



## ARCHDIOCESE OF LIVERPOOL

### INSPECTION REPORT

### ST. JOHN'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

#### SKELMERSDALE

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Inspection Date Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> November 2012  
Inspectors Miss Julie Lockett Mrs Anne McNally  
Unique Reference Number 119586  
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 3-11  
Number on roll 201  
Chair of Governors Dr Helen Flanagan  
Headteacher Mrs Aspinall-Livesey  
School address Flamstead  
Birch Green  
Skelmersdale  
WN8 6PF  
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Date of last inspection 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2009

# 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 John's school is an average sized Catholic primary school situated in Skelmersdale, Lancashire serving the parish of St Richard's.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher are the executive headteacher and deputy headteacher of this school and another local school.
- The headteacher manages the attached Children's Centre that offers full day care places for children below school age alongside parenting and family support services.
- There are 201 children on roll of whom 125 are baptised Catholic, 39 come from other Christian denominations, 2 from other faith or religious traditions and 35 have no religious affiliation.
- There are 14 teachers of whom 8 teach Religious Education. Seven are Catholic. Three teachers have a suitable qualification in Religious Education and 5 teachers are currently studying for a Catholic Certificate in Religious Education.
- The headteacher and the Religious Education coordinator, who is the deputy headteacher, have been in post since the last inspection.

### Key for inspection grades

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

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## **Overall effectiveness:**

St. John's Catholic Primary School is an outstanding school in providing Catholic Education.

## **Inspection Judgements**

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

- Pupils show an outstanding knowledge and understanding of the schools' Mission Statement, and understand the part they play within it. They are involved in its evaluation.
- Pupils have a strong sense of belonging to the school community and value and respect others, for example, older pupils, trained as peer mediators use the schools' motto 'to live in love' as a guide to resolve disputes amongst pupils.
- Pupils embrace opportunities to meet their potential in all aspects of school life and are actively involved in developing the Catholic character of the school.
- Pupils are encouraged to take on roles of responsibility in the school and wider community. For example, the school council provides pupils with the opportunity to participate in decision making in and around school by fundraising for a charity of their choice. Pupil parliamentarians are given opportunities to make presentations about their local area to the wider Lancashire community.
- Pupils benefit from participation in away days and retreat activities such as a residential to Towerwood in the Lake District, Liverpool Cathedral visits and a variety of educational visits to enrich the curriculum and Catholic Life of the school.
- Pupils are involved in service to the local and wider communities. For example, pupils collect for an Ecumenical Food bank; they fundraise for a number of local and international charities such as, Good Shepherd, St Vincent de Paul and CAFOD.
- Education for pastoral care and personal relationships has fostered positive attitudes in pupils. Pupils have a good sense of right and wrong and apply this in their personal relationships.
- Pupils take an increasing responsibility for themselves and their actions. Pupils' behaviour is outstanding.
- They praise and acknowledge the contribution of others through, for example, a weekly celebration of thanksgiving for their achievements. They show a readiness to embrace and celebrate their lived experiences.

### **How well pupils' achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education**

- On entry to school many children have a limited knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith.
- Pupils' achievements in Religious Education are above average.
- Pupils' attainment in Religious Education is above average. Pupils make outstanding 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.
- Analysis of assessments undertaken provides evidence of pupils generally attaining appropriate level for their age and stage of development in each key stage.

- Moderation for formal assessment tasks show pupils' excellent understanding for the lower attainment levels and an increasing understanding for higher levels of attainment.
- Pupils are becoming increasingly more religiously literate. Their knowledge, understanding and skills are developing appropriate to their age or capacity.
- They are 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, enthusiasm and behaviour.
- Pupils work independently and collaboratively. Talking partners and group work supports and encourages learning and is a tool used effectively throughout the school.
- Pupils are anxious to learn and improve their knowledge, understanding and skills. They are equipped to progress independently and to continue undertaking further challenges in their learning.

### **How well pupils' respond to and participate in Collective Worship**

- Pupils' response to and participation in Collective Worship is good.
- They show interest, respond well and are beginning to actively participate in Collective Worship.
- Pupils act with reverence and are keen to participate in a variety of gatherings
- Pupils' knowledge of prayer and liturgy is increasing.
- They are becoming familiar with a variety of prayer styles. They appreciate and are open to the Word of God in the scriptures.
- In a key stage Collective Worship pupils reflected in silence and confidently responded to the Word and sung joyfully.
- Quality focus areas allow the pupils to reflect.
- Pupils are encouraged to go forth in meaningful ways and quality resources are provided for the pupils to reflect on the message given.
- Pupils are developing ways to become more confident preparing and leading worship, for example, in one year group a 'talking book' aids pupils in recording their planning for Collective Worship.

