



ARCHDIOCESE OF LIVERPOOL

INSPECTION REPORT

ST. JAMES' CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

ORRELL

Inspection Date 28th November 2017

Inspectors Mrs. Denise Hegarty, Mrs. Angela Williams,
Mrs. Angel Paget

Unique Reference Number 106492

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

Type of School Catholic Primary

Age range of pupils 4 - 11

Number on roll 390

Chair of Governors Mr. Paul Williams

Headteacher Mr. Gary Hayes

School address St James Road,
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Wigan,
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Date of last inspection 27th November 2012

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. James' School is a larger than average sized Catholic primary school situated in the Orrell area of Wigan, serving the parish of St. James'. Just after the last inspection, the parish priest was given another parish and had to share his time between the two parishes and schools. Following a recent reorganisation, he has subsequently relinquished stewardship of the other parish.
- There are three hundred and ninety children on roll of whom three hundred and fifty-seven are baptised Catholic, nineteen children come from other Christian denominations, one child is of another religious tradition and thirteen have no religious affiliation.
- There are seventeen teachers at the school, fourteen of whom are baptised Catholic. Sixteen teachers teach Religious Education. Sixteen teachers have a suitable qualification in Religious Education. One further teacher is currently undertaking the Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies.
- Since the last inspection, the school has undergone a significant expansion in size as it has moved to being a two-form entry school. This has seen a number of new staff appointed due to the expansion and also some staff turnover.
- The headteacher currently holds an executive headship of a nearby school. There is a head of school in post at St. James' during this period.

Key for inspection grades

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

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OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

St. James 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.
- Pupils participate in the school's evaluation of its Catholic Life and mission and are part of planning improvements to it. Relatively recently, they reviewed their own Mission Statement and came up with a list of ways they could live it out. This is displayed in classrooms and around the school.
- Pupils show a respect for themselves and others as made in the image and likeness of God. The behaviour of most pupils is exemplary all of the time. They show an understanding of the need to forgive, be forgiven and have a good understanding of right and wrong. One child wrote on a questionnaire that, 'Forgiveness is the key to friendship and love.' Others indicated that they should, 'ask for forgiveness and offer forgiveness', and 'forgive each other and move on'.
- Pupils are confident, enthusiastic and respectful. They are quick to congratulate others and are excellent, loyal ambassadors for their school.
- Pupils 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 the wider community. They are alert to the needs of others and seek justice for others within and beyond the school community. They frequently initiate fundraising for a number of good causes e.g. 'Stand Up to Cancer', CAFOD, Children in Need and the Rotary Club's Shoebox Appeal.
- Pupils value and participate in opportunities provided by the school to enhance their spiritual development e.g. Year 6 retreats at Don Orione Care Home where pupils visit and interact with the elderly residents and later prepare to celebrate Mass. Year 4 pupils undergo a residential experience at Coniston to appreciate the awe and wonder of the Lake District.
- Children of all ages take part in a variety of extra-curricular activities which include many sports clubs and choir sessions. The school has had two recent visits from John Burland, a composer of religious songs and singer. This was thoroughly enjoyed by all who attended and had a profound effect of the pupils' love of singing and signing.
- Pupils respond well to all the opportunities the school provides for their personal support and development. As a result, they are happy, confident and secure in their own stage of physical, emotional and spiritual growth.
- Pupils, appropriate to their age and capability, have a good understanding of loving relationships within the context of a Christian understanding.

- Pupils embrace a holistic approach to education, have an understanding of what it means to have a vocation and recognise the importance of using their gifts in the service of others. Many take on roles and responsibilities to help and support others e.g. Play Leaders and Buddies who look after younger pupils and ease their transition into the school. School councillors run a healthy tuck shop once a week and money raised is used for charity and school projects. Pupils are very proud of these roles and take their responsibilities very seriously.
- 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. Representatives attend the Archdiocesan, 'Good Shepherd' Mass.

The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school

- The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school is outstanding.
- This is a welcoming, happy and inclusive school community.
- The school Mission Statement clearly expresses the educational mission of the Church and is displayed around the school and in all classrooms.
- Staff are committed to its implementation across the curriculum and the whole of school life. They are devoted to the education and inclusion of all pupils and care for them all extremely well. They take part in school activities which reflect the Catholic Life and mission of the school, such as, retreats, staff prayer and continuous professional development on Catholic Life.
- There is a clear sense of community at all levels, evident in the outstanding quality of relationships and the centrality of prayer to this flourishing community where values from the Gospel are clearly lived out on a daily basis.
- The school environment reflects its mission and identity through obvious signs of its Catholic character. Beautiful, vibrant displays grace the entrance area, school hall and corridors.
- Staff promote high standards of behaviour and are good role models of mutual respect and forgiveness for pupils who respond accordingly. This leads to a friendly, happy, relaxed atmosphere. Each person in the community is recognised as a unique human being and is encouraged to develop and celebrate their gifts and talents.
- The curriculum reflects a commitment to Catholic Social Teaching, to care for our common home and to the dignity of every human person. Members of the Gardening Club, for example, care for the school's spiritual garden and grow food. The Eco council act as stewards of the earth.
- The school provides many opportunities for the spiritual and moral development of pupils. Staff members undertake prayer and reflection before staff meetings and '*Come and See for Yourself*' before starting their Religious Education topics.
- Links with the parish are strong. Many staff members are involved in the parish as, for example, Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion, Little Church leaders and musicians. The school hosts the 'With You Always' Sacramental Preparation programme and staff members attend the celebrations.

