

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

- Our Lady of Perpetual Succour School is a smaller than average sized Catholic Primary School situated in Widnes in the Halton area of the diocese and serving the parishes of Our Lady of Perpetual Succour and St. Michael's.
- There are 199 children on roll of whom 187 are baptised Catholic and 12 come from other Christian denominations.
- There are 11 teachers at the school all of whom teach Religious Education. Nine are Catholic. Nine teachers have a suitable qualification in Religious Education.
- A new Religious Education co-ordinator has been appointed 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:

Our Lady of Perpetual Succour School provides good Catholic Education.

Inspection Judgements

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

- Pupils make an outstanding contribution to the Catholic Life of the school and greatly benefit from it. They are very good ambassadors for the school.
- They know and understand the school's Mission Statement, 'We learn to love everyone as Jesus loves us' and understand that it is a calling to live out the values from the Gospel in their daily lives as friends and followers of Jesus. School councillors are involved in its evaluation.
- Pupils have a strong sense of belonging to this school community. They understand the demands and responsibilities that the living the mission places on them especially in how they value and respect others and form their relationships.
- Pupils are encouraged to take on roles of responsibility in the school and wider community e.g. as play leaders, school councillors, eco monitors and sports ambassadors. Within these roles, they care for the environment, are models of fair play and co-operation and raise awareness to the needs of others.
- Pupils are actively involved in developing the Catholic character of the school by raising awareness of and generously supporting a variety of charities including CAFOD and a school they are linked with in Ghana both financially and through their prayers.
- 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. choir, dance club, art club. Through them, they learn the values of commitment, responsibility and tolerance.
- All Year 4 and Year 6 pupils have the opportunity to participate actively in residential trips to Hawse End and The Conway Centre. These experiences impact greatly on the pupils' social, spiritual and moral development.
- Pupils have a good sense of right and wrong and apply this in their personal relationships. They take an increasing responsibility for themselves and their actions within the moral framework upheld by the school.
- Education for pastoral care and personal relationships has fostered positive attitudes in pupils and respects the dignity of all. The school nurse and Life Unit also contribute to the programme.
- Pupils praise and acknowledge the contribution of others. They show a readiness to embrace and celebrate their lived experiences especially through Collective Worship which often promotes self-respect and celebration for each individual pupil as created by God.
- They are involved in service to the local faith and religious communities. Celebrations e.g. Christingle Service where the proceeds were donated to Missions in Bolivia, are held at Our Lady's Church. The school choir go out into the community to visit and perform for the elderly residents at a local home at Christmas time. They support Halton Haven Hospice.
- Pupils show respect and understanding of other faiths and religions and have enjoyed learning about Judaism and Hinduism within the curriculum.

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

- Pupils achieve well in Religious Education and thoroughly enjoy their learning.
- They make good progress in relation to their starting points and capabilities.
- Pupils' attainment in Religious Education is good overall. Analysis of assessments undertaken provides evidence of pupils generally attaining appropriate level for their age and stage of development in each key stage. Some underachievement has been identified and strategies are planned to rectify this.
- There is no difference in performance between pupils of different gender.
- Outcomes for pupils with additional or special needs are also good.
- 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 generally outstanding as shown by their interest, sustained concentration, zest and excellent behaviour in lessons.
- They appreciate the efforts staff members make to make their lessons enjoyable, respond enthusiastically and speak highly of their teachers.
- Pupils are encouraged to work independently and collaboratively. They co-operate well with each other in group work and paired / shared activities. Across the school, children are respectful of each others' views and opinions.

How well pupils' respond to and participate in Collective Worship

- Pupils' response to and participation in Collective Worship is good.
- They show keen interest, respond very well and actively participate in daily Collective Worship. This is evident in evaluations from teachers and pupils and from observations on the day of inspection.
- They act with reverence and respect at such times and are keen to participate in a variety of gatherings.
- Pupils' knowledge of prayer and liturgy is increasing. They are very familiar with responses from the Mass and with a variety of prayer styles.
- They appreciate and are open to the Word of God in the scriptures showing reverence and esteem. During the Collective Worship observed, the scripture was treated with utmost respect.
- Pupils sing joyfully, reflect in silence from an early age and join in community prayers appropriately and with confidence.
- They are becoming increasingly more confident and skilled in preparing and leading worship from their earliest years. A plethora of photographic evidence supports this.
- Their liturgical skills are very well developed.

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, engaged and make good progress.
- Teachers plan well using useful school planners and generally display very good subject knowledge. They work hard and are great role models for the children to emulate. A range of teaching styles are deployed to motivate pupils.

