



ARCHDIOCESE OF LIVERPOOL

INSPECTION REPORT

OUR LADY OF THE ASSUMPTION CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

LIVERPOOL

Inspection Date	Tuesday 6 th February 2018
Inspectors	Mrs Julie Rourke Mrs Louise Byrne
Unique Reference Number	133337
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	200
Chair of Governors	Mr Peter Byrne
Headteacher	Mr Martin Burke
School address	Hedgefield Road Liverpool Merseyside L25 2RW
Telephone number	0151 487 9301
E-mail address	ourladyp-ht@ourlady-pri.liverpool.sch.uk
Date of last inspection	12 th February 2013

Introduction

This inspection was carried out under Section 48 of the Education Acts 2005 and 2011

The report of the inspection is produced for the Archbishop of Liverpool (Code of Canon Law 804 and 806) and for the governors of the school.

The inspectors are members of the Christian Education Department and their associates approved by the Archbishop of Liverpool for this purpose.

Information about this school

- Our Lady of the Assumption school is an average sized Catholic Primary School situated in Gateacre, Liverpool serving the parish of Our Lady of the Assumption.
- There are 200 children on roll of whom 170 are baptised Catholic, 13 come from other Christian denominations and 8 from other faith or religious traditions. Nine pupils have no religious affiliation.
- There are 10 teachers in the school. Nine are baptised Catholic. Nine teachers teach Religious Education. Four teachers have a suitable qualification in Religious Education.
- Since the last inspection a new Chair of Governors has been elected to post and a new Religious Education coordinator 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 of the Assumption Catholic Primary School 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 at Our Lady of the Assumption understand and know how to live out their motto, *'Believe, Achieve, Succeed.'*
- Pupils show a respect for themselves and others as made in the image and likeness of God. The behaviour of pupils is exemplary. In proportion to their years, they show an ability to listen, to give thanks, to forgive and be forgiven. They are also quick to congratulate and celebrate each other's achievements.
- Children are praised regularly through a variety of awards such as a Citizenship Award and consistently congratulated on values that they have shown.
- Pupils enthusiastically embrace the demands that membership of a Catholic school, serving the community, entails. They accept their responsibilities and as a result, they become for example; reading ambassadors, playground buddies and school council members.
- Pupils enjoy promoting the Catholic Life and mission of the school. The school choir performs at a variety of community events to raise funds and entertain the community for; Action for Children, Zoe's Place and the local Over 50's Luncheon Club.
- They continually raise funds for a variety of causes including, *Nugent, Foodbank* and *MacMillan Cancer Care*. Pupils are alert to the needs of others and seek justice for all within and beyond the school community. Funds are regularly raised for CAFOD World Gifts at Christmas.
- Pupils enthusiastically 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. Children actively seek ways to ensure they fundraise for national charities but also know the needs of their own community. There are exciting opportunities for children to be involved in developing relationships with other cultures through dance, music and food.
- Pupils value and respect the Catholic tradition of the school and its links with the parish community. They are involved with Family Masses, Harvest Festivals and children have become Altar servers. Pupils have been involved in parish fundraising for the *Whitechapel Homeless* and provided gift bags for those in need in the community.
- Pupils highly value residential trips to Crosby Hall Education Trust and Kingswood, Colomendy to develop their moral, team building and social skills.
- Pupils respond well to the many opportunities the school provides for their personal support and development. A learning mentor works closely with individuals and groups of children. She tailors programmes such as, *Happy to Be Me* and *Drawing and Talking* to build confidence. A counsellor has also been employed by the school to support vulnerable children with bereavement, anger management and self-esteem.
- Pupils, appropriate to their age and capability are developing in their understanding of loving relationships and sexual development within the context of a Christian understanding. This is through the successful implementation of the Archdiocesan advised programme, *Journey in Love*.

