



ARCHDIOCESE OF LIVERPOOL

INSPECTION REPORT

ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY

CHORLEY

Inspection Date 27 September 2016
Inspectors Mrs. Denise Hegarty, Mrs. Angela Williams
Unique Reference Number 119672
Inspection carried out under Section 48 of the Education Acts 2005 and 2011

Type of School Catholic Primary
Age range of pupils 3 - 11
Number on roll 214 (plus Nursery)
Chair of Governors Mrs. Margaret Rogerson
Headteacher Mr. Patrick Smyth
School address Hornchurch Drive
Chorley
Lancashire
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Date of last inspection 27 September 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 Mary's is an average-sized Catholic Primary School situated in Chorley in the Lancashire district of the Archdiocese and serves the parish of St Mary.
- There are 214 children on roll, of whom 207 are baptised Catholic. There are 7 pupils attending the school from another Christian denomination.
- There are 9 teachers at the school, 6 of whom are Catholic. Eight teachers teach Religious Education and 4 have a suitable qualification in Religious Education.
- The Headteacher and the Religious Education Co-ordinator were both in post at the time of the last inspection.
- Since the last inspection, the school has established a maintained Nursery class.

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:

St. Mary's 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. They thoroughly enjoy their life and work in school and are proud ambassadors for it.
- Pupils know and understand the school's Mission Statement, 'With Christ, we live, we love, we learn, we grow' and understand its importance in the day to day life of their school. They are fully aware of the part they play within it and appreciate the demands and responsibilities that the living the mission places on them. Pupils were involved in its recent evaluation and contributed to a display linked to it.
- Pupils have an excellent sense of belonging to the school community. When asked at interview what was special about their school, one child reported that, 'The thing about belonging to a Catholic school is that we all care for each other.' This was very evident throughout the day of inspection, where examples of how pupils value and respect the views and opinions of their peers and consistently display kindness and consideration, were observed. These encouraging attitudes lead to a cohesive community with outstanding relationships and enable a positive environment to permeate.
- Pupils are actively involved in developing the Catholic character of the school through, for example, their support of local, national and global charities e.g. Derian House, Nugent Care (Good Shepherd) and CAFOD. Through this support, the pupils raise awareness of social justice and are sensitive to the needs of others. Pupils contribute to and serve community projects such as making harvest parcels and visiting elderly person's homes.
- 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. sport and music. Through them, they learn the values of commitment, team spirit, sportsmanship and taking responsibility. During these activities, pupils behave in a manner that reflects the school mission.
- Pupils benefit from their participation in away days and residential holidays. Year 6 pupils enjoy and benefit from outdoor pursuits at Whitehough, Outdoor Education Centre, Burnley. Pupils of all year groups gain much from day trips out to a variety of places including the Metropolitan Cathedral of Christ the King. These experiences impact greatly on pupils' social, moral and cultural development and increase self-confidence.
- 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. Pupils display very positive attitudes to their work and behave in an outstanding manner. They uphold school rules and fully understand how the consequence of breaking any has an impact on themselves and their peers. The use of 'Think Sheets' enables them to reflect on their behaviour and realise how to correct the situation.
- They display positive attitudes to their work and are quick to praise and acknowledge the contribution of others. They warmly celebrate each other's achievements in a weekly awards assembly when pupils are rewarded for high quality work.
- Education for pastoral care and personal relationships has fostered positive attitudes in pupils. Children also benefit from the 'SEAL' programme activities which impact on their social and emotional well-being.

- Pupils are involved in service to the local faith and religious communities. They enjoy planning and participating in a variety of celebrations and community events including leading celebrations such as their Harvest Festival, Advent and Lent Masses and reflections. These experiences encourage them to be more aware of and more active within their community.
- Each year, Year 5 pupils participate in a class retreat at the local high school as part of their transition to the next stage of their education.
- Pupils show respect and understanding of other faiths and religions and have really enjoyed learning about Judaism and Sikhism within the curriculum. They enjoyed their visit from a visitor of a different religion.

