



## ARCHDIOCESE OF LIVERPOOL

### INSPECTION REPORT

### ST. CHRISTOPHER'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

#### SPEKE

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Inspection Date Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> June 2014

Inspectors Miss Julie Lockett  
Mr Andy Cocker Mrs Dorothy Martin

Unique Reference Number 133615

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 310

Chair of Governors Mrs Fran Stoddart

Headteacher Mrs Collette Denby

School address Tarbock Road,  
Speke,  
Liverpool.  
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Date of last inspection 1<sup>st</sup> February 2011

## 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. Christopher's school is a larger than average sized Catholic Primary School situated in Speke, Liverpool serving the parish of St. Christopher's.
- There are 310 children on roll of whom 253 are baptised Catholic, 17 come from other Christian denominations, and 2 from other faith or religious traditions. Thirty eight children have no religious affiliation.
- There are 20 teachers of whom 15 teach Religious Education and 10 have a suitable qualification in Religious Education. Sixteen teachers are baptised Catholic.
- At present the Religious Education coordinator is on maternity leave. A team of senior leaders are temporarily leading the subject.

### Key for inspection grades

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

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## Overall effectiveness:

St. Christopher's Catholic Primary School 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 and understand the school's Mission Statement, '*we care, we learn, we achieve.*' They understand the part they play within it and are fully involved in its evaluation. Pupils are proud of their mission and this is reflected and displayed pictorially around the school.
- On the day of inspection pupils expressed that their mission enabled them to, '*care about others, be thoughtful and to always work hard to achieve our goals.*'
- Their behaviour is outstanding; they have a good sense of right and wrong and apply this in their personal relationships. They lead by example and show responsibility for themselves and their actions.
- All pupils are actively involved in developing the Catholic character of the school and embrace opportunities to meet their potential in all aspects of school life.
- They are encouraged to take on roles of responsibility in the school, e.g. through the school council, playground pals, lunchtime monitors and reading buddies.
- Pupils show wider responsibilities through a variety of fundraising events. Funds are regularly raised for CAFOD, Nugent Care, and Sport Relief and through the annual Summer and Christmas Fayres. They understand the impact of fundraising as they have, for example, supported a visit to a Tanzanian orphanage by one of the schools' Learning Support Assistants.
- Pupils are involved in service to their local community. They have, for example, sung carols for the community, and participated in the annual remembrance service, close to school at Liverpool John Lennon Airport.
- Respect and understanding of other faiths and religions and all backgrounds and cultures are celebrated by the pupils. A large display in the school hall represents each family at St. Christopher's. Each family depicted their heritage through drawings, photographs and words showing the similarities and differences as one community.
- They are fully involved in liturgical events and in Welcome Masses each year for new pupils and a Leavers Mass. Pupils are fully supported by their parish priest. Pupils have attended the Good Shepherd Masses at the Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral and Epiphany Masses in the Liverpool Cathedral.
- Many pupils benefit from participation in residential to, for example, Llandudno or Colomendy in Wales and skiing trips. There are many other educational day trips enjoyed by the pupils.
- Older pupils are offered the chance to aid their transition to high school and work alongside their local primary school by attending a summer school.
- Education for pastoral care and personal relationships is outstanding and has fostered positive attitudes in pupils. There is an invaluable network of support for families, for example, through the *Rainbows* programme and children who are supported also take part in an annual school trip. St Vincent de Paul Society offer support to families through holiday accommodation. A project for *Families and Schools Together* is successfully aiding families and having a great impact on their engagement with St Christopher's.

- St. Christopher's praises and acknowledges the contribution of others, evident in their weekly *Social Awards* on the basis of their commitment to the weekly Gospel inspired focus. Pupils nominate their peers who are deserving of the award. Pupils show a readiness to embrace and celebrate their lived experiences.

### **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 good.
- They make good 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.
- Pupils show good standards of work for lower levels of attainment. This will continue to improve by raising expectations and challenging pupils in their work so that more detail can be given 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 very good as shown by their interest, enthusiasm and behaviour. On the day of inspection, pupils spoke keenly about the variety of ways Religious Education lessons are delivered. Pupils are immersed in their learning and want to achieve.
- Pupils are encouraged to work independently and collaboratively.
- Pupils are anxious to learn and improve their knowledge, understanding and skills as they become independent learners.

### **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 actively participate in Collective Worship.
- 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.
- Pupils sing joyfully and join in community prayers appropriately and with confidence.
- Pupils are involved in preparing and leading worship. This good practice can continue to improve by using the *Stepping Stones* Archdiocesan guidance for gradual expectations in worship across the school.
- On the day of inspection pupils acted with reverence, sang beautifully and enjoyed leading worship with their peers. Pupils led well, explaining their focus, using bible readings and asked pupils to respond to what they had heard. Each child knew how to go forth and act on the message they had heard.

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

- The quality of teaching and purposeful learning in Religious Education is good and some of the lessons observed on the day of inspection were outstanding.

