

# ARCHDIOCESE OF LIVERPOOL

## INSPECTION REPORT

### OUR LADY AND ST. SWITHIN'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

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Inspection Date Tuesday 19 November 2013  
Inspectors Miss. Julie Lockett Mrs. Marie Connolly  
Unique Reference Number 104632

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 220  
Chair of Governors Mr. John Mc Cormack  
Headteacher Mrs. Sandra Hamilton  
School address Parkstile Lane  
Liverpool  
Merseyside  
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E-mail address [swithin-ao@ourlady-st-swithin.liverpool.sch.uk](mailto:swithin-ao@ourlady-st-swithin.liverpool.sch.uk)  
Date of last inspection 2<sup>nd</sup> February 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

- Our Lady and St. Swithin's school is an average sized Catholic Primary School situated in Croxteth, Liverpool serving the parish of Our Lady, Queen of Martyrs.
- There are 220 children on roll of whom 208 are baptised Catholic, 12 come from other Christian denominations.
- There are 10.6 teachers of whom 8.6 teach Religious Education and 8.6 have a suitable qualification in Religious Education. 10.6 teachers are baptised Catholic.
- Since the last inspection there has been a significant change in personnel. There is a Temporary Headteacher in post and a reconstituted governing body.

### Key for inspection grades

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

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Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school.

## Overall effectiveness:

Our Lady and St. Swithin'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.**

- 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 and understand the part they play within it. They are fully involved in its evaluation.
- The pupils' motto of, '*Love, live, learn,*' are the foundations of the Catholic life of the school.
- Pupils have an outstanding sense of belonging to the school community and value and respect others.
- They praise and acknowledge the contribution of others. They show a readiness to embrace and celebrate their lived experiences.
- Pupils embrace opportunities to meet their potential in all aspects of school life.
- Pupils are actively involved in developing the Catholic character of the school.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. They have a good sense of right and wrong and apply this in their personal relationships. They show responsibility for themselves and their actions.
- Pupils are encouraged to take on roles of responsibility in the school, e.g. through the school council, a variety of monitoring roles, play leaders and 'buddies'.
- Pupils show wider responsibilities through a variety of fundraising events. Funds are regularly raised for a local homeless project, local pensioners, CAFOD, the Shoe Box Appeal, Nugent Care and many others.
- Pupils benefit from a variety of away days and regular educational visits to encourage and ensure first hand experiences.
- They take part in regular retreat activities developing their spiritual and moral guidance.
- Education for pastoral care and personal relationships has fostered positive attitudes in pupils. There is outstanding support and care for pupils and their families through, for example, Butterflies and Rainbows supporting bereaved families, food bank support and counselling for vulnerable families.
- Pupils are active in the local parish with many altar servers, attendance at 'little church', messy play and the With You Always Sacramental Programme.
- Pupils are actively involved with a variety of events in service to their local and wider community. For example, visits to care homes, many choir events and members from CAFOD, a local homeless group and the wider community come together with pupils to share a bi-annual St. Swithin's week picnic.
- Pupils show respect and understanding of other faiths and religions and displays and pupils work are an outstanding example of this.

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

- Pupils' achievements and enjoyment in Religious Education is above average.
- Their attainment in Religious Education is good.
- They make very 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.
- Pupil attainment is tracked comprehensively across the school.
- 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 are rarely off task; they work diligently, enthusiastically and enjoy enquiring about their learning.
- Pupils can be further challenged by setting tasks linked to the driver words consistently across the school.
- 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 outstanding.
- They show interest, respond well and actively participate in Collective Worship.
- Pupils' knowledge of prayer and liturgy is increasing.
- On the day of inspection younger pupils were invited to prayer outside in the school grounds 'culture corner'. By using different settings for prayer pupils are keen to participate in a variety of gatherings.
- They are becoming familiar with a variety of prayer styles. They appreciate and are open to the Word of God in the scriptures.
- All pupils and the school community act with reverence.
- Pupils are becoming more confident in developing ways to prepare and lead worship.
- The school is ensuring that pupils participate and lead worship according to their age and stage across the school. They are continually encouraged.
- Older pupils were encouraged, on the day of inspection, to lead their worship in partnership with other adults. This outstanding practice enabled deep response and heartfelt responses to all present.
- They sing joyfully, reflect in silence and join in community prayers appropriately and with confidence.
- There are excellent routines embedded to encourage prayerful reflection in pupils.