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education

- Pupils' achievements in and enjoyment of Religious Education is outstanding.
- Pupils' attainment in Religious Education is high overall.
- Analysis of assessments undertaken provides evidence of pupils attaining appropriate levels for their age and stage of development in each key stage with some exceeding expectations.
- Pupils make very good progress in relation to their starting points and capabilities and are enthusiastic learners.
- There is no difference in performance between pupils of different gender.
- Outcomes for pupils with additional or special needs are similar to their peers. They benefit from the support of additional adults in the classroom.
- Pupils' knowledge and skills in Religious Education and their ability to reflect on meaning are developing well throughout the school.
- They are becoming increasingly more religiously literate. Their knowledge, understanding and skills are developing according to their age or capacity.
- They are developing the skills that enable them to reflect spiritually, think ethically and theologically and are becoming aware of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life.
- Pupils' engagement in and enjoyment of their learning is outstanding as shown by their interest, enthusiasm and excellent behaviour for learning in lessons. They take great pride in their work and interact very well with their peers in group work and paired / shared activities. They are encouraged to work independently and collaboratively.
- Observations undertaken on the day of inspection indicate that pupils are keen to learn, excited by their activities, eager to participate and work diligently at their tasks. Both when working independently and in their contributions to whole class discussions, pupils were highly motivated and committed to doing their very best.

How pupils respond to and participate in Collective Worship

- Pupils response to and participation in Collective Worship is outstanding.
- They show great interest, respond well and actively participate in a variety of forms of worship.
- Pupils act with utmost reverence and are keen to participate in a variety of gatherings.
- They display palpable enthusiasm for Collective Worship as reflected in their joyful communal singing and in the depth of participation in prayer.
- Pupils are becoming familiar with a variety of prayer styles and with the Church's liturgical year. They appreciate and are open to the Word of God in the Scriptures showing reverence and respect as they actively listen to the message therein.

- Pupils confidently play an active part in Collective Worship and thoroughly enjoy helping to plan and deliver their own class worship. Their liturgical skills are very well developed at the age appropriate level. During discussions, children talked about how they enjoy leading worship and gain a lot from it.
- They assist with planning, leadership and delivery of worship. They write their own prayers, choose appropriate hymns and readings and prepare the focus for worship.
- Collective Worship makes a significant contribution to the children's spiritual and moral development. This is evident in the way they live their daily lives and how they react and respond to each other.

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

- The quality of teaching and purposeful learning in Religious Education is outstanding.
- A relaxed, positive climate for learning prevails across the school.
- Adults work hard and lead by example, modelling how to show respect and encouragement. Both teachers and support staff are confident with their delivery of the curriculum and work well together to do so.
- On the whole, teachers plan well and display very good subject knowledge.
- Within lessons, teachers offer a range of teaching styles to motivate pupils and encourage their enthusiasm for Religious Education. They bring the subject to life so pupils can enjoy lessons and have fun while achieving their learning outcomes.
- Teachers take into account pupils' prior learning and often ensure tasks are differentiated when planning so that the work consolidates, builds and extends their knowledge and understanding. They use assessment for learning strategies to great effect.
- Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to work independently and collaboratively. They use an effective range of questioning skills to ensure pupils concentrate well. Some excellent use of 'talking partners' was seen on the day of inspection which really kept the children focussed on their discussions and gave them confidence to share their ideas.
- Excellent use is made of time and resources including other adults and Information and Communication Technology to maximise learning. Teachers deploy additional adults in the classroom effectively. Consequently, they contribute well to learning and provide great support for pupils.
- Displays and working walls in classrooms and around the school celebrate the children's work, reinforce learning and provide opportunities for reflection on what has been taught.
- Effort and achievement are celebrated through marking and verbal encouragement. Pupils' contributions are valued and appreciated by all staff. Children are consistently praised and rewarded for good work, attitude and behaviour within lessons. The Friday awards assembly celebrates examples of good work across the school.
- The school has outstanding assessment procedures which provide detailed information on the achievement of all the pupils and show their progress over time. Records of Attainment are kept appropriately and passed on to the next teacher. This enables smooth and consistent transition across the year groups.
- The assessment of pupils' work in Religious Education is outstanding. 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 performing and tackle underachievement. Formal assessments are undertaken in line with Archdiocesan requirements. Teachers use these and their informal assessments well to inform future planning.
- Books generally show a very good level of marking with clear feedback on what the children have achieved and an indication of what they need to do to improve.
- Pupils are encouraged to evaluate their own work especially through the use of concept maps.

