school is an average sized Catholic Primary School situated in Leigh, Lancashire, serving the parish of St. Edmund Arrowsmith.
- There are 207 children on roll of whom 122 are baptised Catholic, 42 come from other Christian denominations and 4 from other faith or religious traditions. Thirty-nine have no religious affiliation.
- There are 11 teachers at the school, including the headteacher. Eleven teach Religious Education. Nine teachers are baptised Catholic. Nine teachers have a suitable qualification in Religious Education.
- Since the last inspection there is a newly appointed Chair of Governors and a new subject leader in post.

### Key for inspection grades

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

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# OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

Twelve Apostles Catholic Primary School 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 proudly live out their mission, *Through Learning and Loving We Will Follow Jesus*. They appreciate, value and actively participate in the Catholic Life and mission of the school.
- They regularly contribute to the school's evaluation of its Catholic Life and mission and take a lead in planning improvements to it. The children take part in an annual mission week to explore Gospel values in their lives.
- Pupils show a deep respect for themselves and others as made in the image and likeness of God. The behaviour of pupils is exemplary. 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.
- Pupils value and respect the Catholic tradition of the school and its links with the parish community and the Archdiocese. They attend parish masses, are invited to be altar servers, enjoy a Saints Peter & Paul Holy Communion breakfast and this year have celebrated the Year of the Eucharist.
- Older pupils are invited to be part of a Liturgy group. They are enthusiastic in their involvement in planning and taking part in parish and class masses. They are confident in expressing pride in their own religious and cultural identity and beliefs. They actively reach out to the vulnerable and housebound in their parish community and enjoy sharing their faith with others.
- Pupils enthusiastically embrace the demands that membership of a Catholic school entails. They fully accept their responsibilities and as a result they take a leading role to become, for example, part of the School Council, play leaders, reading buddies and Reception partners.
- On the day of inspection, children spoke well about their responsibilities and clearly recognised the importance of using their gifts in the service of others. They are alert to the needs of others and seek justice for all within and beyond the school community. Pupils support numerous causes such as, Nugent, CAFOD and fundraising for schools who are in need because of natural disasters.
- They live out their Catholic mission through a variety of opportunities. Children take part in the *Faith in Action* award each year, they also visit and sing for the elderly in their community and regularly pray for those in need. They have access to many after school sports, knitting, homework and choir clubs.
- Children enjoy visits and retreats by Animate and enjoy residential to Robin Wood and Tatton Hall, promoting their team building, learning and personal development.
- Pupils enjoy learning about other faiths and religions. They are encouraged to promote acceptance and tolerance within their school community.
- They take full advantage of the outstanding opportunities the school provides for their personal support and development such as, a nurture group, friendship groups, mindfulness sessions, meditation and promoting and developing healthy relationships.

- The Relationships and Sex Education programme, *Journey in Love*, recommended by the Archdiocese, has been implemented. As a result of this, pupils, appropriate to their age and capability, have an understanding of loving relationships and sexual development within the context of a Christian understanding of the purpose of sexual love.