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

- The quality of teaching is good and in some year groups outstanding. Teaching is effective in ensuring that pupils are interested and engaged.
- Teachers display good subject knowledge and deploy a range of teaching styles to motivate and inspire pupils.
- In lessons observed, well planned lessons and good questioning ensured pupils were engaged and showed excellent attitudes to their learning.
- Good opportunities are given for pupils to develop their learning, for example, through the use of talking partners.
- Excellent opportunities are given for pupils to reflect on their learning and link it to their own lives, for example, in group work pupils were sensitively guided in discussion to link a 'waiting' theme to their own emotions.
- Teaching encourages pupils' enjoyment of and enthusiasm of Religious Education, for example, practical activities using a timer prompted animated discussion.
- Teachers plan well to create an atmosphere wonder especially through the use of various stimuli, for example, a teaching assistant role played '*Princess Birthday*' and

for younger pupils an unexpected present captured pupils interest and attention in readiness for learning.

- Across the Foundation stage themes are highly effective and reinforced through appropriate language, well timed activities and good resources.
- Planning is annotated and as the new Religious Education Programme is embedded planning can be improved by adding detail, such as consistent differentiation linked to previous assessment and evaluations.
- Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to work independently and collaboratively. Information Technology is used to maximise learning.
- Teaching Assistants provide excellent support and care to pupils. They are deployed effectively and show great sensitivity to pupils' needs. In lessons observed they ensured all pupils in their care reached their full potential.
- A learning mentor is highly effective throughout the school providing specific support for individuals and groups of pupils. She is carefully and effectively planned for within lessons.
- Pupils are informed of their progress and how to improve both orally and through marking. There is some evidence of assessment for learning within lessons.
- Marking relates to the learning intentions and shows that pupils are responding to teachers' feedback either orally or by written responses following teacher's action comments.
- Effective systems are in place to track pupils' attainment in Religious Education, showing detailed information for, 'below, on track and more able pupils'.
- A high percentage of pupils are on track in Religious Education in relation to other core subjects. This firm basis will contribute further to planning, teaching and purposeful learning.
- Effort and achievement at all stages of learning is celebrated.

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

- The curriculum is outstanding in meeting pupils' needs and the school has successfully implemented the new Religious Education Programme, '*Come and See*'.
- The school using the *Come and See* programme recommended by the Archdiocese meets the requirements of the Religious Education Curriculum Directory. 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. Imaginative and well planned strategies are deployed to enrich pupils learning.
- The curriculum supports the needs of groups and individuals. The new Religious Education Programme will provide further opportunities for more able learners to develop detailed content that matches high level attainment targets.
- Pupils have explored the beliefs and value of other faiths and religions through, for example, the Jewish faith and Islamic religion. An outdoor area relates to world religions. This helps to promote tolerance and respect for those who think differently.
- A wide range of enrichment activities such as art, music, sport, opportunities to join a Lancashire brass band and wider community projects such as outdoor and adventure play have a positive impact on the curriculum.

- The Religious Education curriculum provides outstanding opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral development and vocation. The curriculum is closely linked to pupils' personal, social and emotional development.
- Pupils' spiritual and moral development is developed through for example, class based or whole school end of topic celebrations.

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

- Collective Worship provided is outstanding in reflecting the Catholic character of the school.
- Collective Worship has a high profile and is central to the life of the school.
- The schools' comprehensive Collective Worship policy states, '*Collective Worship is a launching pad to what goes on elsewhere in the school.*'
- The school has begun monitoring Collective Worship.
- The school provides opportunities for staff to develop the skills in planning, leading and evaluating Collective Worship. All staff have received school based training and some members of staff have attended Archdiocesan training.
- Children are enabled to pray formally and informally using a variety of prayer methods and styles.
- The teachers provide the necessary resources and opportunities to help children to develop the skills necessary to plan, lead and participate in Collective Worship and to evaluate it effectively.
- Collective Worship plays a key part in meeting the spiritual needs of the pupils.
- Opportunities are provided to enable full, active and conscious participation of the whole school community.
- Opportunities are provided for parents and carers to participate in a variety of celebrations of the *Come and See* programme and the Church's liturgical year.
- School masses are attended by both parents and parishioners.
- The schools' website is outstanding in promoting and celebrating Collective Worship.

