



## ARCHDIOCESE OF LIVERPOOL

### INSPECTION REPORT

### ST. MARGARET MARY'S CATHOLIC INFANT SCHOOL

#### KNOWSLEY

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Inspection Date Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> May 2016

Inspectors Mrs Julie Rourke  
Mrs Maria Eves Mr Andy Cocker

Unique Reference Number 104481

Inspection carried out under Section 48 of the Education Acts 2005 and 2011

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Type of School Infant school

Age range of pupils 3 - 7

Number on roll 473

Chair of Governors Miss Clare Ferguson

Headteacher Mrs Louise Byrne

School address Pilch Lane,  
Huyton,  
Liverpool  
L14 0JG

Telephone number 0151 228 4024

E-mail address stmargaretmary.infant.de@knowsley.gov.uk

Date of last inspection 30<sup>th</sup> November 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

- St. Margaret Mary's Catholic Infant school is a larger than average sized Catholic Primary School situated in Knowsley serving the parish of St. Margaret Mary's.
- There are 473 children on roll of whom 431 are baptised Catholic, 35 come from other Christian denominations, and 1 from other faith or religious traditions. There are 6 children who have no religious affiliation.
- There are 20 teachers of whom 16 teach Religious Education and 17 have a suitable qualification in Religious Education. Sixteen teachers are baptised Catholic.
- Since the last inspection a new headteacher and Chair of Governors have 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:

St. Margaret Mary's Catholic Infant 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, *Loving, Learning, Growing together with Jesus* and understand the part they play within it. They are fully involved in its evaluation and pupils are rewarded regularly for living out their mission.
- The children have been able to work with an artist to create their Mission Statement pictorially and this is displayed prominently in the school.
- Pupils' behaviour is exemplary; they have a good knowledge of right and wrong and apply this in their personal relationships. They lead by example, show respect to one another and responsibility for themselves and their actions.
- All pupils are actively involved in developing the Catholic character of the school and embrace opportunities to meet their potential in all aspects of school life.
  - They are encouraged to take on roles of responsibility in the school, e.g. through the school council, play leaders and anti-bullying ambassadors.
- Pupils show wider responsibilities through a variety of fundraising events. Funds are regularly raised for the Poppy Appeal, Children in Need and Nugent care. They also respond to issues such as the Ebola crisis and Syrian refugees.
- The children have close links with Merseyside Veterans Association. Children have been able to learn and respect local war veterans and plant crosses in prayer with one another. This is an outstanding opportunity for children, serving the wider community.
- Pupils are involved in service to their local community. They visit the local foodbank and have close links with many parish events. Children take part in carol services, parish processions and volunteers from the Union of Catholic Mothers are invited into school.
- Pupils are fully supported by their parish priest. Pupils take part in a wide range of Masses and celebrations, such as, experiences of the Sacrament of Eucharist, Advent and a Parish Feast Day.
- Pupils enjoy and benefit from participation in many educational day trips, such as, the local Youth Parliament to Westminster and a residential to Crosby Hall, where they experience a variety of challenging activities to develop and strengthen confidence and build on their personal and spiritual lives.
- Older pupils are offered the chance to aid their transition to junior school by taking part in joint activities, giving pupils a sense of independence and confidence in their next steps.
- Education for pastoral care and personal relationships is outstanding and has fostered positive attitudes in pupils. Pupils are offered personal support and development through the Learning Mentor, *Sunbeams*, *Rainbows*, circle time and play therapy.
- Children with specific learning needs are offered outstanding care through daily *Sensory Circuits*. This offers pupils the chance to explore and gain confidence using their motor skills, helping them to prepare for and to take part in their classroom learning environment.

- The school praises and acknowledges the contribution of others, evident in their weekly rewards assembly. Pupils show a readiness to embrace and celebrate their lived experiences.

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

- Pupils' achievements and enjoyment in Religious Education is outstanding.
- Their attainment in Religious Education is outstanding.
- They make outstanding 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 outstanding and there is no significant difference in performance between vulnerable groups of pupils.
- Analysis of assessments undertaken provides evidence of pupils attaining appropriate levels for their age and stage of development.
- Pupils' work is moderated regularly and standards and expectations are continuously raised.
- Pupils are becoming increasingly more religiously literate. Their knowledge, understanding and skills are developing appropriate to their age or capacity.
- They are developing the skills that enable them to reflect spiritually, think ethically and theologically and are becoming more aware of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life.
- Pupils' engagement in and enjoyment of their learning is outstanding as shown by their interest, enthusiasm and behaviour. On the day of inspection, learning needs were met and they spoke keenly and with understanding about their work.
- Where appropriate, pupils are encouraged to work independently and collaboratively. Pupils are anxious to learn and improve their knowledge, understanding and skills. They show a commitment to succeed when challenged in their work.