- It is consistently effective in ensuring that pupils are interested and engaged and make good progress.
- Teaching encourages pupils' enjoyment of and enthusiasm of Religious Education.
- Teachers ensure there is consistency in behaviour and expectations of pupils.
- Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to work independently and collaboratively.
- Teachers display good subject knowledge and deploy a range of teaching styles. There are excellent pupil and adult relationships which encourages pupil discussion. Lessons are timed well and there is a wealth of activities to motivate and inspire pupils.
- On the day of inspection many lessons observed shared learning objectives that included driver words. Key vocabulary was clearly displayed and used and there was excellent use of working walls. Pupils were encouraged to share their thoughts through 'pair and share' and plenary sessions were used well to further pupils learning.
- In an outstanding lesson observed a variety of activities enabled older pupils to unpick and understand the parable of the Good Samaritan. Pupils experienced 'sticky fingers' to promote paired discussion, the use of the interactive whiteboard, display board, key questions, group work, 'conscious alley' and freeze framing.
- Younger pupils understood about being a good friend with clear and appropriate activities such as music and role play to suit their age and stage of development.
- In the Foundation Stage there are excellent portfolios of pupils' work. Work is presented to a high standard and Religious Education is promoting and developing many early skills.
- Learning Support Assistants throughout the school provide outstanding care and support to pupils and teachers. They are deployed effectively and show sensitivity to pupils needs, often interacting alongside teachers in the delivery of lessons. They ensure all pupils in their care reach their full potential.
- Opportunities for Information Technology were used well, including the use of an interactive 'Dream Room,' whiteboards and I-pads.
- Teachers take into account pupils' prior learning and work consolidates, builds and extends their knowledge and understanding. Planning is annotated and at times shows differentiation, a range of activities, some driver words and evaluations.
- Planning would now benefit from consistency across the school to include annotated planning in line with Archdiocesan recommendations and to identify a learning objective to match an activity and differentiated using the driver words.
- The school has begun to use 'non-negotiable' expectations in lesson planning and delivery. This excellent practice should continue to raise standards further across the school.
- In teaching and learning there is some good use of the driver words and pupils are beginning to recognise them. This good practice now needs embedding by making explicit use of them to develop levels of challenge and pupil expectations.
- Effort and achievement at all stages of learning is celebrated.
- Pupils are informed of their progress and how to improve both orally and through marking. Marking is positive, affirming and shows some developmental marking for Religious Education and at times pupils assess and comment on their understanding. This good practice needs to be shared across the school and to develop manageable ways for pupils to respond to comments made.
- The school has good assessment strategies in place which provides detailed information on the achievement of all the pupils.
- Teachers are able to identify how well pupils are achieving and tackle underachievement. The school tracks the achievement of all the pupils.

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

- The extent to which the Religious Education Curriculum promotes pupils' learning is outstanding.
- The curriculum is outstanding in meeting pupils' needs.
- 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.
- The curriculum is customised to meet the needs of groups and individuals.
- The curriculum has been used to link with many areas of school life, for example, awards such as *Artsmark Gold*, *International Schools*, *Quality Mark* and *Investors in People*. The school is currently working towards a *Silver Liverpool Reading Quality Mark*.
- The school environment is vibrant and many areas lend themselves to the Religious Education curriculum, for example, the interactive 'Dream Room,' inviting quiet reading areas and well presented displays. There is an outdoor classroom, climbing frames and an outdoor reading area.
- The school entrance is a welcoming, cared for space with fresh flowers and a focus that is lovingly dedicated to the memory of the schools' long serving cleaner.
- The head teacher and staff ensure that Scripture impacts on pupils' lives, spiritually and morally, through weekly Gospel values and Religious Education lessons.
- There are close transition links with the feeder high school and the schools' chaplain visits St. Christopher's to provide spirituality sessions with the pupils.
- Pupils take part in many after school clubs such as, cricket, athletics, choir and drama including the *Children's University*. The school promotes a range of extracurricular activities as they motivate and instil responsible attitudes.
- There are many visitors to school such as 'guest' storytellers, community doctors and nurses, reading volunteers and parents who help with a variety of activities including tending to the Nursery garden.
- Children have explored the beliefs and values of other faiths and religions. This helps to promote tolerance and respect for those who think differently. Judaism and Islam are taught each year. The school has invited family members to contribute to an assembly on Islam. Pupils would benefit from further visits and visitors of other faiths and religions to gain understanding from first hand experiences.

## **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 and takes into account other faith backgrounds among the pupils.
- Collective Worship has a 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.
- Gospel values are a consistent message to the school community. A Gospel value is introduced to pupils at the beginning of each week and is reflected through a celebration assembly at the end of the week. Parents are informed through the weekly bulletin and

pupils are encouraged to live by these values and are praised for their contributions to live out the message.

