



ARCHDIOCESE OF LIVERPOOL

INSPECTION REPORT

ST. LEO'S AND SOUTHMEAD CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL (SERVING THE COMMUNITY)

WHISTON

Inspection Date Tuesday 30th January 2018

Inspectors Mrs Julie Rourke Mrs Angela Williams

Unique Reference Number 104475

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

Type of School Catholic Primary (Serving the Community)

Age range of pupils 3-11

Number on roll 192

Chair of Governors Cllr. Pauline Kelly

Headteacher Mrs Jeanette Grundy

School address Lickers Lane
Whiston
L35 3SR

Telephone number 0151 477 8410

E-mail address jeanette.grundy@knowsley.gov.uk

Date of last inspection 29th January 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

- St. Leo's and Southmead school is a smaller than average sized Catholic Primary School situated in Whiston, Knowsley serving the parish of St. Leo's.
- There are 192 children on roll of whom 115 are baptised Catholic, 29 come from other Christian denominations and 3 from other faith or religious traditions. Forty-five children have no religious affiliation.
- There are 10 teachers in the school. Six are baptised Catholic. Ten teachers teach Religious Education. Four teachers have a suitable qualification in Religious Education.
- Since the last inspection there has been no significant change in personnel.

Key for inspection grades

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

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OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

St. Leo's and Southmead Catholic Primary School (Serving the Community) 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 St. Leo's and Southmead understand their mission and know how to live it out. They were fully involved with its evaluation. On the day of inspection, a child remarked, *'It makes you grow and become a better person in your own different ways.'*
- 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. Pupils take part in a variety of after school clubs which allows access to the *Children's University*.
- Pupils enthusiastically embrace the demands that membership of a Catholic school, serving the community, entails. They accept their responsibilities and as a result, they regularly attend Governor meetings, become prefects and pupil champions.
- Pupils enjoy promoting the Catholic Life and mission of the school. The school choir performs at a variety of community events as well as at the local *Willowbrook Hospice*. They raise funds for a variety causes including, *Marie Curie*, *Shoe Box Appeal* and hold annual *Good Shepherd* sponsored events. They are alert to the needs of others and seek justice for all within and beyond the school community.
- 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. The school is a pioneering school for the *Anne Frank Programme*. Children have trained as ambassadors, guiding parents and visitors around an Anne Frank exhibition and developing their awareness on issues of prejudice and discrimination.
- Pupils value and respect the Catholic tradition of the school and its links with the parish community. They are involved with reading Scripture, sharing their own written prayers, performing hymns and role play at a variety of masses held in the parish.
- Pupils value links with the Archdiocese, such as the recent celebrations for the fiftieth anniversary of Liverpool Cathedral. Before children leave school, they will have fulfilled an *Exit Profile*. They all experience visiting the two cathedrals in Liverpool, museums, art galleries and art exhibitions as part of a cultural programme.
- Pupils respond well to the many opportunities the school provides for their personal support and development. A learning mentor works closely with the youngest children and their families. This builds relationships as they begin school and then throughout their time at school if needed.

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 is a clear and inspiring expression of the educational mission of the Church.
- The whole school community fully embraces the mission statement which is revised regularly.
- The school environment reflects its mission and identity through concrete and effective signs of the school's Catholic character. There are many vibrant displays and a large outdoor installation which has been used creatively for prayer. It has been used for, remembrance with poppies, remembering the Holocaust with butterflies and raindrops for CADOD. The well-presented school ensures that children and their families are given the best possible surroundings.
- 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. Staff ensure children in their care feel part of a loving school family. A few tissues, a chocolate and a teabag are thoughtfully presented to families whose dropping children are beginning school. This small act of kindness, is an example of how the school embraces all, into their loving and caring community.
- Staff promote high standards of behaviour throughout the school and provide outstanding opportunities for the spiritual and moral development of all pupils.
- 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.
- The school offers prayer opportunities for staff 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 and have reflection days, for example on revising the mission statement.
- The Relationships and Sex Education programme, *Journey in Love*, is beginning to be delivered across the school, celebrating Catholic teachings and principles. The school has recognised the need to embed a revised policy and to have regular consultation with governors, staff and parents and identifying where there are links with other areas of the curriculum.

