

Catholic Schools Inspectorate inspection report for **St. Laurence's Catholic Primary School**

URN: 104461

Carried out on behalf of the Most Rev. Malcolm McMahon, Archbishop of Liverpool on:

Date: 18th - 19th January 2023

Overall effectiveness

The overall quality of Catholic education provided by the school.....

1

Catholic life and mission (p.3)

How faithfully the school responds to the call to live as a Catholic community at the service of the Church's educational mission.....

1

Religious education (p.5)

The quality of curriculum religious education.....

1

Collective worship (p.7)

The quality and range of liturgy and prayer provided by the school.....

1

The school is fully compliant with the curriculum requirements laid down by the Bishops' Conference

✓

The school is fully compliant with all requirements of the diocesan bishop

✓

The school has responded to the areas for improvement from the last inspection

Fully

Summary of key findings

What the school does well.

- The whole school community lives out the Catholic life and mission of St. Laurence's. They 'develop their gifts and talents for the good of all'.
- Staff and governors, led by an inspirational headteacher, have high expectations in all areas of Catholic life, religious education and collective worship, so that pupils at St. Laurence's receive the very best in Catholic education.
- Pupils demonstrate excellent manners, they are socially mature, kind, caring and helpful. Their behaviour is exemplary. They show Gospel values through their actions.
- Staff have the very highest regard for the pastoral care of pupils and their families.
- Teachers and supporting adults have excellent subject knowledge, which enriches teaching and learning in religious education.

This Catholic Schools Inspectorate inspection was carried out under canons 804 & 806 of the code of canon law. For maintained schools and academies in England it fulfils the statutory requirements of s.48 of the Education Act 2005. For maintained schools and academies in Wales it fulfils the statutory requirements of s.50 of the Education Act 2005.

What the school needs to improve:

- Enable pupils to take a leading role in responding to Catholic Social Teaching;
- Quality-assure assessment judgements through external moderation, and use the outcomes to further raise standards of attainment in religious education,
- Further enrich the outstanding practice in collective worship by developing a wider range of prayer styles and provision of prayer spaces for pupils to use independently.

Catholic life and mission

How faithfully the school responds to the call to live as a Catholic community at the service of the Church's educational mission.

Catholic life and mission key judgement grade:.....

1

Pupil outcomes

The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

1

Provision

The quality of provision for the Catholic life and mission of the school

1

Leadership

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

1

The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school is outstanding.

Pupils understand, embrace and clearly articulate the mission of St. Laurence's, and can explain how they, 'develop their gifts and talents for the good of all'. They take great personal responsibility for caring for their school, their local community and the wider world. They understand how to share the Gospel values each day. Pupils think deeply about how they can support others, for example with school council and pupil leadership teams, Bully Busters, Mini Vinnies and through the many charities which they actively support. They love their school community and describe it as a 'united family'. Together, they live out their core school values of love, justice and respect. Pupils take great pride in the roles they play in their locality, through litter picking and through the Kirkby Child initiative. Pupils show a deep respect for themselves and others. They recognise their uniqueness and understand that all are made in the image and likeness of God. This is celebrated throughout all aspects of their school life and demonstrated through their exemplary behaviour.

The quality of provision for the Catholic life and mission of the school is outstanding.

The Mission Statement of St. Laurence's is regularly reviewed. It is known and understood by all. Staff embrace and live out the Catholic mission of St. Laurence's every day, ensuring that Christ is central to all aspects of school life. Adults are exemplary role models, who go above and beyond to provide a joyful and happy, inclusive community, where the highest level of pastoral care is at its heart. Staff know the needs of their wider school very well. They describe their community as 'family to us, because we are invested in their lives'. Several staff members are past pupils, who

have returned, because the school's Catholic ethos has impacted greatly on their lives. Staff are committed to supporting each other and relationships are very strong. There are beautiful displays, with well-presented photographs, scripture quotes and high-quality work from pupils, all around the school. These reflect, communicate and celebrate the school's mission. Everyone is welcome at St. Laurence's, where the presence of those of various cultures and beliefs is understood and celebrated.

The provision for Relationships, Sex and Health Education is well-planned and mapped out. The programmes 'Journey in Love' and 'All are Welcome' are well-embedded and these enable pupils to celebrate their own uniqueness and to grow spiritually and morally. These resources are carefully selected to ensure that they are firmly rooted in the teaching of the Church. There are many holistic opportunities for personal growth and development, which pupils can confidently explain and discuss.