## **The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school**

- The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school is outstanding.
- The school Mission Statement is a clear and inspiring expression of the educational mission of the Church.
- The school environment reflects its mission and identity through concrete and effective signs of the school's Catholic character. The school is a bright, colourful, homely learning environment. There are dedicated and well used sacred prayer spaces for the children with quality resources and artefacts.
- Twelve Apostles has a strong sense of community at all levels, evident in the quality of relationships and the centrality of prayer. The school is a supportive and joyful community. On the day of inspection, staff keenly shared their commitments as a school family, 'I have always felt part of the school family.' 'The Catholic Ethos is tangible in our school.'
- The school has a high regard for the pastoral needs of staff and members' needs are understood and catered for. Staff have access to a counsellor and mindful therapist. There are regular worship and reflection opportunities for staff throughout the school year and the school is keen to continue their development of staff well-being.
- Staff promote high standards of behaviour and are outstanding role models of mutual respect and forgiveness for pupils. All staff are fully committed to the Catholic Life and mission of the school, across the curriculum and the whole of school life. On the day of inspection, a staff member explained, 'We put the Gospel values at the heart of everything we do.'
- Pastoral programmes and Personal, Social and Health Education and Relationships and Sex Education are planned, well taught and reflect Catholic teachings and principles.
- Clear policies and structures are in place, which provide high levels of pastoral care to pupils, and there is an explicit and concrete commitment to the most vulnerable and needy in both policy and practice. The school employs a Pastoral Mentor who supports both children and families. Regular visitors support children in building communities, cultural awareness, healthy relationships and sensory sports coaching.
- All children at Twelve Apostles are provided with outstanding inclusive pastoral and educational care. This ethos is shared with all teachers, teaching assistants and those who provide one to one care. The school has a dedicated Nurture classroom with experienced Special Educational Needs and Disability staff, who ensure a fully accessible curriculum.
- The curriculum reflects a commitment to Catholic Social Teaching, to care for our common home and to the dignity of every human person. Children have accessed CAFOD's Connect to El Salvador and Pope Francis' Laudato Si. The school council have been tasked with promoting recycling and children enjoy taking part in gardening. The school encourages children's faith into action and provides opportunities to reflect on their environmental behaviours in God's world.
- The parish priest fully supports and promotes the Catholic Life of the school. He is regularly invited and welcomed into school, working closely with the headteacher to support families and children in their Sacramental preparation. He provides mediation in Advent and Lent for the children and promotes reflection to guide their well-being. On the day of inspection, the parish priest spoke highly of the introduction of the children's Liturgy group at school and regularly advises the children on themes and Scripture.

- The school provides parents with a wealth of information regarding the Catholic Life of the school. The website displays the variety of opportunities provided for the children and its successes and celebrations. There is an active group of friends and parents of Twelve Apostles who support, socialise and fundraise regularly for the school.

## **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.
- The headteacher, senior leaders and governors are deeply committed to the Church's mission in education. They are energised by the task and are a source of inspiration for the whole community.
- The school's parish church, Twelve Apostles has recently closed. The school family are deeply saddened by its closure, yet they have found some spirit in gathering historical evidence of the church from families and the surrounding parish community. The headteacher has been instrumental in this and is working closely with the parish priest to provide masses for the local parishioners in school.
- The provision for the Catholic Life of the school is given the highest possible priority by leaders. This is reflected in the school's self-evaluation which reflects rigorous monitoring, searching analysis and self-challenge and is clearly focused on the Catholic Life of the school and its Mission Statement.
- The school's Mission Statement, aims and objectives are regularly and creatively reviewed each year, led by the headteacher. This enables all stakeholders to reflect on and have an outstanding understanding of their mission. They share its purpose and are keenly and actively involved in shaping and supporting it.
- The school has strategies for engaging with parents/carers to the obvious benefit of pupils. Parents/carers understand the school's mission. They are invited to school masses, services, Sacramental preparation and a variety of fundraising and school events.
- The governing body is highly ambitious for the Catholic Life of the school and leads by example in the way it consistently emphasises this as a school improvement priority. There are planned improvements to further enhance the Catholic Life of the school.
- On the day of inspection, a governor expressed how they all live out their mission and are uplifted in the quality of relationships throughout the school. The governor expressed, 'The school is an oasis for children and their families.' Governors celebrate regularly with the school through, for example, in worship, for fundraising events and attendance at a variety of assemblies.
- All policies relating to the Catholic life of the school are up to date and ratified by the governors.
- The school responds well to Archdiocesan policies and initiatives and actively promotes them throughout the school, including, Archdiocesan subject leader Religious Education training, headteacher spirituality retreats.
- The Relationships and Sex Education programme, *Journey in Love*, recommended by the Archdiocese, is planned well and evidence is being collated. The school is keen to develop and map the provision for the programme, identifying links with Religious Education, Science and Personal, Social and Health Education across the school year.

