



# 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 serving the community and the parish of St. Leo's.
- There are 209 children on roll of whom 102 are baptised Catholic, 32 come from other Christian denominations, and 75 from other faith or religious traditions.
- The headteacher and Religious Education co-ordinator were both in post at the last inspection. Since then a whole school subject review made Religious Education along with Literacy, Numeracy and Information Communication Technology an Intensive subject. This involves an additional member of staff to coordinate alongside the previous subject leader.
- There are 10 teachers working in the school of whom 8 teach Religious Education. Six are Catholic. Four teachers have a suitable qualification in Religious Education.

### Key for inspection grades

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

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Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school.

## Overall effectiveness:

St. Leo's and Southmead Catholic Primary School (Serving the Community) 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.
- Since the school was previously judged outstanding it has continued to improve and develop. This is due to the shared commitment of all in wanting the very best for those they serve. They are exemplary in the manner in which they undertake their work.
- Pupils know and understand the school's Mission Statement and are able to articulate in a manner far beyond their years the part they play within it. Bookmarks with a strap line from the Mission Statement are part of the children's workbooks and serve as a constant reminder of their mission. Children are actively involved in its evaluation throughout the school year. Pupil voice actively seeks out the opinions of the children.
- Pupils benefit from the many opportunities presented to them to know the life and teachings of Jesus and the traditions of the Catholic Church.
- Pupils have a strong sense of belonging to the school community and witness to their value and respect of each other and others in innumerable ways. Impressive displays all around the school reinforce this practice. This helps all feel welcome, accepted and respected.
- Pupils are encouraged to take on roles of responsibility in the school and wider community, for example, School Council, Active Play Leaders, School Prefects and a Pupil Management Group – all of whom contribute to the positive development of the school.
- Pupils embrace opportunities to meet their potential in all aspects of school life and are actively involved in developing the Catholic character of the school by, for example, supporting the Mayors Charity, Children in Need, Comic relief, Buckets of Love to name but a few. The school has links with a Canadian school also. This is 'a little school with a big heart!'
- Pupils benefit from activities such as participation in theme days and use of the prayer and well being rooms all of which nurtures their spiritual selves.
- Pupils have a good sense of right and wrong and apply this in their personal relationships. They take an increasing responsibility for themselves and their actions. Conversations with pupils indicate their excellent understanding that the need to respect and serve others.
- Pastoral care is outstanding and a real strength of the school. All adults working in school have this line from the Mission Statement at heart- 'A place to allow humanity to flourish'. The Learning Mentor has played a significant role in this development and has fostered positive attitudes in pupils.
- Children are quick to praise and acknowledge the contribution of others. They show a readiness to embrace, celebrate and share their lived experiences.
- Pupils are involved in service to the local faith and religious communities, the immediate neighbourhood served by the school and the wider community. They show

great respect and understanding of other faiths and religions and pupils and parents with different religious beliefs are outstandingly supported. This school truly serves the community.

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

- Pupils' achievement and enjoyment in Religious Education is outstanding.
- Pupils' attainment in Religious Education as evidenced in their written work overall is good. However, by the end of Key Stage 2 pupils are able to articulate a much deeper understanding of religious matters. Pupils 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 or faith background which is remarkable given the schools' intake.
- Outcomes for pupils with additional or special needs are outstanding. They are well supported throughout the school by additional adults in classrooms.
- Analysis of assessments undertaken provides evidence of pupils generally attaining the appropriate level for their age and stage of development in each key stage.
- Pupils are becoming increasingly more religiously literate. Their knowledge, understanding and skills are developing at least appropriately to their age or capacity and some exceed expectation. This trend has improved consistently since formal assessment began.
- 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, real enthusiasm, enjoyment excitement and excellent behaviour.
- Pupils are encouraged to work independently and collaboratively through a wide variety of stimulating tasks. Visual presentation, drama, song and story effectively reinforce learning and open questioning is used well to interest, stimulate and motivate pupils. Great use is being made of ICT e.g. by staff creating presentations of work undertaken and pupils for research.
- Pupils are eager to learn and improve their knowledge, understanding and skills as they become independent learners. Prompts are displayed so that children understand what independent learners can do.