- Policies and structures are in place, which provide outstanding pastoral care to pupils and there is a strong commitment to care for the most vulnerable and needy in both policy and practice. These pupils are encouraged to Relax, Enjoy, Smile and Talk (REST). A Learning Mentor and Play Therapist who are members of the school's support staff devote a couple of afternoons a week to provide activities that support the children's well-being, emotional and social development. The school is currently undertaking the 'National Nurturing Schools' Accreditation'.
- Pastoral programmes, Personal Social Health Education and Relationships and Sex Education are planned, well taught and reflect Catholic teachings and principles. Programmes used include *Social and Emotional Learning (SEAL)*, *Healthy Living, Social and Emotional Aspects of Development (SEAD)* and 'All that I Am'.
- The school has a regard for the pastoral needs of staff and members' needs are understood and catered for.

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

- Leaders and governors are good at 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.
- Leaders and governors are rightly proud of the pupils and their outstanding achievements in all aspects of school life. All pupils are treated as special individuals with unique gifts and talents to celebrate.
- 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.
- This leads to planned improvements to further enhance the Catholic Life of the school.
- Continuous Professional Development focusing on the Catholic Life of the school occurs and is effective. As a result, staff members' understanding of the Church's mission in education is excellent and they are very supportive of the mission and ethos of the school.
- The school has good strategies for engaging with parents/carers to the benefit of pupils. As a result, parents/carers have an excellent understanding of the school's mission and are extremely supportive of it. On their questionnaire, one parent wrote, 'This is an exceptional Catholic school in every sense. The Catholic ethos shines through in all the school does.' Another wrote, 'The values that permeate all that this school does are there for all to see. It is a school that truly lives out its mission.'
- As leaders, the governing body is ambitious for the Catholic Life of the school and leads by example in the way it emphasises Catholic Life as a school improvement priority. Governors make a significant contribution to the Catholic Life of the school. They are committed to the school's mission and are ready to challenge as well as support where necessary.
- The school responds well to Archdiocesan policies and initiatives and promotes the Archdiocese vision 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.
- Pupils, from their varied starting points, make excellent 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. 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. They use key words from each topic very well and so their religious vocabulary is extending. They have an excellent understanding of the Church's year, its seasons and feasts.
- Pupils concentrate very well and, from an early age, have an understanding of how they are doing and what they need to do to improve. They can articulate how they have made progress.
- Pupils approach their lessons with interest and great enthusiasm. They enjoy challenging activities, and respond well to opportunities which extend their learning. At interview, Year 6 pupils reported that there was always a 'nice atmosphere' in their Religious Education lessons and they found them relaxing. Pupils are not afraid to share their views and opinions and do so eloquently and confidently.
- Behaviour in lessons is exemplary because pupils enjoy Religious Education and disruptions in lessons are unusual. In general, children work industriously and productively. They are anxious to please and to do well.
- Pupils' attainment, as indicated by teacher and formal assessment, is excellent. This has been sustained for a number of years and is an improving trend. Standards are high.
- The quality of pupils' current work, both in class and in written work, is outstanding. They take a real pride in their work and present it very well.

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 lessons linked to pupils' current assessment so that pupils learn successfully.
- Teachers effectively build on prior learning in a quick recap of previous work at the start of each lesson. This puts the lesson into context for pupils enabling them to extend their learning.
- Teachers are confident in their subject expertise and have a great understanding of how pupils learn. As a consequence, pupils apply themselves well and make excellent progress in lessons and over time.
- Teachers employ a wide range of creative teaching and learning strategies to engage, excite and inspire pupils. Opportunities are given for children to work independently or in collaboration with others. Consequently, pupils are well-motivated and can sustain their concentration and engagement in lessons.