# **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 with some outstanding features.
- Pupils, from their varied starting points, make good progress in each key stage.
- Pupils, relative to their age and capacity, are religiously literate and engaged young people; they use their knowledge, understanding and skills effectively, to reflect spiritually, and to think ethically and theologically. As a consequence, they are fully aware of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life.
- On the day of inspection, pupils concentrated well, were engaged in lessons and were committed to improving their knowledge, understanding and skills in order to further develop as competent learners. They have an excellent work ethic and as a pupil explained, 'I don't ever give up!'
- Pupils approach their lessons with interest and enthusiasm. They enjoy their activities and respond enthusiastically to opportunities which extend their learning.
- Behaviour in lessons is outstanding because pupils enjoy Religious Education. They are rarely off task even in extended periods without direction from an adult.
- Pupils workbooks are well presented, depict a variety of activities and progress is evident across the year groups. Their achievements are celebrated with affirming feedback from their teachers. In some year groups children respond to developmental marking. The school can then share excellent practices and look to their marking policy to ensure that there is consistency across year groups when marking in line with the other core curriculum subjects.
- Outstanding workbooks contain a variety of rich content, research, evidence of role play and creative activities. By sharing this good practice, teachers can continue to enrich the content in pupils' workbooks and continue to use the driver words to differentiate for all learners.
- The school has class tracking percentages in place across the school. This is beginning to enable teachers to see some developments. The school can now continue to use this data to develop how Religious Education is affecting different groups of children, for example, children with specific needs, boys and girls which will support differentiated planning and teaching and learning.

## **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 some of the lessons observed were outstanding.
- Teachers plan good and outstanding lessons, are confident in their subject expertise and understand how pupils learn in Religious Education. As a consequence, pupils apply themselves well and make good progress in lessons and in some lessons observed, outstanding progress.
- Teaching assistants and staff who work with children on a one to one basis are carefully planned for to optimise learning for pupils. They show outstanding understanding of and consideration of the specific needs of pupils in their care and encourage progress.
- Planning is detailed and shows differentiation through use of the driver words. The school can now look to their planning policy across other core subjects and adapt their Religious Education planning to suit the needs of the teachers and pupils in their care.

- On the day of inspection, teachers included driver words successfully to differentiate. Continuing to use the driver words will enable teachers to strengthen their high expectations for pupils in Religious Education.
- On the day of inspection, teachers planned a variety of creative activities to engage the pupils. Throughout the school there were calm inclusive working environments, excellent use of questioning, assessment of learning and consistent praise and encouragement within lessons taught. Teachers understand how the driver words can be used to tackle and develop learning. In outstanding plenaries observed, children were challenged which extended and widened their knowledge and understanding.
- In one lesson observed, outstanding questioning led children to make links to previous Scripture. All learners were catered for and were able to access the Religious Education curriculum to suit their ability. In another outstanding area of the school in the Nurture classroom, teachers skilfully wove Religious Education into their everyday activities and children were able to proudly share their work.
- Sharing the outstanding practises within school, will enable and develop further consistency in Religious Education lessons.
- Achievement and effort are celebrated continuously in lessons leading to high levels of motivation from the 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.
- 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 ensure that the required amount of curriculum time is given to Religious Education in each key stage. Religious Education has full parity with other core curriculum subjects, in terms of professional development, resourcing, staffing and accommodation. Timetables that are adapted regularly now need to ensure that Religious Education has quality timing as the core subject in school.
- Any additional requirements and policies of the Archdiocese regarding the Religious Education curriculum are embraced and fully implemented.
- Leaders and governors' self-evaluation of Religious Education is a reflection of assessment, monitoring and self-challenge which is informed by current best practice in Religious Education. The school is developing their tracking to inform teaching and learning. This will support analysis of data and enable self-challenge, resulting in targeted planning and strategic action for outstanding outcomes in Religious Education.
- Governors are fully informed about Religious Education standards and the subject leader regularly meets with the Religious Education governor. Governors are fully aware of their responsibilities and ratify all policies linked to Religious Education.
- The Religious Education governor is passionate about the subject and is fully informed of the impact that standards are having across the school. She is regularly updated on any new initiatives. With the subject leader, she has been involved in monitoring and training. Governors receive records of her visits and detailed reports.
- The Parish priest supports the *Come and See* Religious Education Programme. He knows the themes of the programme and this is reflected in his discussions with the Liturgy group.
- The curriculum leader for Religious Education has worked tirelessly to develop and continually improve the provision and outcomes of Religious Education. She leads the subject exceptionally well and the parish priest, governors, headteacher, senior leaders and teaching staff speak highly of and are supportive of her work. She clearly enjoys her role, is dedicated,

understands and knows the importance of the Catholic church's mission in education. She works closely with an effective cluster group of local Catholic schools.

- Parents receive regular updates and newsletters about Religious Education, formal reports on the achievement of their children and there is a wealth of information on the schools' website.