### **How well pupils respond to and participate in Collective Worship**

- Pupils are outstanding in responding to and actively participating in Collective Worship.
- They act with reverence and are keen to participate in a variety of gatherings. They do so with deep thought and heartfelt response.
- Pupils' knowledge of prayer and liturgy is increasing. They are happy to share their personal prayers. Older children are becoming more confident at preparing and leading worship. This is developing throughout the school.
- 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.

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

- The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding in Religious Education and is consistently effective in ensuring that pupils are interested and engaged and make outstanding progress.
- Teachers display good subject knowledge and deploy a vast range of teaching styles to motivate and inspire pupils. Lessons observed provided evidence of high teacher expectation and very well motivated pupils who are actively engaged in their own learning.
- Outstanding teaching encourages pupils' enjoyment of and enthusiasm for Religious Education.
- Teachers take into account pupils' prior learning and ensure differentiated tasks when planning so that the work consolidates, builds and extends pupils' knowledge and understanding. This is a continued priority of the school.
- Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to work independently and collaboratively. Good use is made of time and resources. Teaching assistants are outstanding in the way they support pupils' learning.
- Overall marking is positive and interactive. Pupils are given good feedback to enable them to take the next steps in their learning. They are given opportunities to discuss their work and how to improve. Pupils' achievements are recognised, praised and valued and because of this every child flourishes.
- The assessment of pupils' work in Religious Education is excellent.
- The school has excellent assessment strategies which provide accurate and detailed information on the achievement of all the pupils. Teaching assistants make a record of verbal responses during lessons. This gives a much broader indication of children's knowledge and understanding.
- Teachers are able to identify how well pupils are achieving and effectively tackle underachievement. Targets are to be included on the cover page of each topic. This will help children to focus clearly on expectations.
- Teachers enable pupils to evaluate their own work. This should be undertaken regularly during plenary sessions using the appropriate driver words.

## **The extent to which the Religious Education Curriculum promotes pupils' learning**

- 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. The school has shown a great enthusiasm in using this new material.
- Of the total curriculum time 10% is allocated to Religious Education. This fulfils the requirements of the Bishops of England and Wales.
- Planning ensures full coverage of the Religious Education programme. Imaginative and well planned strategies are deployed to enrich pupils' learning. Teachers have shown tremendous creativity in tasks they provide for the children. This is a real strength.
- The school readily implements new curriculum developments as appropriate.

- Enrichment activities such as the World War 11 Day and work based on the Olympics have a hugely positive impact on the curriculum.
- The Religious Education curriculum provides outstanding opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral development and vocation.
- The curriculum is customised to meet the needs of groups and individuals as appropriate.
- Children have explored the beliefs and values of other faiths and religions. They have invited a visitor from the Jewish community to support their work. This helps to promote tolerance and respect for those who think differently.

### **The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school.**

- The Collective Worship provided is outstanding in reflecting the Catholic character of the school and taking into account the wide variety of 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. Opportunities are provided to enable full, active and conscious participation of the whole school community. This is a real strength.
- Children are enabled to pray formally and informally using a variety of prayer methods and styles.
- The school provides opportunities for staff to develop their skills in planning, leading and evaluating Collective Worship. Providing a termly planner with a variety of themes and approaches will support this further.
- The teachers provide the necessary resources and opportunities to help children to develop the skills necessary to plan, lead and participate in Collective Worship and to evaluate it effectively. They are most creative and imaginative in the ways they deliver different themes.
- Opportunities are provided for parents, carers, the local and wider Faith communities to participate in a variety of celebrations of the *Come and See* programme and the Church's liturgical year.

