



# ARCHDIOCESE OF LIVERPOOL

## INSPECTION REPORT

### OUR LADY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

#### PRESCOT

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Inspection Date 12<sup>th</sup> February 2019

Inspectors Mrs. Denise Hegarty, Mrs. Meg Buckley

Unique Reference Number 104459

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 202

Chair of Governors Mrs. J. Ryan

Headteacher Mr. H. Boyle

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Prescot,  
Merseyside  
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Date of last inspection 25<sup>th</sup> February 2014

# 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's School is an average sized Catholic primary school situated in Prescot in the Knowsley area of the Archdiocese. It mainly serves the parish of Our Lady Immaculate and St. Joseph, Prescot although a significant number of pupils live in other parishes in the area.
- There are 202 children on roll of whom 183 are baptised Catholic, 9 come from other Christian denominations and 8 have no religious affiliation. There are 2 pupils from another faith or religious tradition at the school.
- There are 12 teachers at the school, 9 of whom are baptised Catholic. Eleven teachers teach Religious Education. Ten teachers have a suitable qualification in Religious Education.
- Since the last inspection, a new Chair of Governors has been appointed.

### 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's is an outstanding school in providing Catholic Education.

## CATHOLIC LIFE

### **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 appreciate, value and actively participate in the Catholic Life and mission of the school. They are wonderful ambassadors for the school and can clearly articulate how they live out their mission of *Loving, Learning and Reaching out to All*.
- Pupils participate in the school's evaluation of its Catholic Life and mission and are part of planning improvements to it.
- They show a deep respect for themselves and others as made in the image and likeness of God. The behaviour of most pupils is exemplary all the time as they have a very good understanding of right and wrong. They are always helpful and well-mannered.
- In proportion to their years, they show an ability to listen, to give thanks, to forgive and be forgiven. They are quick to congratulate others especially during reward assemblies each Friday. The School Council Award is then presented to children who actively live out the aims of the Mission Statement.
- Pupils enthusiastically embrace the demands and willingly accept the responsibilities of living within a Catholic school community. As a result, they are regularly involved with those activities which promote the Catholic Life and mission of the school both within school and in the wider community. As play leaders, school councillors, eco councillors and assembly monitors, to name but a few, children are enabled to fully live out their mission. The skills and attitudes they develop in fulfilling these roles contribute to pupils becoming tolerant, helpful and considerate of others and these values equip them well for the future.
- Pupils are aware of the needs of others and seek justice, within and beyond the school community, for those in need. They are encouraged to follow the words of the prayer of St. Teresa of Kolkata, 'Christ has no body now on earth but ours....' and in doing so, they wholeheartedly support several charities including Marie Curie, CAFOD, Nugent, Save the Children and the Royal British Legion. They often take the initiative in fundraising, particularly for charities dear to them e.g. Muscular Dystrophy and Scoliosis from which two children at the school suffer. They thoroughly enjoy planning ways to help others in need as Christ would.
- The 'Jesus and Me' group play an instrumental role in revealing scripture to others and recommend ways it can be lived out in school. They were influential in having the school's behaviour policy amended to reflect values from their school mission.
- Pupils value the parish clergy and participate in opportunities provided by the school such as Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament in response to 'Adoremus', the National Eucharistic Pilgrimage and Congress held recently in Liverpool.
- Pupils respond well to the opportunities the school provides for their personal support and development e.g. through circle time activities and the sensory circuit provided each morning for vulnerable pupils. As a result, they are happy, confident and secure in their own stage of physical, emotional and spiritual growth.

- Early in Year Six, pupils are given the opportunity to participate in residential trips to Robinwood Activity Centre. Such experiences enable pupils to develop their social skills and to learn how to co-operate with others to achieve their goal.
- Pupils, appropriate to their age and capability, gain knowledge and understanding of loving relationships within the context of a Christian understanding through the *Journey in Love* programme used by the school.
- Pupils embrace a holistic approach to education, understand what it means to have a vocation and recognise the importance of using their gifts in the service of others.
- Pupils value and respect the Catholic tradition of the school and its links with the parish community and the Archdiocese. As a result, they respect and are involved with parish and diocesan celebrations and activities, irrespective of their own faith commitments. Many celebrations, including Nativity performances, take place in one of the two main churches that the school serves.
- Pupils feel able to express great pride in their own religious and cultural identity and beliefs.
- Many past pupils continue to visit the school long after they have left as they enjoyed their experiences there so much.