- Teachers ensure pupils are involved in evaluating how well they are achieving. This contributes to their excellent progress and increases their confidence in making further improvements.
- Teachers manage time well to secure learning in lessons and across sequences of lessons. There is no time slippage and pupils settle down to work quickly and enthusiastically. Excellent use is made of talking partners in some classes and this good practice should be shared.
- Teachers regularly adapt tasks and explanations to improve learning for pupils. They have excellent questioning techniques to challenge, probe and encourage a deepening of understanding as well as to assess what learning has taken place.
- Excellent resources, including other adults are used effectively to optimise learning for pupils. Information and Communication Technology is used to great effect and work is modelled and shared using class visualisers.
- Teachers communicate high expectations of pupils during their Religious Education lessons and they respond positively knowing that their ideas and experiences are drawn upon, valued and celebrated. Teachers create positive climates for learning through the use of praise and encouragement and consequently, relationships between adults and children in the classrooms are excellent. Assessment for learning strategies are used very effectively.
- High quality feedback leads to the interest, achievement and excellent progress of pupils. Pupils are given the opportunity to respond, which improves their understanding of what they need to do to improve.
- Achievement and effort are celebrated and this further motivates the 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.
- Leaders and governors ensure that the Religious Education curriculum meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference in every respect and across the key stages.
- Leaders and governors ensure that the required amount of curriculum time is given to Religious Education in each key stage.
- Leaders and governors ensure that Religious Education has parity with other core curriculum subjects, in terms of budget, professional development, resourcing, staffing and accommodation.
- Any additional requirements and policies of the Archdiocese regarding the Religious Education curriculum are fully implemented.
- The school's assessment, levelling, moderation and tracking procedures are outstanding. Portfolios of moderated work support teachers in their levelling of children's work. Leaders' and governors' self-evaluation of Religious Education is a true reflection of frequent assessment, tracking, analysis and self-challenge.
- There is a planned monitoring and evaluation programme in place including the monitoring of planning, work, displays and teaching and learning by peers and senior leaders. This results in strategic action taken by the school which leads to improvements in provision and excellent outcomes in Religious Education.

- The curriculum leader for Religious Education has a clear vision for teaching and learning and demonstrates a high level of expertise in securing this vision. She is an outstanding role model for other staff members and is totally committed to her role and to ensuring that Religious Education has the highest priority in the school. She attends all Archdiocesan briefings and regularly leads staff meetings to share information etc. with colleagues. All relevant policies are fully in place and the Religious Education handbook guides and directs the staff in the subject. Staff members are very appreciative of all the support they receive.
- Leaders and governors ensure that Religious Education is well-planned to meet the needs of different groups of pupils and to secure coherence across different key stages and phases.

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 and enthusiastically often signing to the words. They reflect in silence and join in community prayer appropriately and with confidence.
- Pupils regularly prepare and lead worship with confidence, enthusiasm and a degree of independence in an age appropriate manner. They are thoughtful in their planning of liturgy. Other pupils are engaged by the worship opportunities planned by their peers and are very respectful throughout.
- During their interview on the day of inspection, Year 2 pupils demonstrated a clear understanding of the structure for worship and an enthusiasm for planning it.
- Children enjoy opportunities to go to Church for special celebrations e.g. Harvest celebrations, Leavers' Mass.
- 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 have an excellent understanding of the Church's liturgical year, its seasons and feasts and the approaches this requires in the planning of appropriate worship opportunities. Themes are often linked to the scripture found within the curriculum which follows the Church's year.
- The experience of living and working in a faithful, praying community has a positive impact on the spiritual and moral development of pupils.

The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school

- The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school is outstanding.
- Collective Worship is central to the life of the school and is at the heart of every school celebrations. Praying together is part of the daily experience for pupils and staff.
- Collective Worship has a purpose, message and direction. The themes chosen for worship reflect a clear understanding of the liturgical seasons and the Catholic character 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 very positively about these opportunities.

- The spiritual and multisensory garden provides an outdoor prayer space for worship and reflection which is well used by parents, staff and pupils. The Church is also used regularly for liturgies and Masses.
- Relevant staff have an excellent understanding of the Church's liturgical year, seasons and feasts and ensure that pupils have first-rate experiences of the Church's liturgical life.
- Each class teacher ensures the theme, focus, delivery, length and resources are appropriate to the interests, age range, backgrounds and ability of learners.
- Staff 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 the wide variety of methods and styles of prayer.
- Opportunities such as Masses, liturgies and celebrations are planned in a manner that facilitates attendance by other adults associated with the pupils and school and response to this invitation is excellent.
- The *Wednesday Word* is jointly funded by the school and parish and is given to families to share the Good News at home. This resource enhances and strengthens the Home, School and Parish partnership.

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.
- They have a clear understanding of the Church's liturgical year, seasons and feasts and make these accessible to pupils in a contemporary context whilst ensuring that worship takes place in a variety of forms and places. Liturgical colours are used on focus tables to depict the various times of the year.
- 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.
- Leaders offer regular professional development of staff incorporating liturgical formation and the planning for Collective Worship. The co-ordinator supports new staff members as necessary and ensures that *'Come and See for Yourself'* is modelled and shared with staff at the start of every theme. A portfolio of examples of planning and photographs is kept to provide ideas and stimuli.
- Leaders and governors regularly review Collective Worship as part of their self-evaluation processes.
- An excellent policy and guidelines are fully in place and are frequently reviewed in line with other related policies. Resources are modern and plentiful and include beautiful South American crosses for all classrooms.
- Leaders are rightly proud of their beautiful spiritual garden.

What the school needs to do to improve further

- Devote quality time for worship consistently across the school.
- When undertaking self-evaluation focus clearly on the impact of provision and give evidence in support.
- When next reviewing the school Mission Statement, ensure that aims and practical objectives that emanate from it are clearly identified. The school may wish to seek external support in doing so to facilitate this process.
- Continue to implement the issues identified in the Self Evaluation Document. These include:
 - Arrange a series of visits or visitors to enhance the teaching of other faiths / religions;
 - Implement the Relationships and Sex Education policy across the school.

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	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