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic life and mission of the school is outstanding.

All leaders, including governors, embrace this as a core responsibility, ensuring that Christ is at the heart of this Catholic school. Governors describe the Catholic mission as, 'an umbrella over the whole school'. They promote the bishop's vision for the diocese and actively participate in services offered, for example, attendance at training and development opportunities with other Catholic schools. School leaders have a full knowledge and understanding of the whole curriculum and how it is taught, with Religious Education at its core. All policies and procedures reflect the Catholic identity of St. Laurence's. Consequently, decisions are made in the best interests of those in greatest need, pastorally, academically and financially. Plans have started for a return to class Masses and visits to the church, in-line with the well-established celebrations and practices of pre-covid times. The headteacher and parish priest go the extra mile in providing practical support for their parish families where it is needed.

Partnerships with parents are a strength and the school fully embraces the principle that parents are the first educators of their children. Parents overwhelmingly value this supportive and joyful school community, which ensures their children are happy and safe. The majority of the parents understand the school's Catholic mission and are supportive of it. A parent stated that, 'this school is amazing at everything it does, teachers are kind and compassionate'.

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade:.....

1

Pupil outcomes

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education.....

1

Provision

The quality of teaching, learning, and assessment in religious education.....

1

Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor, and evaluate the provision for religious education.....

2

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education is outstanding.

Pupils develop secure knowledge, skills and understanding in religious education. They make strong progress from low starting points on entry to the school. Their attainment is in line with other core subjects by the time they leave. Strong and consistent learning increasingly enables pupils to reflect spiritually and think morally and ethically about their lives. They know what it means to behave in a religious way, and this shapes their words and actions. Pupils speak articulately, using good vocabulary to describe what they have learned in religious education. They are inquisitive and curious, which is shown by their interest and the reflective questions they ask. They listen carefully to each other, work co-operatively and stay on task, when working independently. Pupils are very proud of their beautifully presented work in their books and on display around the school. They have high expectations of themselves. Older pupils use mind maps to self-evaluate their learning and progress and they respond to marking and feedback, which further deepens their learning. It is evident that pupils greatly enjoy their religious education lessons. One parent said that: 'my child is happy when talking about what he has done in his RE lessons'.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in religious education is outstanding.

Teachers and supporting adults have a high level of confidence when teaching religious education. Their subject knowledge, detailed planning, excellent resources and preparation for lessons ensure excellent teaching across the whole school. Skilled questioning, clear explanations and recapping of previous learning all contribute to effective learning over time, for all pupils. Year group teachers plan together and reflect on lesson outcomes, this enables them to plan subsequent lessons, in which all levels of ability are catered for. Teaching assistants are skilled in

supporting learning, using the adaptations that are carefully planned for them. Celebration of effort leads to good levels of motivation from pupils. Teachers provide space and time for pupils to respond and reflect on the feedback provided orally and through marking and this is in line with the age and stage of development of each pupil.

One parent stated, 'My son is taught and encouraged to follow his spiritual and cultural development at school. The teachers are amazing, how they deliver the curriculum, especially around religious education and the (other) core subjects.'

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for religious education is good.

The school's religious education programme is a faithful expression of the *Religious Education Directory*. The Liverpool Archdiocesan required programme for religious education, 'Come and See; is fully implemented and embedded. The headteacher, who takes responsibility for religious education, has an inspiring vision. She has high expectations for excellence in religious education. This drive and ambition is shared by governors who are well informed and involved in the monitoring and evaluation of religious education. The link governor for religious education and the chair of governors are frequent visitors to the school. The subject leader carries out regular and rigorous monitoring, using the Archdiocese monitoring pack and teachers receive detailed feedback following these activities. This continual cycle is used effectively to raise standards in teaching and learning. However the standards of attainment in religious education, whilst good, do not fully match the tracking data from assessments of pupils' work. Standards of attainment in pupils' books and in classrooms are much higher than the tracking suggests. The school would benefit from external moderation with other schools to improve the accuracy of judgements.

Collective worship

The quality and range of liturgy and prayer provided by the school.

Collective worship key judgement grade:.....

