



## ARCHDIOCESE OF LIVERPOOL

### INSPECTION REPORT

### ST BENEDICT'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

#### WARRINGTON

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Inspection Date 24 June 2014  
Inspectors Mrs. Denise Hegarty, Mrs. Mary Kearsley  
Unique Reference Number 111308  
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 253 (including Nursery pupils)  
Chair of Governors Mr Barry Cain  
Headteacher Mr. Kevin McCourt  
School address Quebec Road  
Warrington  
Cheshire  
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E-mail address stbenedicts\_primary@warrington.gov.uk  
Date of last inspection 19 October 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. Benedict's school is an average-sized Catholic Primary School situated in Warrington serving the parish of St. Benedict's, in the Warrington district of the Archdiocese.
- There are 253 children on roll (including nursery pupils) of whom 228 are baptised Catholic and 20 pupils are from another Christian denomination. Five pupils have another religious affiliation.
- There are 11 teachers at the school of whom 9 are Catholic. Nine teachers teach Religious Education and 7 have a suitable qualification in the subject.
- The headteacher and the Religious Education Co-ordinator were both in post at the time of 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 Benedict's Catholic Primary is a good school in providing Catholic Education.

## Inspection Judgements

**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 know the sentiments of the school's Mission Statement and recognise that they belong to a loving Christian family where their gifts and talents are nurtured and celebrated. Each year, they have the opportunity to reflect upon the statement and review it. They understand the demands and responsibilities that living their mission places on them. This is particularly evident in how they form their relationships and celebrate each others' achievements. Pupils display sensitive, caring attitudes towards their peers.
- They are proud to belong to this school community and are confident ambassadors for it.
- Pupils are encouraged to take on roles of responsibility in the school and wider community e.g. as school councillors and playground buddies. Within these roles, they look after younger members of the community and raise awareness to the needs of others.
- Pupils are actively involved in developing the Catholic character of the school by, for example, generously supporting a variety of charities including CAFOD, St. Rocco's hospice and Nugent Care's Good Shepherd Appeal. Through their promotion of such charities, they are raising funds for and responding to the needs of the less fortunate.
- Pupils benefit from participation in many away days and some retreat activities. All concerned really enjoyed their Week of Wonder which gave time for reflection and contemplation. As part of their transition to the next stage of their education, Year 6 pupils attend retreat days at their local high school where they can reflect on and celebrate their experiences in their primary school and look forward to the future. Residential trips are available for pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6. Such opportunities encourage the development of the whole child in a different setting; broaden their horizons and impact greatly on their social, spiritual and moral development. They provide memorable learning experiences for all concerned.
- Pupils embrace opportunities to meet their potential in all aspects of school life and benefit from a wide range of extra-curricular activities e.g. sports and music clubs. Through these, they learn the values of commitment, responsibility and teamwork. On the day of inspection, the delight on the faces of the Gospel Choir singers as they performed reflected their enjoyment and enthusiasm for it.
- Pupils have a good sense of right and wrong and of fair play. They take an increasing responsibility for themselves and their actions. On the day of inspection, behaviour throughout the school was outstanding.
- Education for pastoral care and personal relationships has fostered positive attitudes in pupils.
- They praise and acknowledge the contribution of others and are quick to congratulate them on their achievements within class and at whole school assemblies.
- Pupils are involved in service to the local faith and religious communities, the immediate neighbourhood served by the school and the wider community. They have participated in the Warrington Walk of Witness, the school and parish May procession and joined in the Feast of Choirs at the Anglican Cathedral.

- Pupils of all ages show respect and understanding of other faiths and religions. They have enjoyed learning about Judaism and Sikhism within the curriculum and look forward to studying Islam next.

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

- Pupils' achievements and enjoyment in Religious Education is good.
- Their attainment in Religious Education is also good.
- They make at least expected progress in relation to their starting points and capabilities.
- On entry to school many children have a limited knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith.
- There is no difference in performance between pupils of different gender.
- Outcomes for pupils with additional or special needs are good.
- Analysis of assessments undertaken provides evidence of pupils generally attaining appropriate level for their age and stage of development in each key stage with some exceeding expectation.
- 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 very good as shown by their interest, enthusiasm and behaviour. They are focussed on their work and able to sustain their concentration.
- Pupils are encouraged to work independently and collaboratively. They are anxious to learn and improve their knowledge, understanding and skills as they become independent learners. They want to succeed and take great pride in their achievements.
- Pupils of all ages are keen to share what they have learned with parents at their school Knowledge Fairs.