### **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 and developing the Catholic life of the school and show a deep understanding of and commitment to the Mission of the Church.
- The School's Mission Statement is reviewed regularly. It has been planned to review it again shortly. All who form part of the school community will be involved when this happens. The Mission Statement clearly directs and guides every aspect of school life and is a useful tool by which the school evaluates its effectiveness.
- Outstanding opportunities are provided for the staff and pupils to play an active part in the Catholic life and Mission of the school. They know, own and live out their Mission Statement.
- The Chair of Governors visits school twice weekly and observes and supports lessons and other activities. The school leadership recognises her as an extremely valuable resource advising, challenging and supporting. The link governor for Religious Education works in school weekly and also supports the parish sacramental preparation. This is hugely beneficial to the children.

- The parish priest is welcomed into school. He has supported liturgies and the curriculum enhancing children's understanding of the Church in many ways. He is fulsome in his praise of this exceptional school.
- Leaders, governors and managers are effective in the way they use monitoring data to evaluate the school's performance, celebrate and plan future improvements.
- The Self Evaluation Document provides evidence of the school's monitoring, searching analysis and self challenge.
- Their analysis provides a basis to celebrate the school's strengths and outlining areas for development.
- The school provides outstanding induction and in-service training to enable staff to further understand the Church's Mission in Education and play their unique part in it. Staff benefit from the opportunities provided to attend all relevant training delivered by the Archdiocese. The new coordinator has been part of this.
- The quality of Collective Worship is a priority for the school. It is effectively monitored and evaluated by leaders, governors and managers. An up to date policy is in place.
- A wide range of opportunities for spiritual and moral development are provided for staff and pupils. Every corner of the school provides evidence of this outstanding provision.
- Leadership at all levels respects difference, values diversity and ensures equal opportunities for all. The entire school takes to heart its' mission –'respecting all and living our values'.
- The Leadership is outstanding in the way it respects the religious diversity of all pupils and parents through prayer, worship and the liturgical life of the school.
- There are extremely positive relationships at every level within the school. A very happy and joyful environment is provided in which all clearly flourish.
- Parents are consulted regularly and involved in a variety of ways in the life of the school through questionnaires, newsletters, meetings and invitations to attend assemblies and liturgical celebrations throughout the year. They value what the school provides for their children and many personal letters of praise and gratitude were provided for inspectors to share.
- Governors are outstanding in fulfilling their responsibilities. They have effectively helped to shape the direction of the school through their commitment to ensuring they have the necessary skills to continue to support and challenge the school, ensuring positive outcomes for all pupils.

**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 monitoring and evaluating the provision for Religious Education for the school and in planning and implementing improvement for outcomes.
- Monitoring data is used effectively to evaluate the school's performance and plan for future improvements. Achievement and effort are celebrated at all levels.
- There is a programme for the monitoring and evaluation cycle.
- Teaching and learning is monitored regularly and appropriate feedback and support given as necessary. Good practice is shared and celebrated.
- Continuing professional development opportunities are provided for all.
- Assessment information is collated and tracked by the subject leader and shared with the leadership team, governors and parents.
- Formal assessment tasks are undertaken in line with Archdiocesan guidance.

- The subject leaders and headteacher are outstanding and exemplary in guiding Religious Education. They demonstrate a high level of care, vision, and commitment. They have high expectations for pupils and staff and are supportive and encouraging. New initiatives are introduced when appropriate. Good documentation guides and directs all staff in the delivery of the subject. This is updated as necessary.
- The Self Evaluation Document identifies targets, timescales and lines of accountability.

## **What the school needs to do to improve further?**

Continue to raise standards by:

- Greater differentiation as outlined in the school's own self evaluation;
- Including targets on the topic pages in children's books.

Improve the quality of provision and outcomes for Collective Worship by;

- Providing a theme planner for Collective Worship.

# 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

**Key to judgements: Grade 1 is outstanding, Grade 2 good, Grade 3 requires improvement and Grade 4 inadequate**