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

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

- Teaching and learning is supported well by the subject leader. This now needs to be formally monitored to ensure that teachers have the opportunities to feedback and share good and outstanding practice.
- There are very well established, consistent routines across the school which ensures that pupils are interested and engaged and are always ready to learn and make good progress.
- Teachers display good subject knowledge and deploy a range of teaching styles to motivate and inspire pupils.
- Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to work independently and collaboratively.
- Teaching encourages pupils' enjoyment of and enthusiasm of Religious Education.
- One teacher explored with the pupils how to celebrate birthdays. The quality resources, speaking and listening opportunities and focused tasks led to great excitement and one child expressed, 'I can't wait!'
- In another lesson observed pupils used their prior learning visit to the Cathedral to write a 'Cathedral Rap.' The teacher skilfully led, supported and demonstrated, enthusing and energizing the pupils in their work.
- Effort and achievement at all stages of learning is celebrated.
- In the Foundation Stage, themes are reinforced through appropriate continuous provision. There is evidence of how Religious Education is promoting and developing many early skills.
- Teaching Assistants and support workers provide great care and support to pupils. They are deployed effectively and show sensitivity to pupils needs. They ensure all pupils in their care reach their full potential.
- Good quality resources are used within lessons and teachers use Information Communication Technology at times to maximise learning particularly through use of the interactive whiteboard.
- The school has excellent assessment strategies which provide accurate and detailed information on the achievement of all the pupils. This ensures that teachers are aware of how pupils are achieving and provides information that can be used in planning to tackle underachievement.
- Planning is annotated well at times showing some evaluations, differentiation and driver words.
- Planning would benefit from regular formal monitoring to ensure that there is consistency across the school, showing clear accessible learning objectives, differentiated tasks led by the driver words, and opportunities for pupils to assess their own learning.
- Pupils are informed of their progress and how to improve both orally and at times through marking.
- Marking is positive and affirming and there is evidence of some good developmental marking. This can be improved by giving opportunities for pupils to respond to comments made. Formal monitoring of marking would ensure that good practice is being shared.

### **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.
- Enrichment activities for example, a wide variety of after school clubs, visits to the cathedral and a '*River of Life*' fundraising project where pupils are made aware of their place in the wider world, have a positive impact on the curriculum.
- The school environment is used creatively; quiet areas for outdoor reflection and activities, displays around school reflect pupils valuable contributions and a generous, appealing space for Early Years provision ensures a positive impact on the Religious Education curriculum
- The Religious Education curriculum provides outstanding opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral development and vocation. For example, older pupils take part in retreat activities working with feeder secondary schools to build on self esteem, self discipline, responsibility, and teamwork.
- The school ensures that personal, social and health education is included within many areas of school life, including whole school assemblies and Collective Worship.
- Children have explored the beliefs and values of other faiths and religions and the pupils work produced from this is outstanding.
- Pupils regularly attend a synagogue and Hindu Temple. Children have explored Islam through the work of a Muslim teacher in the school. This helps to promote tolerance and respect for those who think differently.