- Children are enabled to pray formally and informally using a variety of prayer methods and styles.
- The school provides opportunities for staff to develop the skills in planning and leading Collective Worship. The teachers provide the necessary resources and opportunities to help children to develop the skills necessary to plan, lead and participate in Collective Worship.
- Training from the Archdiocese will continue to improve Collective Worship. This will develop the partnership of adults and pupils in preparing, leading and evaluating worship across the school. It will further ideas for listening to scripture using *God's Story* or *Good News* bibles for children and show how to encourage heartfelt, voluntary responses and times of silence in worship.
- There are many opportunities provided to enable full, active and conscious participation of the whole school community, for example, nativity plays, and welcome and leavers assemblies.
- Opportunities are provided for parents, carers and the local parish to participate in a variety of celebrations of the Church's liturgical year.

### **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.
- This is reflected in the school's own Mission Statement which has had a recent review. All who form part of the school community including parents, clergy, governors and children were involved in the development and review of the Mission Statement.
- St. Christopher's can now embed their reviewed mission and its aims and practical objectives will continue to guide and direct all aspects of school life.
- Leaders, governors and managers use monitoring data to evaluate the schools performance, celebrate, and plan future improvements.
- The Self Evaluation Document provides evidence of the schools' monitoring, analysis and self challenge. It provides a basis to celebrate strengths and outlines areas for development.
- The Self Evaluation Document would benefit from reorganisation and to include further detail in areas of strength that will reflect the many good and outstanding features of the school.
- Leaders, governors and managers at St. Christopher's are deeply committed to the Church's mission in education.
- Governors have full knowledge and understanding of the Catholic life of the school and fulfil their responsibilities. They have effectively helped to shape the direction of the school.
- Governors are regularly invited into school for a variety of events and liturgical celebrations. Regular updates are received from the Headteacher regarding the Catholic life of the school, which is a standard item on the agenda for governors meetings.
- Governors are rightly very proud of St. Christopher's and know and care deeply for the school and surrounding community. They make a huge impact and are a large part of the school family they are shaping and supporting.

- The Parish priest visits school regularly celebrating masses, whole school events, such as 'Welcome' services for the new intake of children and on a variety of liturgical occasions with the school community.
- There are excellent home, school, and parish links for Sacramental preparations and celebrations.
- Staff at St Christopher's work hard and take great strides to ensure that they play an active part in the Catholic life and mission of the school. It is an inclusive school where all are made welcome. The headteacher and staff display great levels of respect and care for each other and visitors to school. They are exemplary role models for the pupils in their care.
- The Headteacher, assistant head teachers and subject leader for Religious Education have attended spirituality sessions ran by the Archdiocese.
- The school provides valuable induction and regular in-service training to enable staff to further understand the Church's Mission in Education and play their unique part in it. Many staff members teaching Religious Education either have their Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies or are working towards the completion of it. Governors and the headteacher continue to encourage the completion of the certificate for all staff members.
- The quality of Collective Worship is a priority for the school. An up to date detailed policy and monitoring is in place and further training will continue the development of worship.
- Parents are consulted regularly and involved in a variety of ways in the life of the school e.g. through regular newsletters, the school website, which is due to be updated and a variety of liturgies, celebration and fundraising events. Parent views of the school are very positive.
- St. Christopher's offers many opportunities to involve parents in the Catholic life of the school, for example, by sending home a travelling crib in Advent. One parent expressed this as, *'a caring, uplifting and joyful experience shared with the extended family that has enabled us all to reflect on the true meaning of Christmas.'*

**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.
- At present there is a small Religious Education coordinator team, whilst the subject leader is on maternity leave. Religious Education has been and continues to be led enthusiastically and positively.
- Evidence provided to inspectors showed the hard work and commitment of all involved in managing Religious Education. New initiatives are introduced when appropriate, by encouraging staff and ensuring they are supported.
- Briefing meetings provided by the Archdiocese are attended regularly and continuing professional development opportunities are provided for staff. Communication between the headteacher, staff, parents and governors is effective.
- Governors are fully informed of standards in Religious Education. The Religious Education governor has an established relationship with St. Christopher's and is skilled and experienced in offering advice. In partnership with the headteacher and subject leaders improvements are continuing to be made.
- Monitoring is in place and data is used to evaluate the schools performance. Monitoring should now continue to be embedded to impact on future improvements.
- Good documentation guides and directs all staff in the delivery of the subject. This is updated as necessary.

- Formal assessment tasks are undertaken in line with Archdiocesan guidance. Moderation is completed by the Religious Education subject leaders. This process will develop by including all staff in moderating formal assessments. This will further their understanding of expectations needed for levels of attainment to be awarded.
- Improving the moderation process will have a greater impact on planning and teaching and learning.
- Assessment information is collated and tracked by the subject leader and shared with the leadership team, governors and parents.
- Curriculum outlines are provided for parents who are consulted on different issues depending on the topic being covered.
- Formal written reports give priority to Religious Education and inform parents of their child's achievements.

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

- Using the guidance given in this report, continue to make improvements in Religious Education and the Catholic life of the school. This includes areas in the following:
  - Collective Worship training;
  - Consistency in annotated planning;
  - embed the use of driver words in planning and teaching and learning;
  - consistency in developmental marking ;
  - develop moderation to impact on planning and teaching and learning;
  - include further detail and organise the Self Evaluation Document to reflect areas of strength.

# 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

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