## **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.
- Pupils value and regularly participate voluntarily in liturgy and prayer. They display confidence using a variety of traditional and contemporary approaches to prayer, scripture, religious artefacts and liturgical music.
- Pupils have an excellent understanding of the Church's liturgical year, seasons and feasts. Appropriate to their age and ability, they are able to prepare acts of Collective Worship, which fully reflects this understanding.
- Pupils' Liturgy group are enthusiastic about preparing and leading worship. They are creative and resourceful in their planning of liturgy and want it to be the best it can be. Other pupils are engaged by the worship opportunities planned by their peers. On the day of inspection, pupils explained, *'We organise Collective Worship and we also help charities and we raise money for the school.'* This supports not only the children's prayer life but also using their faith in service for others.
- There is a genuine enthusiasm for Collective Worship, reflected in the quality of resources and planning, in the quality of prayerful silence and the depth of reverent participation in communal prayer.
- Acts of Collective Worship engage all pupils' interest and inspire in them deep thought and heartfelt response. On the day of inspection, children were given time with God, prayed together, shared their own thoughts, listened to music and were provided with purposeful go forth messages. In discussion with younger children they were keen to share their daily routine of school and traditional prayers.
- Children are invited to prayer which is inclusive to all. The quality of kindness, caring relationships and prayerful partnerships between the children and staff are palpable. This is a real strength of the school enabling inclusive daily prayer in a safe and loving environment.
- The experience of living and working in an inclusive, faithful, praying community has a profound and visible effect on the spiritual and moral development of all pupils, irrespective of ability.

### **The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school**

- The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school is outstanding.
- Collective Worship is central to the life of the school and forms the heart of every school celebration. Praying together is part of the daily experience for pupils and staff.
- Collective Worship has a clear purpose, message and direction. The themes chosen for worship reflect a deep understanding of the liturgical seasons and the Church's mission in education.
- Collective Worship is given priority in terms of planning, evaluating and resourcing. As a result, experiences of Collective Worship are of a high quality.
- Relevant staff have an excellent understanding of the Church's liturgical year, seasons and feasts, and ensure pupils have high quality experiences throughout the year.



- The parish priest is fully active in the prayer life of the school. He leads regular liturgical services planned with the children. He leads meditation at Advent and Lent and is keen to extend the reflections by using the theme of Reconciliation.
- Staff are highly skilled in helping pupils to plan and deliver quality worship, when appropriate. They have a thorough and comprehensive understanding of the purpose of Collective Worship and a wide variety of methods and styles of prayer.
- Twelve Apostles takes every opportunity to attract and facilitate attendance by parents/carers associated with the pupils. They invite parents to regular liturgical services, Rejoice celebrations and Stay and Pray.

## **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 have expert knowledge of how to provide policies and guidelines to ensure quality planning and delivery of Collective Worship.
- They have an extensive understanding of the Church's liturgical year, seasons and feasts and they are able make these accessible to the pupils in a contemporary context.
- Leaders place the highest priority on the professional development of staff incorporating liturgical formation and the planning of Collective Worship.
- They extensively promote pupils' planning and leading Collective Worship in a variety of contexts.
- Leaders are models of outstanding practice for staff and pupils. This is an area that can be further developed by evaluating how leaders are visible in their practices of liturgy and how they are cherished by the school community.
- Leaders and governors place the highest priority on the school's self-evaluation of Collective Worship with regular reviews of school performance.
- Governors and the parish priest are fully immersed and support the prayer life of the school and regularly attend liturgies throughout the school year. They are in a true partnership with the school community and its families, ensuring a welcoming and inviting prayerful environment.

## **What the school needs to do to improve further**

- Further develop the work being undertaken in the Catholic Life of the school by:
  - developing a curriculum map for *Relationships and Sex Education* with links to, PSHE, Science and with Religious Education at the heart of the curriculum.
- Continue to develop standards in Religious Education by:
  - developing data to inform differentiation in planning and teaching and learning;
  - sharing outstanding practices.

## INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

### OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

|   |   |
|---|---|
| How effective the school is in providing Catholic Education | 1 |
|---|---|

### 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                            | 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 | 1 |

### COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

|   |   |
|---|---|
| How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship                     | 1 |
| The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school  | 1 |
| How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship | 1 |

***Key to judgements: Grade 1 is Outstanding, Grade 2 Good, Grade 3 Requires Improvement and Grade 4 Inadequate***