### **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 and are deeply committed to the Mission of the Church.
- This is reflected in the Schools own Mission Statement. All who form part of the school community including parents, Priests, governors and children were involved in the development of the Mission Statement. It guides every aspect of school life and is a useful tool by which the school evaluates its effectiveness.
- The Mission Statement had its last full review in 2007; there are interim reviews each year involving staff and pupils. Parents are consulted on the schools mission.
- Leaders, governors and managers are outstanding in the way they use monitoring data to evaluate the schools performance, celebrate and plan future improvements.
- The Self Evaluation Document provides detailed evidence of the schools monitoring, analysis and self challenge, showing a thorough diagnosis of the schools strengths and areas for development.
- Governors are outstanding in fulfilling their responsibilities and actively help to shape the direction of the school. There is a named Religious Education governor. They receive regular updates from the headteacher and Religious Education coordinator regarding the Catholic life of the school.

- Governors are linked to individual classes and attend a variety of liturgical and seasonal celebrations.
- Leadership at all levels respects difference, values diversity and ensures equal opportunities for all.
- The school provides valuable induction and in-service training to enable staff to further understand the Church's Mission in Education and play their unique part in it e.g. all teachers hold a suitable Religious Education qualification or are studying for the Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies.
- The Catholic life, mission and work of St John's is produced to a very high standard through for example, staff and pupils working to develop an outdoor learning environment and inspiring, creative displays within school .
- There is a detailed and comprehensive Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural policy in place that suits the specific needs of the school. It highlights strong links to the behaviour, code of conduct, personal, social and emotional curriculum.
- The policy is evidence of the opportunities for positive relationships throughout the school for staff and pupils.
- The quality of Collective Worship is a priority for the school. It is monitored and evaluated by leaders, governors and managers. An up to date comprehensive policy is in place.
- Parents are consulted regularly and involved in a variety of ways in the life of the school e.g. the school website has a wealth of up to date information for parents and are invited class based end of topic celebrations where they can also view and share their child's work.

**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.**

- Leaders, governors and managers are good with many outstanding features in promoting, monitoring and evaluating the provision for the Religious Education of the school.
- The deputy headteacher is outstanding in leading Religious Education, showing excellent knowledge and understanding of her key role. She attends regular training and updates provided by the Archdiocese. In her role she shows dedication, commitment and drives forward new initiatives when appropriate. Outstanding documentation guides and directs all staff in the delivery of the subject. This is updated as necessary.
- Governors receive regular updates from the Deputy Headteacher regarding Religious Education and are aware of standards at St John's.
- The Self Evaluation Document is rigorous in identifying targets, timescales and lines of accountability
- The Religious Education handbook suits the individual needs of the school and guides and directs all staff in the delivery of the subject.
- Monitoring data for Religious Education is used effectively to evaluate the schools performance and plan for future improvements. There is a robust programme for the monitoring and evaluation cycle.
- Teaching and learning is monitored regularly and appropriate feedback and support given as necessary. Good practice is shared and celebrated.
- Planning is continuing to evolve following the introduction of the new Religious Education Programme, Come and See.
- Continuing professional development opportunities are provided for all.

- Assessment information is collated and tracked by the subject leader and shared with the leadership team, governors and parents.
- Formal assessment tasks are undertaken in line with Archdiocesan guidance and moderated well by the by the Religious Education coordinator, who is continuing to guide staff in high level attainment expectations.
- Curriculum outlines are provided for parents who are consulted on different issues depending on the topic being covered. The outlines are adapted to suit the needs of the school.
- Formal written reports are detailed and are in a prominent position. They are individual to each child and comments made reflect excellently on the achievements for Religious Education and at times commenting on the pupils' contribution to Collective Worship.
- Achievement and effort at St John's is always celebrated.

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

- Continue to develop Collective Worship by:
  - continuing monitoring Collective Worship and share good practice;
  - pupils continuing to embed skills in preparing, leading and evaluating Collective Worship.
- Continue to develop purposeful learning by:
  - giving clear expectations and guidelines when annotating planning;
  - linking planning to previous formal assessment and evaluations.

# INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

## **OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS**

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

## **OUTCOMES FOR PUPILS**

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>How good outcomes are for individuals and groups of pupils</b>                         |   |
| 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             | 2 |

## **PROVISION**

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>How effective the provision is for Catholic Education</b>                     |   |
| The quality of teaching and how purposeful learning is in Religious Education    | 2 |
| 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**

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>How effective leaders, governors and managers are in developing the Catholic Life of the School</b>   |   |
| 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                      | 2 |

|   |               |
|---|---------------|
| <b>Key to judgements: Grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 requires improvement and grade 4 inadequate</b> | <b>Grades</b> |
|---|---------------|