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 and children's motto are a clear and inspiring expression of the educational mission of the Church. The whole school community fully embraces the clear aims and objectives of the mission.
- The school environment reflects its mission and identity through concrete and effective signs of the Catholic character of the school. There are a variety of vibrant displays as well as sacred areas for reflection. There are beautiful areas dedicated to the memory of previous members of the school community.
- Clear policies and structures are in place, which provide the highest levels of pastoral care to pupils, and there is a commitment to the most vulnerable and needy in both policy and practice.
- All staff promote high standards of behaviour and are exemplary role models of mutual respect and forgiveness for pupils. They provide outstanding opportunities for the spiritual and moral development of all pupils. The school has high expectations for the school community to live by Gospel values, which are part of a weekly reflection.
- The curriculum reflects a commitment to Catholic Social Teaching, to care for our common home and to the dignity of every human person. As well as continual support through the teachings of CAFOD, the school encourages letter writing to children in Ireland and Uganda.
- There is a strong sense of community at all levels, evident in the high quality of relationships and the centrality of prayer. The school is a supportive and joyful community. There are many opportunities for parishioners and the whole school community to come together, for example in masses, assemblies and coffee mornings. A cluster of local schools regularly gather for Advent services, Stations of the Cross, welcome and end of year Masses.
- The school has put into place St. Julie's Christian Action Scheme, welcoming sixth form high school students to work alongside pupils. They too have strong links with Hope University student teachers.
- Staff are offered outstanding prayer opportunities for through masses and liturgies with the pupils and families. They take part in *Come and See for Yourself* prior to Religious Education topics being taught. The parish priest leads retreats for the staff in Advent and Lent and at the beginning of the school year. This is in collaboration with their neighbouring Catholic school which also offers the opportunity to gather together socially. A member of staff expressed, '*I am proud to be a member of this community.*'
- The Relationships and Sex Education programme, *Journey in Love*, has been carefully designed and implemented across the school. The programme has been incorporated and identified along with Science, Personal, Social and Health Education, English and Circle Time. This can now continue to be embedded across the school.
- The Relationships and Sex Education coordinator works closely with the Religious Education subject lead. She is ensuring that *RSE* and *PSHE* has a high profile across the school through gaining a Healthy Schools Award, Mindfulness workshops and Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service.

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

- Leaders and governors are good 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 school has an overarching mission, *“This is a community based on the teachings of Jesus, where everyone is valued and encouraged to achieve their full potential.”* It also has a children’s motto, *‘Believe, Achieve and Succeed.’* Both are a good reflection of the schools’ Gospel values. The school may wish to develop one mission for the whole school community to live by in its annual revision.
- The provision for the Catholic Life of the school is given priority by leaders. The schools’ Self Evaluation Document contains good evidence throughout and has planned improvements to further enhance the Catholic Life of the school. The document would now benefit from some reorganisation following the evidence outlined in this report.
- The school has strategies for engaging with parents/carers to the benefit of pupils, including those who might traditionally find working with the school difficult. As well as the wealth of pastoral support, the schools’ open-door policy enables families to be signposted to support agencies and possible parenting courses.
- Parent questionnaires received show that the majority of parents are in full agreement of the Catholic values and welcome they receive at school. One parent commented, *‘We have been delighted by the love and care given to my child by the staff and children.’*
- The Parish Priest, Governors, the headteacher and senior leaders are ambitious for the Catholic Life of the school and lead by example in the way it consistently emphasises Catholic Life as a school improvement priority. They make a significant contribution to the Catholic Life of the school.
- Governors are committed and are able to challenge as well as support where necessary. They visit school regularly and there are good links with the parish. The governors, which includes the Parish priest and a newly appointed Religious Education Governor, receive updates from the headteacher regarding the Catholic Life of the school.
- The school is keen to enhance the relationships between staff and governors and provide regular formal and informal opportunities for governor visits to school. This will provide a wealth of understanding and further ambitions for the Catholic Life of the school.
- Continuous Professional Development focusing on the Catholic Life of the school occurs and is effective. Staff are involved in shaping and supporting it.
- The school responds well to Archdiocesan policies and initiatives and actively promotes them throughout the school, including, Archdiocesan subject leader Religious Education training and regular staff meetings linked to Catholic Life.