- Teaching encourages pupils' enjoyment of and enthusiasm for Religious Education. On the day of inspection young children excitedly prepared and performed a dance to illustrate a difficult passage from scripture, even working through their play time to complete and improve it.
- Teachers take into account pupils' prior learning and should consistently ensure tasks are clearly differentiated when planning so that the work consolidates, builds and extends their knowledge and understanding particularly to challenge the higher achievers.
- Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to work independently and collaboratively.
- They have high expectations of the pupils they teach in terms of attitude and behaviour.
- Good use is made of time and resources including other adults and Information and Communication Technology to maximise learning.
- 'Assessment for Learning' strategies are generally used effectively across the school. This helps children understand where they need to go next and how best to get there.
- Pupils' contributions are valued and appreciated.
- Effort and achievement are celebrated through marking and verbal encouragement. Displays are used to celebrate and reinforce learning.
- The assessment of pupils work in Religious Education is good. Most teachers use their assessments well to inform future planning.
- The school has excellent assessment strategies which provide detailed information on the achievement of all the pupils. Teachers track individual progress and enter data onto school tracking sheets which are used effectively to identify areas of development for individuals and groups of pupils. They are thus able to identify how well pupils are achieving and tackle underachievement.
- Teachers enable pupils to evaluate their own work.

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

- The extent to which the Religious Education curriculum promotes pupils' learning is good. It meets all pupils' needs very well.
- Religious Education is clearly seen as the core curriculum subject in this school.
- Using the *Come and See* programme recommended by the Archdiocese, the school 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. New planning sheets have been introduced with end of topic evaluation sheets matched to the appropriate levels of attainment. These are used effectively but could indicate the next steps for learning more consistently.
- The school implements new curriculum developments as appropriate and purchases suitable resources in support. Plans to form a local cluster group for subject co-ordinators are being made. Good practice can then be shared effectively.
- Displays around the school are linked to the curriculum and celebrate work.
- Enrichment activities such as opportunities to work with artists and writers have a positive impact on the curriculum, promote respect for the gifts and talents of each individual and help to raise self esteem.

- The Religious Education curriculum provides good opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral development and vocation.
- Children have explored the beliefs and values of the Jewish faith and Hindu religion. This helps to promote tolerance and respect for those who think differently. They thoroughly enjoyed the visitors who shared their beliefs and values.

The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school

- The Collective Worship provided is outstanding in reflecting the Catholic character of the school. It has a very high profile and is central to the life of the school.
- 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.
- Prayer and Liturgy are used effectively as a source of inspiration to help pupils and staff members reflect upon their lives and mission.
- Children are enabled to pray formally and informally using a variety of prayer methods and styles.
- Excellent use is made of music and the pupils have been taught a wide range of hymns to enhance worship.
- In accordance with development plans, training was provided by a member of the Christian Education Department in planning, leading and evaluating Collective Worship. This had a significant impact on the quality of Collective Worship throughout the school and on the role of pupils in planning and leading worship in an age appropriate manner.
- The head teacher monitors the quality of provision as he regularly joins classes across the school for Collective Worship.
- The Religious Education co-ordinator ensures that suitable resources are purchased and used effectively.
- The teachers are able to provide essential resources and opportunities to help children to develop the skills necessary to plan, lead and participate in Collective Worship and to evaluate it effectively.
- Many 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. Many regularly attend the Friday Celebration Assembly and other liturgies e.g. Ash Wednesday, Harvest Thanksgiving and Easter Liturgies.

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 good in promoting and developing the Catholic Life of the school. They are wholly committed and show a very good understanding of and commitment to the Mission of the Church.
- This is reflected in the school's own Mission Statement - the call to 'love everyone as Jesus loves us'. All who form part of the school community including parents, priest, governors and children were involved in the development and annual review of the Mission Statement. Its aims and practical objectives direct and guide every aspect of school life and are a useful tool by which the school evaluates its effectiveness. It is displayed prominently throughout the school and used on all documentation.