1

Pupil outcomes

How well pupils participate in and respond to the school's collective worship

1

Provision

The quality of collective worship provided by the school

1

Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for collective worship

1

How well pupils participate and respond to the school's collective worship is outstanding.

Pupils immerse themselves in the special times provided for prayer and liturgy. They are very respectful and reverent as they gather. Pupils respond sensitively to well-chosen themes, with empathy and deep understanding. They reflect in silence and join in with a variety of ways of praying which includes traditional prayers. Pupils can describe the Church's liturgical year and make links between scripture readings and the way of life God expects. Their worship together inspires pupils to go forth and to help change the world. They cited being inspired by Martin Luther King about how to make the world a better place. Class worship is creatively led by pupils, particularly in upper key stage 2. Pupils enjoy planning prayer and liturgy. They prepare thoughtful displays with drapes, candles, crosses, bibles, artefacts and flowers. They lead worship very well and evaluate its impact. Pupils select themes which reflect current work covered through 'Come and See' or from the school values of Love, Justice and Respect. Pupils personal experiences of awe and wonder, are clearly seen in their faces.

The quality of collective worship provided by the school is outstanding.

Gatherings for collective worship and routines of prayer are an integral part of daily life at St. Laurence's. Staff are inspiring role models of good practice for pupils and each other, as they sensitively create the atmosphere in which prayer and liturgy can take place. Teachers offer a range of ways of praying. They are creative in providing worship experiences for pupils of all ages. For example, there are the youngest children, who explore the uniqueness of each other, with awe and wonder inspired by snowflakes; whilst older pupils explore the themes of tolerance and diversity. Teachers support pupil prayer leaders very well, knowing when to carefully intervene. Appropriate themes are selected which are in line with the Church's liturgical year or inspired by

the school's mission statement and values. Key stage assemblies are led by senior leaders and provide a rich source of inspiration for the whole school community. The headteacher meets with the parish priest to discuss liturgical plans, together with plans for the re-introduction of class Masses and for Sacramental Preparation. Parents are invited to year group prayer and liturgy. Their most recent invitation was to participate with Year 2 and Year 5. One parent commented that, 'we are regularly invited into school Masses and liturgies. My daughter is part of a collective worship group and helps to write prayers. She really enjoys doing this'.

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for collective worship is outstanding.

Policies and procedures for prayer and liturgy have recently been reviewed and updated and all staff have received training through the Archdiocese and from the very committed headteacher. The levels of pupil leadership skills and the development of progression in prayer are understood by leaders and there is a clear strategy for further development. Indeed, training and professional development is given high priority, as is the monitoring and evaluation of collective worship. Staff receive regular feedback to support the continued enrichment of their practice. There is an expectation from everyone that prayer is at the heart of this school. Training days and governing body meetings begin with prayer and liturgy for the adults present, and this is greatly valued. Leaders plan out a calendar for the liturgical year, which includes holy days, scripture, themes inspired by the school's value of the month, local community needs and wider world initiatives. Time and resources are invested in the development of this important area.

The link governor for Religious Education is a frequent visitor to St. Laurence's. Together with senior leaders, he has observed prayer and liturgy. He is inspired to see the reverence of pupils and their dedication to planning and leading worship. There is a commitment from leaders and governors to constantly self-evaluate and to invest financially in resources for collective worship. The highest priority is given to collective worship at St. Laurence's.

Information about the school

Full name of school	St. Laurence's Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	104461
Full postal address of the school	Leeside Avenue, Southdene, Kirkby Liverpool, L32 9QX
School phone number	0151 546 4733
Name of head teacher or principal	Mrs Sarah-Jane Carroll-McKevitt
Chair of governing board	Mr. John Holmes
School Website	www.stlaurences.co.uk
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	Not applicable
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age-range of pupils	3 – 11
Trustees	Archdiocese of Liverpool
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	26 November 2014
Previous denominational inspection grade	Outstanding

The inspection team

Mrs Christine Mason	Lead inspector
Mrs Julie Littler-Shire	Team inspector
Name of inspector	Lead/team
Name of inspector	Lead/team

Key to grade judgements

Grade	England	Wales
1	Outstanding	Excellent
2	Good	Good
3	Requires improvement	Adequate and requires improvement
4	Inadequate	Unsatisfactory and in need of urgent improvement