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

- Pupils' response to and participation in Collective Worship is good.
- They enjoy their experiences, showing interest, responding well and actively participating in Collective Worship.
- They act with reverence and are keen to participate in a variety of gatherings.
- They take an active part in reading, writing petitions and taking up the offertory gifts during school Masses.
- Pupils' knowledge of prayer and liturgy is increasing. They become familiar with a variety of prayer styles and enjoy writing prayers to share with others.
- They appreciate and are open to the Word of God in the Scriptures.
- Pupils sing joyfully and join in community prayers appropriately and confidently.
- They are becoming increasingly more secure in preparing and leading worship in an age appropriate manner. During their interview, Year 6 pupils spoke about how they were given the theme to prepare worship and challenged to choose appropriate music, prayers and method of delivery.

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

- The quality of teaching and purposeful learning in Religious Education is good.
- It is consistently effective in ensuring that pupils are interested and engaged and make good progress.

- Teachers display good subject knowledge and deploy a range of teaching styles to motivate and inspire pupils. This includes the use of art, drama, Information and Communications Technology and independent research. They plan their lessons very well and have developed a good understanding of the *Come and See* programme. The *Come and See for Yourself* sessions are used effectively by staff to pause and reflect before they begin to teach each topic to consider its roots, explore their own feelings about it and see how they can apply it to their practice.
- Teaching encourages pupils' enjoyment of and enthusiasm of Religious Education. Pupils interviewed were effusive in their praise and enthusiasm for the subject.
- Teachers take into account pupils' prior learning and ensure differentiated tasks when planning so that the work consolidates, builds and extends their knowledge and understanding. They do, however need to have higher expectations, particularly of the more able pupils, to really challenge them to consistently attain the higher levels.
- Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to work independently and collaboratively. The use of talking partners is very effectively used to discuss ideas and formulate opinions.
- All staff members are committed to removing barriers for learning and ensure that all pupils are nurtured and cared for.
- Good use is made of time and resources including other adults and Information and Communication Technology to maximise learning. Additional adults in the classroom were deployed very well to support and enhance learning and to assess progress. The provision for Information and Communication Technology throughout the school is excellent and most teachers use it to great effect.
- Pupils are informed of their progress and how to improve both orally and through marking. They are given opportunities to discuss their work and how to improve. Teachers make effective and inclusive use of questioning to engage their pupils. They use oral feedback well to positively reinforce high-quality work, attitude and behaviour.
- Effort and achievement are celebrated especially in *Rejoice* assemblies and celebrations in the final week of the topic. They are also celebrated on a daily basis in lessons, by most teachers, through positive marking strategies which build pupils' self-esteem and indicate their next steps for learning. Within this good practice, pupils are given opportunities to respond to comments about their work and how they can improve.
- Displays throughout the school celebrate work and reinforce pupils' learning and understanding.
- The assessment of pupils work in Religious Education is very good. The teachers are becoming very familiar with the levels their children are working at. Moderation meetings have been held in school, with the local cluster network and at archdiocesan level. A portfolio of levelled work is well underway.
- The school has outstanding assessment strategies which provide accurate and detailed information on the achievement of all the pupils. Tracking sheets are completed termly giving staff members an overview of progress and achievement. This facilitates future planning and provides teachers with the possibility to identify how well pupils are achieving and tackle any underachievement. They should now use the available data to target pupils and plan work which will provide an appropriate level of challenge for them all.
- Teachers enable pupils to evaluate their own work through peer and self review opportunities.

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

- The extent to which the Religious Education Curriculum promotes pupils' learning is outstanding. It meets pupils' needs very well.