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

- The extent to which the Religious Education curriculum meets pupils' needs is outstanding.
- The school places Religious Education at the heart of the curriculum and it is clearly seen as the core curriculum subject in this school. It is under the same scrutiny and level of moderation as other core subjects.
- Using the '*Come and See*' programme recommended by the archdiocese, which is now embedded throughout the school, 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. Timetables are monitored by school leaders to ensure this provision is in place.
- Planning ensures full coverage of the Religious Education programme. Imaginative, creative and engaging strategies and resources, especially Information and Communication Technology, are deployed to enrich pupils' learning.
- The school implements new curriculum developments as appropriate and purchases suitable resources in support. Staff members show a great willingness to strive for improvement.
- Displays around the school are linked to the curriculum and celebrate work. All classrooms have a display of the current topic commemorating children's work from life and faith experiences.
- A wide range of extra-curricular activities and educational trips enhance and support learning. These promote respect for the gifts and talents of each individual and help to develop self-esteem.
- Enrichment activities such as music, art and drama – MAD weeks – have a positive impact on the curriculum.
- The Religious Education curriculum provides very good opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral development and vocation.
- Because of the curriculum newsletters sent to them each term, parents are able to discuss learning with the children and extend knowledge and experiences outside of school.
- Visits out and visitors into school widen pupils' subject knowledge. Children have visited their own church and cathedral. Visitors include the parish priest and a visitor of another religion.
- Children have explored the beliefs and values of the Jewish faith and Sikhism. 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 and takes into account the variety of backgrounds among participants.
- It has a high profile, is central to the life of the school and is seen as a special part of the day. There are many opportunities given to adults and pupils to be involved in the prayer-life of the school. This is most definitely a Catholic community that prays and worships together.
- Collective Worship is well-planned using school and Archdiocesan planners. All adults present are excellent role models for pupils to emulate. Timings are age and stage appropriate. This ensures it is a suitable, personal experience for the children.

- Collective Worship throughout the school is stimulating and plays a key part in meeting the spiritual needs of the staff and pupils. It is valued by all participants. Through a variety of themes, pupils are given opportunities to search for meaning and purpose in their lives and see the awe and wonder of creation.
- Opportunities are provided to enable full, active and conscious participation of the whole school community. A variety of experiences are provided – school, key stage and class - in various settings. There are plans to create a spiritual garden in the school grounds to provide a sacred space for members of the community to experience Collective Worship outside and to sit quietly in reflection.
- Scripture, prayer and liturgy are used very effectively as the foundation and a source of inspiration for worship.
- A useful policy with guidelines for delivery is in place and used effectively. Liturgical skills are well-developed.
- Pupils are enabled to pray formally and informally using a variety of prayer methods and styles. The school ensures that appropriate formal prayers are taught at an age appropriate time.
- The children and staff create visual displays for worship with a variety of artefacts etc. as focal areas for thought and reflection.
- The school has purchased a range of music and a variety of appropriate resources which are well cared for and used effectively.
- Staff members have received training in planning, leading and evaluating Collective Worship and have embedded the skills they learned.
- They are able to provide essential resources and opportunities, at an age appropriate time, 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, governors and members of the community to participate in a variety of celebrations e.g. through the Posada (visiting crib) in Advent, class assemblies and Masses. These opportunities are appreciated and well-attended.

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 are wholly committed to promoting and developing the Catholic life of the school and show an excellent understanding of and commitment to the Mission of the Church. This core purpose is clearly articulated in the school's own Mission Statement and reflected in how leaders lead by example and develop excellent relationships within the community. The Catholic life encompasses all that happens in the life of this school and underpins all decisions made.
- All who form part of the school community including parents, priest, 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. It is displayed prominently throughout the school and used on the website and documentation.
- Opportunities are provided for the staff and pupils to play an active part in Catholic life and Mission of the school. They know, own and live out their Mission Statement. New members of staff and volunteers are given an induction by the headteacher to explain the Catholic nature and ethos and to share its mission and vision. Newly qualified teachers are enrolled on the Archdiocesan induction programme.

- Leaders and all members of school staff are justly proud of the welcoming, Catholic ethos that underpins the work of the whole school community. This enables both children and adults to flourish.
- Staff members are proud to teach in the school and understand how the tangible ethos is based on Catholic values. They are aware how the faith is lived out in action in many different ways.
- The whole learning environment is attractive, well cared for and very clearly of a Catholic nature.
- Leaders, governors and managers use the monitoring data available well to evaluate the school's performance, celebrate, and plan future improvements.
- The Self Evaluation Document provides evidence of the school's monitoring, analysis and self challenge. It 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. Areas for development are prioritised and monitored rigorously.
- 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.
- The quality of Collective Worship is a priority for the school. It is effectively monitored and evaluated. A useful policy and guidelines for its implementation are in place. Resources purchased are modern and well cared for. A beautiful, purpose-made focus table has pride of place in the school hall.
- A range of opportunities for spiritual and moral developments are provided for staff and pupils, such as prayers and reflections before meetings etc.
- Matters of social justice are given high importance with many examples of awareness- and fund-raising for a variety of good causes e.g. St Catherine's Hospice, Nugent Care and CAFOD.
- Leadership at all levels respects difference, values diversity and ensures equal opportunities for all.
- There are very positive relationships at every level within the school and within the parish community. There are very close links with the parish and school is used for some parish activities e.g. Brownies and Guides. Good communication and strong links between home, school and parish ensure awareness and understanding of the school's Catholic life at all levels.
- The school supports the parish well and members of staff show their unanimous support by attending Masses and other events out of school time. The Archdiocesan sacramental preparation programme, *'With You Always'* is supported very well.
- Leaders acknowledge the important role parents and carers play and so they are consulted regularly and involved in a variety of ways in the life of the school. They are kept well-informed through newsletters and the school website. They are extremely supportive and affirming of the school and are happy with the values the school promotes.
- Governors fulfil their responsibilities outstandingly. 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 enthusiasm and close involvement in its Catholic life. They regularly visit and ensure areas needing development are quickly and effectively addressed.
- Class governors support and take an interest in each cohort. They are invited to class Collective Worship and Masses.