### **The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school**

- The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school is outstanding.
- The school Mission Statement clearly expresses the educational mission of the Church and underpins everything that happens in Our Lady's. All members of the community have had the opportunity to reflect on it and evaluate its effectiveness.
- Staff members are committed to its implementation across the curriculum and the whole of school life. They participate in school activities which reflect the Catholic Life and mission of the school, such as staff prayer and continuing professional development on Catholic Life.
- There is a clear sense of community at all levels, evident in the high-quality relationships and the centrality of prayer to the whole community. The school fosters a sense of belonging that enables all involved in the life of the school to play an active role.
- The school environment reflects its mission and identity through obvious signs of its Catholic character. Visiting artists have worked with children to create several beautiful, inspirational displays which truly celebrate the school's Catholic Life. One such display in the school hall has photos of all the staff, governors and children on it and depicts how the school mission is lived.
- The Mission Statement, itself, is very proudly displayed in all areas of the school, is written on all correspondence and documentation and even emblazoned on the side of the school mini-bus and on staff lanyards. All policies and practices emanate from it.
- Staff members promote high standards of behaviour and are outstanding role models of mutual respect and forgiveness for pupils. They are alert to the needs and well-being of all.
- The curriculum reflects a commitment to Catholic Social Teaching, to care for our common home and to the dignity of every human person.
- The needs of the whole child are also catered for through a range of experiences provided including visits to cathedrals, libraries, art galleries etc. Members of staff provide several after school clubs and there are other enrichment activities available. These include key board club, cross-country, Science club etc. The school is very involved in the Shakespeare Festival and local community events.

- The school is very attentive to the spiritual and moral development of pupils. Ideas from the *Prayer Spaces* website have been used to great effect in providing ideas and inspiration to enhance the children's spiritual growth. Pupils are given to opportunity to reflect on their own mission and vocation. The school arranges annual careers events whereby pupils in Year Six meet representatives from various professions. One of the parish Deacons was invited along latterly to provide guidance to the pupils.
- Members of the parish clergy as appropriate are highly effective in supporting and promoting the Catholic Life of the school. There are very strong links with the local parishes
- Policies and structures are in place, which provide excellent pastoral care to pupils and their families, and there is a commitment to the most vulnerable and needy in both policy and practice. Members of staff have undertaken training and the skills they acquired have been shared. Mindfulness and Yoga sessions have been offered to children and staff. Materials from the *Relax Kids* programme have also been used to great effect in supporting the emotional development of pupils. A member of support staff commented that the school, "...makes every child's views and beliefs a key priority in their day to day experience making them feel valued and important."
- The Rainbow Room provides a quiet haven for pupils with emotional difficulties. The headteacher and pastoral leader are present on the yard at key times during the school day to look out for any issues that may arise.
- The school has a high regard for the pastoral and spiritual needs of staff and these needs are understood and catered for especially with the help of the link governor who is a chaplain in a local secondary school. She supports and guides staff members and shares appropriate resources.
- The school supports and facilitates the *With You Always* sacramental preparation programme and children from one of the parishes meet in the school hall with their parents each month to prepare.
- The school values all the help received from governors and parishioners and to show their appreciation, invites them all to an annual afternoon tea party at Christmas time.
- Pastoral programmes, Personal, Social and Health Education and Relationships and Sex Education are effectively planned, well taught and reflect Catholic teachings and principles. The *Journey in Love* programme is used very effectively to support this area of the pupils' education.

### **How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school**

- Leaders and governors are outstanding in promoting, monitoring and evaluating the provision for the Catholic Life of the school.
- Leaders and governors demonstrate a public commitment to the mission of the Church. They are well regarded as models of Catholic leadership by both staff and pupils. The development of the Catholic Life of the school is viewed by leaders and governors as a core leadership responsibility.
- The provision for the Catholic Life of the school is given priority by leaders. This is reflected in the school's self-evaluation which involves monitoring, analysis and self-challenge and is clearly focused on the Catholic Life of the school and Mission Statement.
- This leads to planned improvements to further enhance the Catholic Life of the school.
- There are close relationships at all levels, and this is a real strength of the school.
- The school's behaviour policy is rooted in Gospel values. Pupils clearly understand that each new day offers a fresh start. This policy and other relevant policies are regularly updated and reviewed by the governing body to ensure they are reflective of current practice.