- Opportunities are provided for the staff and pupils to play an active part in Catholic life and Mission of the school. They truly know, own and live out their Mission Statement.
- Leaders, governors and managers use the monitoring data available well to evaluate the school's performance, celebrate, and plan future improvements.
- On the whole, the quality of planning is very good. Care should be taken when monitoring to ensure that tasks are always clearly differentiated to meet the needs of all and ensure assessments made consistently inform future planning.
- Monitoring of planning and teaching should focus on ensuring there is consistent progression across the school.
- The Self Evaluation Document provides evidence of the schools monitoring, analysis and self challenge. It is a comprehensive document which gives an accurate picture of the Catholic Life and work of the school. The analysis provides a basis to celebrate the school's strengths and outlines areas for development. It is rigorous in identifying targets, timescales and lines of accountability.
- The school provides excellent induction and in-service training to enable staff members to further understand the Church's Mission in Education and to play their unique parts in it. In-service sessions at LACE are regularly attended and Religious Education features regularly on the staff meeting agenda.
- The quality of Collective Worship is a priority for the school. It is monitored and evaluated by leaders and managers. An excellent up to date policy and guidelines for its implementation are in place.
- A range of opportunities for spiritual and moral developments are provided for staff and pupils, such as the day of contemplation at Bolton Abbey. These are good opportunities for reflection.
- Initiatives such as Anti Bullying week and Holocaust Memorial Day help to embed values of inclusion and equality for all.
- Matters of social justice are given high importance with many examples of awareness and fund raising for a variety of good causes e.g. on CAFOD Family Fast Day, the older children are encouraged to forgo their mid-morning snack and to donate monies to the appeal as gestures of empathy and support.
- Leadership at all levels respects difference, values diversity and ensures equal opportunities for all. Funding is available to invite visitors of other faiths and religions into school to share their faith and help to foster positive attitudes and respect for the beliefs of others.
- There are positive relationships at every level within the school and within the parish community. As the two parishes of Our Lady's and St. Michael's were merged into one, care was taken to strengthen relationships and spiritual ties resulting in a shared liturgy for Year 6 Leavers.
- The school supports the Archdiocesan sacramental preparation programme, 'With You Always' very well and some school staff members and governors are actively involved as part of the catechetical team.
- Parents are consulted regularly and involved in a variety of ways in the life of the school. They are kept well-informed through newsletters, the school website and text messages.
- Governors fulfil their responsibilities very well. They are fully committed and kept well-informed about the Catholic Life of the school. They have effectively helped to shape the direction of the school through their high profile in the school. They regularly attend the whole school celebrations, Acts of Worship and special liturgies throughout the year. The Chair of Governors is also a regular visitor and acts as a liaison between the school and the parish.

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 the way they promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education and in how they plan and implement improvement to outcomes for pupils.
- Religious Education is very much at the core of the curriculum in Our Lady's School.
- Governors ensure that 10% quality time is dedicated to the teaching the subject.
- Teaching and learning is monitored and appropriate feedback and support given as necessary. Good practice is celebrated and should be shared. A more robust programme for the monitoring and evaluation cycle is needed to evaluate the school's performance and plan for future improvements.
- The subject action plan feeds into the Self Evaluation Document and into the School Development Plan.
- Continuing professional development opportunities are provided for all and additional support given to new or inexperienced staff members.
- 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. Staff are familiar with and becoming more secure in their levelling of work.
- The subject leader is outstanding in guiding Religious Education. She shows commitment enthusiasm and diligence. Archdiocesan training and briefing sessions are regularly attended and new initiatives introduced when appropriate. Excellent documentation guides and directs all staff in the delivery of the subject. This is updated as necessary. She provides unstinting support to colleagues as required.
- Governors are kept well-informed by the head teacher. They are interested and proactively involved.
- Newsletters are provided for parents and carers each term that outline the curriculum and indicate how they can help to support their children's Religious Education. They receive an annual report on progress and are kept further informed through verbal reports on Parents' Evenings. They are consulted on different issues depending on the topic being covered and encouraged to support their child's learning.
- Achievement and effort are celebrated especially at the end of week assemblies which are much appreciated by pupils and parents alike.

What the school needs to do to improve further:

- Raise attainment and accelerate progress further by:
 - differentiating work more particularly to challenge the higher achievers;
 - using assessment to inform planning more consistently and routinely across the school;
 - monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning in Religious Education more rigorously to identify and share good practice and to provide support as necessary.
- Continue to implement the areas for development identified in the school's own self-evaluation document. These include:
 - implementing a new programme for Education for Personal Relationships;
 - sharing good practice in Religious Education;
 - carrying out a full Mission Statement review.

INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

How effective the school is in providing Catholic Education	2
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OUTCOMES FOR PUPILS

How good outcomes are for individuals and groups of pupils	
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school	1
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education	2
How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship	2

PROVISION

How effective the provision is for Catholic Education	
The quality of teaching and how purposeful learning is in Religious Education	2
The extent to which the Religious Education curriculum promotes pupils' learning	2
The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school	1

LEADERS AND MANAGERS

How effective leaders, governors and managers are in developing the Catholic Life of the School	
How well leaders, governors and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school and plan and implement improvement to outcomes for pupils	2
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