- 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. Imaginative and well planned strategies are deployed to enrich pupils' learning.
- The school implements new curriculum developments as appropriate.
- Enrichment activities such as many extra-curricular activities show how the children strive to achieve all-round potential and enjoy life to the full. Visits to a variety of places e.g. Martin Mere, Formby Beach and the Metropolitan Cathedral have a positive impact on the curriculum and provide memorable learning experiences for the pupils.
- The Religious Education curriculum provides excellent opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral development and vocation. The Week of Wonder helped pupils to develop stewardship of creation and a sense of awe and wonder. Other themed weeks such as the Anti-bullying Week encourage respect for the views and opinions of others.
- Circle time and SEAL activities are regularly provided and give the children opportunities to discuss issues, listen to and reflect upon the views of others and to share their own thoughts and ideas. These sessions help to develop self-esteem and raise aspirations.
- The curriculum is customised well to meet the needs of groups and individuals.
- Every effort is made to develop children's experiences in order to prepare them for the next stage in their learning. There are good links with the local high schools for curriculum support, workshops etc.
- Children have explored the beliefs and values of other faiths and religions including Judaism and Sikhism. This helps to promote tolerance and respect for those who think differently. Since the last inspection, some pupils have visited a synagogue as part of their studies.

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

- The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school is good. It reflects the Catholic character of the school well and takes into account the variety of backgrounds among the pupils.
- Collective Worship has a high profile and is central to the life of the school.
- It plays a key part in meeting the spiritual needs of the pupils.
- A comprehensive timetable of themes ensures the Church's seasons, the time of Year and topics from *Come and See* are celebrated. The school also includes opportunity to focus on current issues e.g. CAFOD's Lent and Harvest themes.
- Resources used are modern and up to date. They include artefacts, music and artwork. These engage the pupils in a lively manner. Classrooms have suitable focus tables and there are devotional areas in the entrance and around the school.
- Opportunities are provided to enable full, active and conscious participation of the whole school community.
- Children are enabled to pray formally and informally using a variety of prayer methods and styles. Provision includes the teaching of Gospel singing which is much enjoyed by pupils and gives them the opportunity to share their praise of God in a very dynamic way.
- The school provides opportunities for staff to develop the skills in planning, leading and evaluating Collective Worship. They recently attended the Warrington Schools' in-service on Collective Worship.

- The teachers should now consistently 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.
- 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 and the Church's liturgical year. All classes take turns to lead the *REJOICE* celebrations for the *Come and See* topics over the course of the year.
- Governors, parents, carers and parishioners are invited to other celebrations e.g. Nativity, Passion plays, May processions etc. They are also invited to attend school Masses.

**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 monitoring and evaluating the provision for the Catholic life of the school and in the way they plan and implement improvement to outcomes for pupils.
- They show an excellent understanding of and commitment to the Mission of the Church which is reflected in the Schools own Mission Statement, *'being a loving, Christian family nurturing and celebrating gifts, talents and achievements through the example of their living faith'*. All who form part of the school community were involved in its development. The aims and practical objectives emanating from it direct and guide every aspect of school life and are a useful tool by which the school can evaluate its effectiveness.
- The statement is proudly displayed throughout the school and is prominent on the school's website. It is reviewed regularly. School policies reflect its sentiments and the school's distinctive Catholic nature.
- There are positive relationships at every level within this cohesive school family. Pastoral care is excellent.
- Leaders, governors and managers are outstanding in the way they use monitoring data to evaluate the schools performance, celebrate, and plan future improvements. There is a shared vision for continuous improvement and a passion for working to give pupils the best provision possible. This area has significantly improved since the last inspection and reflects the commitment of leaders.
- Good opportunities are provided for the staff and pupils to play an active part in Catholic life and Mission of the school. This is evident through themed weeks and through outreach work for a variety of local, national and global charities.
- The Self Evaluation Document provides evidence of the schools monitoring, searching analysis and self challenge. It is reviewed by senior leaders and feeds into the school development plan.
- This provides a basis to celebrate the school's strengths and outlines areas for development.
- The school provides good induction and in-service training to enable staff members to further understand the Church's Mission in Education and to play their unique part in it. There are strong links with the Warrington schools' network which has recently provided training in spirituality and collective worship.
- The quality of Collective Worship is a priority for the school. It is effectively monitored and evaluated by leaders, governors and managers. An up to date policy is in place.
- Records of class, phase and school collective worship indicate how they are evaluated for impact and effectiveness.
- A range of opportunities for spiritual and moral developments are provided for staff and pupils such as *Come and See for Yourself* sessions, *Rejoice* celebrations and especially the school's 'Week of Wonder'.