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 outstanding 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.
 - Religious Education is at the core of the curriculum. Leaders are committed to improving and further developing Religious Education. A suitable budget is provided to enhance provision. Religious Education is regularly on the agenda at staff meetings and features on the school's development plan.
 - Monitoring takes place as part of the school's monitoring cycle. Timetables are monitored to ensure that 10% quality time is dedicated to the teaching the subject. The subject leader monitors and evaluates the planning, assessments and children's workbooks each term. Appropriate feedback and support is given as necessary. Actions are identified and acted upon.
 - The subject development plan feeds into the School Development Plan and into the Self Evaluation Document. Actions identified are regularly reviewed and addressed.
 - Continuing professional development opportunities are provided for all and additional support / induction given to new or inexperienced staff members. Newly qualified teachers also attend the Archdiocesan induction programme.
 - Formal assessment tasks are undertaken in line with archdiocesan guidance. Staff members are familiar with and secure in their levelling of work. Assessments are moderated by colleagues and accurate levels agreed.
 - Assessment information is collated and tracked by the subject leader and shared with the leadership team and governors. Outcomes feed into the development plan.
 - The subject leader is outstanding in guiding Religious Education. He ensures that the subject has a high profile, supports colleagues well and ensures high quality Religious Education is delivered. He shows commitment and enthusiasm and organises staff meetings throughout the year to champion the subject and share any new information. He regularly attends Archdiocesan training and briefing sessions and introduces new initiatives as necessary. Good documentation guides and directs all staff in the delivery of the subject.
 - Staff members are encouraged to attend in-service sessions provided by the Christian Education Department to support their professional development.
 - The school collaborates well within the local cluster of schools to share good practice and procedures.
 - Governors are kept well-informed by subject leader and head teacher through the curriculum committee and head teacher reports. They are interested and proactively involved. Progress in Religious Education is shared with the governors so that standards can be monitored by them and they can challenge the school to improve.
 - There is a nominated governor for Religious Education who meets regularly with the subject leader and subsequently produces a report for the full governing body informing them about the school's provision and any new initiatives being undertaken.
 - The parish priest liaises closely with the subject leader to ensure the high profile of the subject. He is fully supportive of the school and often visits to help with aspects of the '*Come and See*' programme and provide liturgies and Masses.
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- Newsletters are provided for parents and carers each term, which outline the curriculum and indicate how they can help to support their children's Religious Education. They are consulted on a variety of issues and encouraged to support their children's learning. Their views and opinions are sought and valued. Parents receive an annual report on the progress and achievement of their children and are also kept further informed through verbal reports on Parents' Evenings. Religious Education is the first subject to be reported on in the children's annual reports. This emphasises its central importance to in the curriculum.

- Achievement and effort are celebrated especially at end of week assemblies which are much appreciated by pupils.

What the school needs to do to improve further:

- Continue to implement the targets set out in the school’s self evaluation document and the subject action plan. This includes:
 - developing opportunities for outdoor Collective Worship;
 - further developing the role of Teaching Assistants and providing them with training in *Come and See*;
 - further developing the monitoring and evaluation role of the subject co-ordinator;
 - updating relevant policies in the light of the new school Mission Statement.
- Improve standards in Religious Education by:
 - Consider using the Archdiocesan planning format to show how work is consistently differentiated to challenge pupils and meet the needs of all individuals and groups. The ‘driver words’ from the *Levels of Attainment in Religious Education* should be included when doing so.

INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

How effective the school is in providing Catholic Education	1
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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	1
How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship	1

PROVISION

How effective the provision is for Catholic Education	
The quality of teaching and how purposeful learning is in Religious Education	1
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

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	1
How well leaders, governors and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education and plan and implement improvement to outcomes for pupils	1

Key to judgements: Grade 1 is Outstanding; Grade 2 Good; Grade 3 Requires Improvement and Grade 4 Inadequate