- Continuous professional development focusing on the Catholic Life of the school occurs and is highly effective. As a result, staff members' understanding of the school's mission is outstanding. They are involved in shaping and supporting it.
- Newly qualified teachers undertake the Archdiocesan induction programme and are well supported by school leaders.
- The Catholic ethos is tangible in the school. The Religious Education co-ordinator and senior leaders lead the staff in creating an environment where children are nourished and nurtured. Some staff members have undertaken a course in Emotional First Aid and are able to support vulnerable pupils in time of crisis. This work has been given a high priority in the school's overall development plan.
- The school is very family-orientated and has strategies for engaging with parents and carers to the benefit of pupils, including those who might traditionally find working with the school difficult. As a result, parents and carers have a very good understanding of the school's mission and are greatly supportive of it.
- Close links have been forged with the local high school and pupils' transition to the next stage of their learning is smooth.
- As leaders, the governing body is extremely ambitious for the Catholic Life of the school and leads by example in the way it emphasises Catholic Life as a school improvement priority. They are regular visitors to the school and make a highly significant contribution to the Catholic Life. They are passionate guardians of the school's mission, are regularly involved in its evaluation and are ready to challenge as well as support where necessary. One governor visits school each week to spend time with staff and children. He is able to witness the Catholic Life and gives regular feedback to the governing body about his visits.
- The school responds well to Archdiocesan policies and initiatives and promotes the Archdiocesan vision exceptionally well throughout the school.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

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

- The extent to which pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education is outstanding.
- Observations and interviews all suggest that pupils thoroughly enjoy their Religious Education lessons. They are very interested and enthusiastic learners.
- Pupils, from their varied starting points, make outstanding progress in each key stage
- Groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs, are also making progress comparable to the progress of other pupils.
- Pupils, relative to their age and capacity, are religiously literate and engaged young people; they use their knowledge, understanding and skills, to reflect spiritually, and to think ethically and theologically. Therefore, pupils are fully aware of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life.
- Pupils are actively engaged in lessons and are committed to improving their knowledge, understanding and skills, in order to further develop as competent learners.
- Pupils concentrate exceptionally well, understand how well they are doing, know what they need to do to improve, and can articulate how they have made progress. In an age appropriate manner, they are adept at using the 'Driver Words' from the *Standards of Attainment in Religious Education* as they answer questions posed and complete their tasks.
- Pupils often approach their lessons with excitement. They enjoy challenging activities and respond well to opportunities which extend their learning.

- Behaviour in lessons is usually excellent because pupils enjoy Religious Education and they are rarely off task even in extended periods without direction from an adult, so disruptions in lessons are very unusual.
- Pupils co-operate respectfully with their partners and in groups and are always very supportive of each other. They also work well independently and can confidently share their personal views and opinions.
- Pupils' attainment, as indicated by formal and informal assessment is very good. Pupils achieve at least expected attainment using Archdiocesan data. This has been sustained for the last three years, and is an improving trend.
- The quality of pupils' current work, both in class and in written work, is very good. Pupils clearly take pride in their presentation and achievements.