### **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.
- They are becoming familiar with a variety of prayer styles. They appreciate and are open to the Word of God in the scriptures.
- They sing joyfully, reflect in silence and join in community prayers appropriately and with confidence.
- Pupils are becoming involved in preparing and leading worship. On the day of inspection, the headteacher led a joyous whole school worship. Worship leaders aided in gathering children and going forth with Scripture messages.
- The whole school worship was uplifting and the atmosphere of the school community was palpable. Children were led in prayer and reflection and sang with joy in their hearts.
- In class based worship, children gathered with wonder and processed to lay flowers at a statue of Mary. Children were reverent throughout, prayed in silence and gave heartfelt responses to the Word of God.
- Children are able to participate in a variety of gatherings. Experiences are cherished and collated in well-presented portfolios and shared on the school's website.

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

- The quality of teaching and purposeful learning in Religious Education is outstanding.
- It is consistently effective in ensuring that pupils are interested and engaged and make outstanding progress.
- Teachers ensure that Jesus' teachings relate to the daily lives of children.
- Teachers display excellent subject knowledge and deploy a range of teaching styles. There are excellent pupil and adult relationships, encouraging pupil discussion. Lessons are timed well with a wealth of activities and contain 'wow' moments that motivate and inspire pupils. Quality resources are used.
- Teaching encourages pupils' enjoyment of and enthusiasm of Religious Education. Teachers provide a happy and secure learning environment.
- Teachers ensure there is consistency in behaviour and expectations of pupils. There are established routines.
- On the day of inspection teachers provided some opportunities for pupils to work independently and collaboratively.
- On the day of inspection lessons included a wide variety of activities, including drama, paired discussions, singing, prior learning and positive and affirming feedback to pupils. Learning objectives included driver words and were shared with the children.
- In one lesson observed, pupils were excited by the arrival of a parcel and children were drawn into deeper understanding of Zacchaeus and his struggle to see Jesus. Activities were differentiated and the plenary extended their learning beyond the classroom in an activity planned for a playtime, to be a friend to others.
- Younger pupils understood that they can be a friend of Jesus. In discussions, children were encouraged to act out a conversation with Jesus on a telephone. Children shared their thoughtful remarks and when asked how Jesus knew who it was? They responded with confidence, that Jesus knows each of them by name.
- In the Foundation Stage there are excellent portfolios of pupils' work. Work is presented to a high standard and Religious Education is promoting and developing many early skills. On the day of inspection, continuous provision stimulated learning and related to the Come and See topic.
- Teaching Assistants throughout the school provide outstanding care and support to pupils and teachers. They are deployed effectively and show sensitivity to pupils needs. They ensure all pupils in their care reach their full potential.
- Opportunities for Information Technology were used well, including the use of an interactive whiteboards and iPads.
- Planning is produced on school planning formats and shows learning objectives, differentiation for mixed ability classes and a range of activities, driver words and evaluations.
- Teachers take into account pupils' prior learning and work consolidates, builds and extends their knowledge and understanding.
- Workbooks and portfolios show effort and achievement at all stages of learning and are a celebration of their learning.
- Pupils are informed of their progress and how to improve both orally and through marking. Marking is affirming, supportive and encourages next steps in their learning when appropriate, according to their age and stage.
- The school has outstanding assessment strategies in place, providing detailed information on the achievement of all the pupils.
- Teachers are able to identify how well pupils are achieving and tackle underachievement. The school tracks the achievement of all the pupils and specific groups are identified.

## **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.
- The school implements new curriculum developments as appropriate.
- Planning ensures full coverage of the Religious Education programme. Imaginative and well planned strategies are deployed to enrich pupils' learning.
- The school is innovative in presenting the curriculum creatively to bring an understanding of God to every child.
- The school provides focus weeks and events, for example, through an Awe and Wonder week and the church's Year of Mercy, enhancing the Religious Education programme.
- Other foundation curriculum topics are incorporated, where possible, to support Religious Education themes and the spiritual and moral development of the children.
- The school supports pupils' spiritual and moral education further through, for example, aiding personal and social relationships and through *Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning*.
- The school environment is welcoming with well-presented areas that reflect the hard work and dedication of staff and pupils.
- Children have explored the beliefs and values of other faiths and religions. This helps to promote tolerance and respect for those who think differently. Judaism and Hinduism are taught each year.
- There are transition links with St. Margaret Mary's Junior school and links with a network of local schools, such as, an annual mass with local schools in the pastoral area.

## **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 any faith backgrounds among the pupils.
- Collective Worship has a high profile and is central to the life of the school.
- Collective Worship plays a key part in meeting the spiritual needs of the pupils.
- Children are enabled to pray formally and informally using a variety of prayer methods and styles.
- The school provides opportunities for staff to develop the skills in planning, leading and evaluating Collective Worship. The parish priest and Religious Education coordinator have led training to further develop worship across the school.
- The teachers provide resources and opportunities to help children to participate in Collective Worship. The school is keen to further the skills of the worship team across the school, appropriate to their age.
- There are beautifully presented sacred spaces throughout the school. An inviting and private space has been created for children to reflect on acts of mercy. The school is developing practical and creative ways that the whole school community can act on and be a part of the church's Year of Mercy.