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.
- The school's leadership is deeply committed to the Church's mission in education. Leaders are energised by the task and are a source of inspiration for the whole community. The development of the Catholic Life of the school is viewed by leaders and governors as a core leadership responsibility.
- The Parish Priest, Governors, the headteacher and senior leaders are highly 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 highly significant contribution to the Catholic Life of the school. They are fully involved in the schools' evaluation and are ready to challenge as well as support where necessary.
- The Governors are immersed in school life and are linked to classes throughout the school and the pupils regularly write to them to inform them of class events. Governors also volunteer for classroom support.
- Continuous Professional Development focusing on the Catholic Life of the school occurs and is effective. The staff understand and live out the mission statement. Staff share its purpose and are keenly involved in shaping and supporting it. One member of staff commented, '*We are a loving, caring faith community with a clear vision.*'

- The provision for the Catholic Life of the school is given the highest 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.
- The schools' new Self Evaluation Document contains outstanding evidence throughout and has planned improvements to further enhance the Catholic Life of the school. This document can be populated further with the evidence outlined in this report.
- Parents and carers are kept fully informed of Catholic Life events in school. Parents questionnaires showed that they are overwhelmingly happy with the Catholic values of the school. The school website has a wealth of information and newsletters reflect a variety of events. The headteacher takes great care and attention to ensure its readers know how she and school staff appreciate all in the school community, as well as, a closing message from, '*A very happy, proud Headteacher.*' Another example of embracing and encouraging a loving and caring community.
- The school provides outstanding links to engage all parents. There are home visits for Nursery children, *Stay and Play* workshops, family learning workshops and a parental library.
- The school is enthusiastic in its response to Archdiocesan policies and initiatives and actively promotes them throughout the school, including, the Year of Faith, Year of Mercy, the upcoming Eucharistic Congress and Relationships and Sex Education in a Catholic context.

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 good with outstanding features.
- Pupils, from their varied starting points, make good 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.
- Pupils concentrate well, have an understanding of how well they are doing, of what they need to do to improve and can articulate how they have made progress.
- Pupils approach their lessons with great interest and enthusiasm. Pupils enjoy challenging activities and respond well to opportunities which extend their learning. Behaviour in lessons is excellent because pupils enjoy Religious Education and disruptions in lessons are unusual.
- There are excellent procedures in place for tracking pupil progress. The school provides detailed analysis from the data gathered and actions are made. This data could now be used to group children for Religious Education, which would support differentiation.
- The school has identified that they are aiming for a consistent improving trend in their data and have set appropriate targets.
- Formal assessment is collated well with examples of moderated work. The school would benefit from cross moderation of pupils work to encourage further expectations for higher levels of attainment.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education is good.
- Teachers plan lessons well and at times take into account driver words for differentiation. They plan a range of creative activities and evaluate lessons very well. Driver words can continue to be effective when used to differentiate for Religious Education groups.
- They use time effectively to maximise learning opportunities in lessons and across sequences of lessons.
- A wide range of appropriate teaching strategies are employed, including; paired discussions, individual and collaborative work, some use of working walls, consistent praise and affirmation. Consequently, pupils are motivated and sustain good levels of concentration.
- Teachers carefully observe and skilfully question during lessons in order to adapt tasks and explanations, thus maximising learning for every pupil. They evaluate how well the children are doing throughout lessons, giving pupils confidence in their work.
- In some lessons observed, teachers used their questioning to encourage considerate, thoughtful responses. At times children's responses were exceptional. In a topic exploring special meals one child responded, *'All of your heart spreads out to everybody on special days.'*
- Questioning was used well to include key vocabulary. Plenaries were used as an opportunity not only to reflect on learning, but to develop pupils' understanding, challenge their thinking and linking faith to life.
- Teaching is good, pupils are encouraged and enjoy learning. They make good progress in lessons and over time. This can continue to improve by differentiating an activity using the driver words. Driver words can also be used in questioning and through working walls to encourage familiarity of them with the children.
- Teaching Assistants are highly effective in observation, intervention and in the support and care they give to pupils.
- Pupils have the opportunity to record their work in a variety of creative ways. Marking is supportive and affirming. There is some evidence of developmental marking. Children's work is presented well, and each work book has a mission statement bookmark attached.
- Marking can continue to develop by using the driver words within learning objectives, when commenting on pupils work and when giving challenges.