## **The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education**

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education is outstanding.
- Teachers consistently plan high quality lessons linked to pupils' current assessment as well their prior knowledge of the individual. This consolidates and extends pupils' knowledge and understanding and enables them to learn very well. As a result of this, teaching is always at least good and often outstanding.
- Teachers are very confident in their subject expertise and have a great understanding of how pupils learn. As a consequence, pupils are inspired to learn, apply themselves very well and make excellent progress in lessons and over time.
- Teachers employ a wide range of appropriate strategies, including individual and collaborative work. Consequently, pupils are generally highly motivated and demonstrate sustained levels of concentration in lessons.
- Teachers ensure pupils are involved in evaluating how well they are achieving. This contributes to their excellent progress and gives them confidence in making further improvements.
- Most teachers manage time extremely well to maximise learning in lessons and across sequences of lessons.
- Teachers carefully observe and skilfully question during lessons in order to adapt tasks and explanations, so improving learning for pupils.
- High quality resources are used very effectively to optimise learning for pupils. Additional adults in the classroom make a significant contribution to children's learning and progress. They work very well with teachers to support and challenge pupils. Relationships in all classrooms are strong.
- Teachers communicate high expectations about Religious Education and create positive environments for learning in their classrooms. They make excellent use of praise and encouragement consistently across the school and subsequently pupils respond very positively.
- High quality feedback leads to the engagement, interest, achievement and progress of pupils. Pupils are given the opportunity to respond, which improves their understanding of what they need to do to improve.
- Many cross-curricular links are forged, notably with art and English. Enrichment experiences such as visits and visitors enhance the subject and bring it to life for the pupils.
- Achievement and effort are frequently celebrated leading to high levels of motivation from all pupils. Displays and 'working walls' in classrooms are used very well to support and celebrate learning across the topics.
- Teachers consistently encourage pupils to share their learning with their families and make every effort to work in partnership with them to provide the best learning experience for pupils.

## How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education

- Leaders and governors are outstanding in promoting, monitoring and evaluating the provision for Religious Education.
- They ensure that the Religious Education curriculum meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference in every respect and in each key stage.
- Leaders and governors ensure that at least the required amount of curriculum time is given to Religious Education in each key stage.
- Leaders and governors ensure that Religious Education has full parity with other core curriculum subjects in terms of professional development, resourcing, staffing and accommodation. A very generous budget is allocated for the subject.
- Any additional requirements and policies of the Archdiocese regarding the Religious Education curriculum are embraced and fully implemented.
- Leaders' and governors' self-evaluation of Religious Education is a coherent reflection of monitoring, rigorous assessment, tracking, searching analysis and self-challenge which is well-informed by current best practice in Religious Education. This results in strategic action taken by the school which leads to excellent outcomes in Religious Education.
- They ensure that Religious Education is imaginatively and thoughtfully planned to meet the needs of different groups of pupils and that the subject is rigorously monitored to secure high standards of teaching and learning.
- The subject co-ordinator for Religious Education fulfils her role with flair and enthusiasm. She has a clear vision for teaching and learning and an outstanding level of expertise in securing this vision. These are used exceptionally well to improve teaching and learning in Religious Education, resulting in teaching that is likely to be at least consistently good to outstanding.
- She regularly attends all Archdiocesan training and meets frequently with a cluster of other schools to share good practice. Information gleaned is efficiently cascaded to relevant members of staff.
- Staff members feel very well supported by leaders and are confident in their knowledge and teaching of *Come and See*.
- The co-ordinator is always available to support staff members and is much appreciated by them. As one teacher said, "She always makes time to support and thank the staff for their teamwork." Governors also appreciate her efforts and commented on how she is such a driving force in developing teachers' confidence.
- There is a link governor for Religious Education who meets regularly with the subject co-ordinator to monitor action plans and share new initiatives. She is a real asset to the school and works hard to challenge and support leaders. To gain a secure knowledge of standards, together with the R.E. Co-ordinator, she has undertaken pupil interviews and learning walks and monitored work and planning.
- Leaders and governors ensure that Religious Education is planned to meet the needs of different groups of pupils and to secure coherence across different key stages and phases. Samples of work have been scrutinised by the Pastoral Committee of governors to keep them informed about the children's learning in Religious Education.
- Governors are often invited to attend any training the school offers to enhance and inform the subject.
- Effective links are forged between home and school which allows learning to flourish. Parents and carers are kept very well informed about learning and progress. Their views are regularly sought and considered. Children are set tasks to complete and learning is shared with families via the class Do Jo.