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.
- Pupils, from their varied starting points, make good progress in each key stage, with some achieving outstanding progress.
- Groups of pupils, particularly those with special educational needs are catered for and careful planning and use of appropriate support is given.

- 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. As a consequence, pupils are 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 approach lessons with great interest, passion and enthusiasm. At times, pupils are given challenging activities and opportunities to extend their learning which they respond to exceptionally well. Behaviour in lessons is outstanding because pupils enjoy Religious Education and they are rarely off task even in extended periods without direction from an adult.
- There are outstanding procedures in place for tracking pupil progress. The school provides detailed analysis from the data gathered and actions are made. The school is keen to continue improving pupil progress by monitoring how the data, gained from tracking, is being used effectively in teaching, learning and in children's work.
- Formal assessment is collated and presented exceptionally well with examples of moderated work clearly identifying the progress made. This will continue to improve as data is consistently used to inform planning to strengthen the use of the driver words.
- Pupils have the opportunity to record their work in a variety of creative ways. Marking celebrates and affirms pupils' achievements. There is some evidence of challenge and developmental marking, however, this now needs to be consistent across the school. Evidence of outstanding marking for Religious Education targets should be shared across the school to enable all pupils to know how they are progressing and how to keep improving.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education is outstanding.
- Teachers plan detailed lessons, take into account some driver words for differentiation and thoughtfully create a wealth of engaging activities. They evaluate lessons exceptionally well and children's progress is clearly identified. Driver words can continue to be effective when used to differentiate for Religious Education groups.
- Teaching is outstanding, pupils are inspired to learn and make rapid and sustained progress.
- They consistently use time effectively to maximise learning opportunities in lessons and across sequences of lessons.
- A wide range of appropriate teaching strategies are employed including; engaging lesson openers, paired discussions, individual and collaborative work, prior learning, celebrating achievement and self-reflection. Consequently, pupils are highly motivated, sustain high levels of concentration and make sustained progress.
- Teachers carefully observe and skilfully question during lessons in order to adapt tasks and explanations, thus maximising learning for every pupil. They have high expectations and evaluate how well the children are doing throughout lessons, giving pupils confidence in their work.
- In outstanding lessons observed, teachers used driver words appropriately to show clear differentiation for tasks. Plenaries were used as an opportunity not only to reflect on learning, but to develop pupils' understanding and challenge their thinking.
- In an outstanding lesson observed, interactive songs and activities ensured that the youngest pupils were immersed in their learning. There were high expectations to share and reflect, reinforcing the importance of '*gathering together.*'
- In other outstanding lessons, teachers began with a variety of props, such as balloons, music, a suitcase and role-play. Children were captivated and ready to learn.

- Teaching Assistants are highly effective and provide outstanding care and focused support to pupils.

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

- Leaders and governors are good in promoting, monitoring and evaluating the provision for Religious Education.
- Leaders and governors 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 the required amount of curriculum time is given to Religious Education in each key stage which is evident in planning and in children's workbooks. Regular monitoring of class timetables would ensure that Religious Education is timetabled appropriately for the age of the children and matches planning and work evidence.
- Leaders and governors ensure that Religious Education is comparable to other core curriculum subjects, in terms of professional development, resourcing, staffing and accommodation.
- Any additional requirements and policies of the Archdiocese regarding the Religious Education curriculum are fully implemented.
- Leaders' self-evaluation of Religious Education is a reflection of frequent assessment, tracking, monitoring, analysis and self-challenge which is informed by current best practice in Religious Education. There are clear strategic actions resulting from monitoring.
- Governors are made aware of Religious Education standards. A new Religious Education governor has been appointed. She is keen to develop understanding of her responsibilities. The governor has already experienced monitoring of teaching and learning and there is a programme of planned visits and meetings in place with the curriculum leader.
- The curriculum leader for Religious Education, has worked hard to ensure that all new Archdiocesan initiatives are in place and keeps staff informed. She has a clear vision for Religious Education and is keen to continue developing progress and standards across the school.
- The subject lead is part of a cluster of local Catholic schools. They meet regularly to discuss and support the coordinating of Religious Education and share their practices.
- Evidence to support Religious Education, including policies, are detailed, collated and organised. The subject is led very well and supported by the headteacher, parish priest and governors.
- Parents receive regular updates about Religious Education, there is a wealth of information on the schools' website and they receive a dedicated newsletter each term.
- Parents receive a formal written report on pupils' achievements. The language of the level descriptors is often used well in reporting to parents. This now needs to be a consistent style of informing parents across the school.