- Leadership at all levels respects difference, values diversity and ensures equal opportunities for all.
- 'Ben's Buddies' offer outstanding wrap-around care for pupils. A breakfast club is available before school and link clubs provide many activities to engage the pupils after the school day. This upholds the school ethos and is very helpful for parents and carers.
- Strong home, school and parish links have been forged. Parents, carers, governors and parishioners are welcomed into school at various times in the liturgical year e.g. Masses and celebrations. The pupil planner gives opportunities for effective daily communication between home and school.
- Parents are consulted regularly and involved in a variety of ways in the life of the school, e.g. 'Ben's Friends' are a parent voice and action group which provide events for families and raises funds for the school. They provided many of the resources for the 'Week of Wonder'. The school website is an effective tool for keeping parents informed of what is happening in the Catholic life of the school and for sharing parish news and events.
- The school is a central part of the local and parish community and is appreciated and supported by all members.
- Excellent links exist with the parish and the school gives its full support to the Sacramental programme, '*With You Always*.' The subject co-ordinator is a lead catechist for the programme. The parish priest is very supportive of the school.
- Governors are outstanding in fulfilling their responsibilities. They have effectively helped to shape the direction of the school through their enthusiasm and presence therein. They are justly proud of the Catholic ethos of their school and feel well-informed and welcome into school at any time.

**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 in promoting monitoring and evaluating the provision for the Religious Education of the school and in the way they plan and implement improvement to outcomes for pupils.
- Monitoring data is used very effectively to evaluate the schools performance and plan for future improvements.
- There is a robust programme for the monitoring and evaluation cycle. Since the last inspection, a systematic system has been put in place. This includes scrutiny of planning and children's work, observations of display work and classroom observations of teaching and learning. Quality feedback is given, good practice is celebrated and shared and areas found for development are followed up with leaders checking carefully on progress made.
- Continuing professional development opportunities are provided for all. Newly qualified teachers are advised and supported well. Staff meetings are regularly devoted to the subject and teachers are encouraged to attend in-service sessions at LACE.
- Assessment strategies are now fully in place and very effective. Information gleaned is collated and tracked by the assessment co-ordinator and shared with the leadership team, governors and parents. This enables all concerned to know what standards in Religious Education are like throughout the school and to be able to challenge underachievement and celebrate success as appropriate.
- Formal assessment tasks are undertaken in line with archdiocesan guidance. Moderation and levelling meetings are held and useful assessment files are kept for each class.
- The subject is outstandingly led. The co-ordinator shows commitment and introduces new initiatives when appropriate. She is a positive role model for staff, parents and pupils. Good documentation guides and directs all staff in the delivery of the subject. This is updated as necessary. All archdiocesan briefings are attended and information given is cascaded to colleagues.

- A good budget is allocated and the subject is well-resourced. An annual audit is undertaken and resources are replenished and augmented so as to enhance the subject.
- The Self Evaluation Document identifies targets, timescales and lines of accountability. A subject action plan is formulated annually and clearly prioritises areas for development which are linked to impact on outcomes for pupils.
- Curriculum outlines are provided for parents who are consulted on different issues depending on the topic being covered. They receive information about their children's progress and achievement at parents' evenings and in their annual report.
- Religious Education features prominently at all meetings of the governing body. Governors receive updates relating to standards and areas of strength and development for the subject. This enables them to be well-informed to challenge, support and advise.
- Achievement and effort are celebrated both on a daily basis and at the weekly celebration assemblies. An awards ceremony at the end of the year celebrates children's good attitude, creativity and endeavour.

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

- Improve the provision for Religious Education by:
  - encouraging teachers and support staff to have higher expectations of the children in their care;
  - continuing to develop assessment procedures to raise standards and close gaps;
  - ensuring that information gleaned from assessments is consistently and effectively used to inform planning and enable all teachers to provide tasks that inspire and challenge pupils.
- Continue to implement the areas for development as identified in the school's own self evaluation document. These include:
  - reviewing the school Mission Statement with all stakeholders;
  - continuing to develop regular opportunities for younger children to lead Collective Worship in a variety of ways;
  - continuing to develop a range of effective and creative teaching strategies to help promote pupils learning.

# INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

## ***OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS***

How effective the school is in providing Catholic Education	2
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## ***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	2
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	2

## ***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

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