# **COLLECTIVE WORSHIP**

## **How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship**

- Pupils response to and participation in the school's Collective Worship is outstanding.
- They act with great reverence and are keen to participate in Collective Worship. They sing joyfully, reflect in silence and join in community prayer appropriately and with confidence.
- Pupils readily prepare and lead worship with confidence, enthusiasm and a degree of independence. They are thoughtful in their planning of liturgy. Other pupils are engaged by the worship opportunities planned by their peers.
- Pupils engage and respond wholeheartedly in worship and are inspired to think deeply about what they have heard. When asked at interview about what they felt about Collective Worship, one Year Six pupil spoke about how it was like a family coming together and another spoke about how calm and relaxing it was and welcomed the opportunity they were given to reflect quietly.
- Pupils use a variety of approaches to prayer which includes scripture, religious artefacts, liturgical music and other forms of prayer both traditional and contemporary.
- Pupils value and participate voluntarily in the school's Jesus and Me (J.A.M.) sessions.
- They have a deep understanding of the Church's liturgical year, its seasons and feasts and the approaches this requires in the planning of appropriate worship opportunities.
- The experience of living and working in a faithful, praying community has a positive impact on the spiritual and moral development of pupils, irrespective of ability or faith background. They have a well-developed sense of respect for those of other faiths. This is reflected in the manner in which many pupils participate in prayer and liturgy. They particularly enjoy the times when parents and carers are invited to attend.
- Prayer is an intrinsic part of each day. There are class prayer books in each classroom containing prayers written by pupils.

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

- The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school is outstanding.
- Collective Worship is part of the life of the school and prayer is included in all school celebrations. Praying together is part of the daily experience for pupils and staff.
- Collective Worship has a clear purpose, message and direction. The themes chosen for worship reflect a deep understanding of the liturgical seasons and the Catholic character and mission of the school.
- Collective Worship is given a high priority in terms of planning, evaluating and resourcing; as a result, experience of Collective Worship is engaging and all members of the community speak positively about these opportunities.
- Timings are suitable and age appropriate.
- Relevant staff members have an excellent understanding of the Church's liturgical year, seasons and feasts and ensure that pupils have meaningful experiences of the Church's liturgical life. Weekly worship is always linked to the liturgical calendar.
- Staff members are skilled in helping pupils to plan and deliver quality worship when appropriate. They have an excellent understanding of the purpose of Collective Worship and utilise a wide variety of methods and styles of prayer.
- A variety of times and settings, including the Quiet Space and the outdoors, provide different experiences for those present. Parish priests also offer the opportunity for Mass in school on special occasions.

- Opportunities are planned in a manner that facilitates attendance by other adults associated with the pupils and school and response to this invitation is good. 'Stay and Pray' sessions for families of pupils in Foundation Stage are particularly well-attended.
- Worship is sensitive to and fully inclusive of all children as there is always an invitation for those present to participate.

## **How well leaders, governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship**

- Leaders and governors are outstanding in promoting, monitoring and evaluating the provision for Collective Worship.
- Leaders provide policies and guidelines for staff members to plan and deliver quality Collective Worship. To support them, a yearly planner that outlines the liturgical year and feast days is provided.
- Collective Worship is given a high priority in terms of planning and resourcing.
- Leaders have an excellent understanding of the Church's liturgical year, seasons and feasts and make these accessible to the pupils in a contemporary context.
- Leaders of Collective Worship within the school are appropriate models of outstanding practice for staff and pupils.
- They promote pupils' planning and leading Collective Worship in an age appropriate manner.
- Leaders offer regular professional development of staff incorporating liturgical formation and the planning for Collective Worship. This is well-supported by the link governor who leads training and offers support in this area. Staff meetings and in-service times are allocated for the provision of Collective Worship training.
- Observations of Collective Worship are frequently undertaken by leaders to ensure the quality of provision. Feedback is provided with relevant suggestions for improvement.
- Leaders and governors regularly review Collective Worship as part of their self-evaluation processes. The Collective Worship co-ordinator provides updates to the governors regarding Collective Worship and the spiritual life of the school.
- All meetings, in-service sessions and training days begin with prayer.

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

- Further develop the quality of teaching and purposeful learning in Religious Education by:
  - embedding the new Standards of Attainment in Religious Education.
- Further develop the work being undertaken in Catholic Life by:
  - Continuing to embed Relationships and Sex Education in the curriculum.
- Continue to address the areas for development as outlined in the Self Evaluation Document.

## INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

### OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

How effective the school is in providing Catholic Education	1
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### CATHOLIC LIFE

The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school	1
The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school	1
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school	1

### RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education	1
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education	1
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education	1

### COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship	1
The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school	1
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship	1

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