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 in each key stage.
- 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 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' and governors' 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. This can be further improved by ensuring that there are clear strategic actions resulting from monitoring.

- The curriculum leaders for Religious Education, one of which is also the deputy headteacher, have worked well as a team to ensure that all new Archdiocesan initiatives are in place and keeping staff informed. They have a clear vision for Religious Education and are keen to keep moving forward.
- The subject leaders are part of a cluster of local Catholic schools who meet regularly to discuss and support leading Religious Education and share outstanding practices.
- Evidence is detailed, collated and organised excellently. The subject is strongly led 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.
- The Religious Education governor meets with the subject leaders, is fully informed of the standards across the school and supports monitoring. She is also an active parish member which provides great links for the school.
- Leaders and governors can continue to develop their outstanding practices by imaginatively and thoughtfully planning Religious Education to meet the needs of different groups of pupils. They should now look towards using pupils prior learning and creatively structure each key stage to enhance their progress.

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, children gathered in quiet, suitable environments ready for prayer. Collective worship was well planned, and pupils were fully involved appropriate to their age and stage of development. They listened to music and Scripture and were invited to reflect on what they had heard. Beautiful PowerPoints enabled further contemplation and pupils sang and prayed in response. Go forth messages were clear and enabled the children to spread the message that they had heard.
- Pupils regularly prepare and lead worship with confidence and a degree of independence. In conversations with older pupils on the day of inspection, pupils were enthused by their worship. They are thoughtful in their planning of liturgy. Other pupils are engaged by the worship opportunities planned by their peers.
- Subject leaders gather children's examples of planning worship in a beautifully presented portfolio.
- There are many 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.
- St. Leo's and Southmead is an inclusive prayerful community with a deep respect for one another. The school is keen to continue developing pupils' participation in worship and are looking to introduce further creative opportunities for prayer.

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.
- Relevant staff understand the Church's liturgical year, seasons and feasts and ensure that pupils have a variety of experiences of the Church's liturgical life.
- Younger pupils are partnered with older pupils as prayer partners. They regularly use the schools' 'Prayer Pod' for independent prayer.
- Collective Worship has a purpose, message and direction. The themes chosen for worship reflect an outstanding understanding of the liturgical seasons and the Catholic character of the school.
- Collective Worship has been given a high priority in terms of planning, evaluating and resourcing. The school along with the Parish Priest creates and leads a yearly timetable of liturgical events. Pupils are supported in how they participate in worship.
- The school is regularly invited to Mass at the local church and celebrate along with parents, carers and parishioners.
- 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 an outstanding understanding of the purpose of Collective Worship. The school is keen to develop and further a wide variety of methods and styles of prayer.

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 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 outstanding practice for staff and pupils. They promote pupils' planning and leading Collective Worship.
- They have an outstanding 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 embedded and is supporting worship across the school.
- 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 with a revised policy, regular consultation to governors, staff and parents and identifying where there are links with other areas of the curriculum.
- Continue to improve Religious Education standards by:
 - using tracking data to inform planning and enabling differentiation, using driver words for Religious Education groups;
 - continuing to develop teaching and learning by using driver words to differentiate an activity, use on working walls and in questioning.
 - using the driver words when providing developmental marking; commenting on pupils work and giving challenges.
- Continue to develop Collective Worship by:
 - creating further, high quality experiences to inspire and develop the spiritual and prayer life of 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	1

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education	2
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education	2
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