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

- The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school is outstanding. It reflects the Catholic character of the school.
- 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.
- The school provides opportunities for staff to develop the skills in planning, leading and evaluating Collective Worship.
- The teachers provide appropriate age related resources and opportunities to help pupils acquire the skills necessary to plan, lead and participate in Collective Worship.
- Teachers plan and deliver alongside pupils providing excellent role models in worship.
- The school now needs to follow a themed timetable and build on a portfolio of collective worship planning and evaluations from across the school to further develop opportunities to share outstanding practice.
- The school ensures that there are quality areas for worship. For example, each classroom has inviting focus areas and displays around the school are evidence of the importance of pupil's contributions and prayer.
- Children are enabled to pray formally and informally using a variety of prayer methods and styles.
- There are many opportunities provided to enable full, active and conscious participation of the whole school community. For example, there are regular end of topic *Rejoice* celebrations and whole school Advent 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 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. 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. 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.
- The temporary Headteacher is leading the school as an inviting, welcoming, Christian family that is prepared to do its very best as source of inspiration for the whole community.
- The Self Evaluation Document provides evidence of the schools monitoring, searching analysis and self challenge.
- Analysis of the Self Evaluation Document provides a basis to celebrate strengths and outlines areas for development.
- To become a strategic process, the Self Evaluation Document would benefit from some reorganisation and updating areas following this report. It can then be used effectively by leaders, governors and managers to evaluate the schools performance celebrate and plan future improvements.
- There is a new Chair of Governors and many new governors to the school. They show a deep commitment to the Catholic life of Our Lady and St. Swithin's and fulfil their responsibilities, helping to shape the direction of the school.
- The Parish priest, who is also the Vice Chair of Governors, is a regular and familiar face in school. He celebrates masses with the school community, supports many liturgical events throughout the year and supports Religious Education topics.
- There are outstanding home, school, parish links. The Headteacher is a parish catechist for the With You Always Programme. The school and parish also work in partnership to provide pastoral care and spiritual support to families.
- Leadership at all levels respects difference, values diversity and ensures equal opportunities for all.
- Opportunities are provided for the staff and pupils to play an active part in Catholic life and Mission of the school. There are positive relationships at every level within the school.
- 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. They know, own and live out their Mission Statement.
- The Headteacher, supports and values staff to ensure they have opportunities to develop spiritually and maintain their well-being,
- There are a variety of staff retreats and regular *Come and See for Yourself* reflections. One teacher commented, 'Our Lady and St. Swithin's has been my spiritual home, a place where I feel valued and loved.'
- The quality of Collective Worship is a priority for the school. An up to date policy is in place, suiting the needs of the school. This now needs regular, timetabled formal monitoring to ensure outstanding practice is shared and built upon.
- Parents are valued and cared for at Our Lady and St. Swithin's. They are consulted regularly and involved in a variety of ways in the life of the
- school e.g. through regular newsletters, and a variety of liturgical liturgies and the Wednesday Word. On the day of inspection there was a hive of activity from parents and school staff preparing a baking competition for the Bishop's visit to school.

## **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.
- The temporary Headteacher, who is also the subject leader, is highly effective in guiding Religious Education and attends all briefings provided by the Archdiocese. She shows great commitment in her role and introduces new initiatives when appropriate.
- The subject leader would benefit from a support team for leading Religious Education to continue to drive the subject forward whilst in post as temporary Headteacher.
- Training and updates provided by the Archdiocese are attended regularly and continuing professional development opportunities are provided for staff.
- Governors are aware of the work undertaken for Religious Education. They have taken part in learning walks around the school and celebrate pupils work with governor stickers. There is a new experienced and effective Religious Education link governor who is guiding the school.
- Good documentation guides and directs all staff in the delivery of the subject. This is updated as necessary.
- There is some effective timetabling for monitoring Religious Education, however this is limited. A formal and robust approach to monitoring now needs to be used to build data to evaluate the schools performance and plan for future improvements.
- Formal assessment tasks are undertaken in line with Archdiocesan guidance.
- Assessment information is collated and tracked comprehensively 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?**

- Monitor and evaluate the provision and outcomes of Religious Education and the Catholic life of the school by:
  - organising the Self Evaluation Document with updates from this report;
  - following a formal monitoring and evaluating timetable enabling teachers to share good and outstanding practice;
  - using formal monitoring and evaluation to inform planning and teaching and learning.

# INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

## **OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS**

How effective the school is in providing Catholic Education	1
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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	1

## **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>
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