- Opportunities are provided for parents, carers and the local parish to participate in a variety of celebrations of the *Come and See* programme and the Church's liturgical year.
- There are many opportunities provided to enable full, active and conscious participation of the whole school community. In Holy Week the school provides practical and creative events such as re-enacting Palm Sunday and laying flowers at the foot of the cross in the school grounds. This has an impact on not only the faith journey for children but that of the staff, parents and governors.

**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, *Loving, Learning, Growing together with Jesus*.
- All who form part of the school community including parents, clergy, governors and children were involved in the development of the Mission Statement.
- The mission is shared in partnership with St. Margaret Mary's Junior school. Its clear 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 Mission Statement is revisited at the beginning of each new school year and there are plans with the junior school for a full review in the next academic year.
- Leaders, governors and managers are outstanding in the way they use monitoring data to evaluate the school's performance, celebrate, and plan future improvements.
- The Self Evaluation Document accurately provides evidence of the schools' monitoring, analysis and self-challenge. It provides a basis to celebrate strengths and outlines areas for development.
- Leaders, governors and managers are deeply committed to the Church's mission in education and are an inspiration to the whole community.
- Governors have full knowledge and understanding of the Catholic life of the school and fulfil their responsibilities. They have effectively helped to shape the direction of the school.
- Governors are regularly invited into school for a variety of events and liturgical celebrations. Regular updates are received from the headteacher regarding the Catholic life of the school.
- Governors are a visible and supportive presence in the school. They ensure the Catholic character of the school has a high profile through the close links with parish and home. They are rightly proud of the school community and the Chair of Governors considers it a, '*privilege to be part of a wonderful Catholic community*.'
- Home, school and parish are an outstanding partnership. The Parish priest is committed to supporting, leading and shaping the whole school community on their faith journey. He is a regular visitor in school, celebrating many liturgical events with the whole school community.
- The Parish priest supports teachers in many Religious Education learning opportunities and has led a worship retreat and training for the staff. He leads an *Ethos* meeting with senior leaders to plan ahead for liturgical occasions throughout the school year. This enables the whole community to contribute to the mission, spirit and Gospel values of the school.

- The school provides induction and regular in-service training enabling staff to further understand the Church's Mission in Education and play their unique part in it. A staff member commented, '*Our school is a wonderful, supportive family for all the children, parents and staff with Christ at the Centre.*'
- The headteacher has led staff training to encourage, promote and live out Gospel Values so that they permeate throughout the school. Together the school community have produced an outstanding Gospel Values policy.
- Regular prayer opportunities are provided for the staff, such as, *Come and See for yourself* at the beginning of each new Religious Education theme.
- All staff members teaching Religious Education have their Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies.
- The quality of Collective Worship is a priority in the school and a yearly calendar guides the liturgical themes for worship. An up to date detailed policy is in place suiting the needs of the school. It is effectively monitored and evaluated by leaders, governors and managers.
- Parents are consulted regularly and involved in a variety of ways in the life of the school e.g. through regular newsletters, the school website and a variety of liturgies, celebration and fundraising events. Parent views of the school are very positive.
- *Sharing our Faith* is regularly included in weekly newsletters, giving parents opportunities to share in prayerful and reflective events throughout the liturgical season.

**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.
- The subject leader is highly committed, an outstanding leader and role model of Catholic education. She has introduced new initiatives when appropriate and adapts them to suit the needs of staff and pupils.
- The subject leader has the close support of another teacher in school. She too is dedicated and has outstanding knowledge and understanding of the Religious Education and worship needs of children in the early years setting.
- The Self Evaluation Document is a reflection of rigorous monitoring and self-challenge.
- Briefing meetings provided by the Archdiocese are attended regularly and continuing professional development opportunities are provided for staff. Communication between the headteacher, staff, parents and governors is effective.
- Governors are informed of standards in Religious Education. The Religious Education governor has taken part in reviewing the self-evaluation document and is kept up to date by the subject leader.
- Monitoring is embedded and data from this is used effectively to evaluate the schools' performance and plan for future improvements.
- Detailed and comprehensive documentation guides and directs all staff in the delivery of the subject. This is updated as necessary.
- Formal assessment tasks are undertaken in line with Archdiocesan guidance. Moderation is completed by the Religious Education subject leader and staff members.
- Assessment information is outstanding and is collated and tracked by the subject leader and shared with the leadership team and governors.
- Tracking data is detailed and includes pupils' starting points and vulnerable groupings. The subject leader tracks the pupils closely and uses data to plan for three yearly trends.



- 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?**

- Use the school's Self Evaluation Document to continue to develop the Catholic life and Religious Education at St. Margaret Mary's Catholic Infant school.

# 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	1
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	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***

<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	1

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