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.
- Pupils act with 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 are involved in 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 liturgy and prayer.

- On the day of inspection, pupils gathered reverently to well-prepared liturgies and in one worship observed, parents were invited to pray with their children. They listened well to Scripture and gave heartfelt responses when prompted and experienced moments of silent reflection. Go forth messages were clear and enabled the children to spread the message that they had heard.
- Pupils are keen to respond to Scripture and worship leaders encourage children to participate in what they have heard. The heartfelt responses observed on the day of inspection gave children great opportunities to express themselves without teacher assessment. Teachers should continue to encourage and embed heartfelt responses without assessing understanding through questioning. This will allow all present in worship to meet God, where they are.
- Older pupils enjoy preparing and leading worship and in other year groups they are encouraged to participate appropriate to their age and stage of development. The school is keen to keep embedding this practice across the school.
- There are a variety of opportunities throughout the school year for pupils to develop their understanding of the Church's liturgical year and its seasons and feasts.
- The experience of living and working in a faithful, praying community has a positive impact on the spiritual and moral development of the pupils, irrespective of ability or faith background.

The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school

- The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school is good.
- 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.
- Relevant staff have a good understanding of the Church's liturgical year, seasons and feasts and ensure that pupils have a variety of experiences of the Church's liturgical life.
- The parish priest meets regularly with the subject leader to plan future liturgies and celebrations with the neighbouring Catholic school. This detailed planning enables the school community to provide, for example, Faith in Action, With You Always, Stations of the Cross, Lent services and weekday Masses.
- Along with planned liturgies, the school has a variety of themes for worship which also includes Gospel values, identified throughout the school year. The school would benefit from reorganising a yearly planner that clearly indicates all liturgies, weekly themes and Gospel values which will support and aid teachers when planning for worship. This will distinctly highlight the wealth of prayer and the Catholic character of the school.
- Opportunities are planned in a manner that facilitates attendance by other adults associated with the pupils and school. The school invites parents and carers to be a part of pupils' liturgies, such as, Rejoice celebrations throughout the year.
- Staff are skilled in helping pupils to plan and deliver quality worship when appropriate. They have a good understanding of the purpose of Collective Worship. The school is keen to embed this practice across the school.

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

- Leaders and governors are good in promoting, monitoring and evaluating the provision for Collective Worship.
- Leaders know how to provide clear policies and guidelines to plan and deliver quality Collective Worship. They lead Collective Worship within the school and are appropriate models of good practice for staff and pupils. They promote pupils' planning and leading Collective Worship.

- They have a good understanding of the Church's liturgical year, seasons and feasts and they are able to make these accessible to the pupils in a contemporary context.
- Monitoring of Collective Worship is supporting worship across the school.
- The school has received recent Archdiocesan Collective Worship training. This training now needs time to be embedded. Leaders are keen to continue developing regular professional development for staff, incorporating liturgical formation and the planning of Collective Worship.
- Governors are informed of policy guidelines and monitoring of Collective Worship. They also are invited to and attend Collective Worship celebrations.

What the school needs to do to improve further

- Continue to develop the Catholic Life of the school by:
 - embedding the Relationships and Sex Education programme, *Journey in Love*, in all year groups.
- Continue to improve Religious Education standards by:
 - using tracking data to provide Religious Education groups;
 - embedding the use of driver words to differentiate in planning, teaching and learning, and developmental marking.
- Further develop Collective Worship by:
 - embedding the recent Archdiocesan training;
 - developing heartfelt responses;
 - organising a yearly planner that incorporates liturgies, weekly worship themes and Gospel values.

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	2

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	2

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	2
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship	2

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