

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. Oswald's is an average sized Catholic Primary School situated in Padgate serving the parish of St. Oswald, Warrington.
- There are 213 pupils on roll of whom 193 are baptised Catholic, 10 come from other Christian denominations. There are 10 pupils who have no religious affiliation.
- There are 11 teachers of whom 8 teach Religious Education. Seven teachers are Catholic. Five teachers have a suitable qualification in Religious Education.
- There have been no significant changes to the staff since the last Section 48 Inspection.

Key for inspection grades

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

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Overall effectiveness:

St. Oswald's, Padgate is outstanding in providing Catholic Education.

Inspection Judgements

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

- Pupils are outstanding in the way in which they contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life at St. Oswald's.
- There is a shared vision for Catholic Education which is embraced by the whole school community and reinforced in the school's Mission Statement "*St. Oswald's is a Catholic School fully committed to offering excellence in education*" and the code of conduct which flows from it. It is known, owned and lived out by everyone in this most inclusive school community.
- Pupils have an excellent sense of belonging to the school. Its values and ethos are visibly reflected in the exemplary attitudes and relationships between all members throughout the school community. St. Oswald's is an oasis in the community whereby everyone feels safe and valued.
- The learning environment is vibrant and stimulating and enriches pupils' sensory experiences. Focal areas are lovingly maintained.
- Pupils are encouraged to take on roles of responsibility from their earliest years by becoming school councillors, eco environmentalists and buddies.
- In the wider community pupils act as ambassadors of the school during off site visits i.e. on visiting the Metropolitan Christ The King Cathedral in support of Nugent, residential visits and take part in the Padgate annual area walk of faith celebrations.
- Pupils are actively involved in developing the Catholic character of the school by the work they undertake in fundraising for numerous charities e.g. CAFOD, Nugent, Mission Together and Operation Christmas Child to name but a few and outreach to the local and wider community by collecting toys and winter clothes for refugees and asylum seekers.
- Pupils benefit from participation in annual residential outdoor activities. Year 6 pupils visit Condover Hall Residential Activity Centre in Shropshire.
- Pupils have an excellent sense of right and wrong and apply this in their personal relationships.
- Education for personal relationships has fostered very positive attitudes in pupils. The school has an up to date Relationships and Sex Education policy and uses the All That I Am resource to support this aspect of the curriculum.
- Pupils benefit from an extremely caring and nurturing environment.
- Pupils take an increasing responsibility for themselves and their actions and enthusiastically praise and celebrate each other's achievements at their 'star of the week' assemblies where certificates are awarded.
- Pupils embrace opportunities to meet their potential in all aspects of school life. They say that they are very proud of their school and are reflective and enquiring.
- Pupils are involved in service to the local Faith and religious communities by taking an active part in parish liturgies held at St. Oswald's Church and in school where Mass is celebrated.

- A key strength of the school is the work pupils undertake in support of Catholic social justice issues. They actively have recently started a 'Mini Vinnies' group to support the St. Vincent De Paul Society with causes in India and nearer to home.
- The school has an established garden which adds a different space for pupils and staff to work, reflect and pray plus it is a feature opened up to the local community to share. The community values it immensely and volunteers support the school with its upkeep.
- Pope Francis' letter 'Laudato Si' has touched the lives of everyone in the school community and they are passionate about caring for the environment and are committed to becoming green.
- The school has many global links with schools in South Africa and China. Reciprocal visits have been undertaken to enhance pupils' awareness of wider issues.

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education

- Pupils' achievement and enjoyment in Religious Education is outstanding.
- The school has embraced the Come and See programme and the needs of all the pupils are being met. The range of activities provided for the pupils are very effective in engaging and enthusing pupils from their earliest years.
- Pupils' attainment in Religious Education is outstanding. They make excellent progress in relation to their starting points and capabilities.
- There is no difference in performance between pupils of different gender.
- Outcomes for pupils with additional or special needs are outstanding and their support is very effective.
- Assessments undertaken to date and scrutiny of workbooks provides evidence of pupils generally attaining a very good level for their age and stage of development. There is a proportion of levelled work in Key Stage 2 which is generally over marked. This can be rectified by staff becoming more experienced at moderating work at the higher levels.
- Pupils are becoming increasingly more religiously literate as they become familiar with key words from the topics. Driver words from the Levels of Attainment are used routinely in lesson objectives. 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, positive attitudes and exemplary behaviour. This is a real strength of the school.
- Pupils work extremely well independently, in pairs and collaboratively in small groups.

How well pupils respond to and participate in Collective Worship

- Pupils are outstanding in responding to and participating in Collective Worship. They recognise prayer is a fundamental part of school life at St. Oswald's.
- Pupils are involved in planning, preparing and leading Collective Worship from their earliest years. They use the Archdiocesan prompt cards to support this.
- Pupils are extremely respectful, act with reverence and are keen to participate in a variety of gatherings.
- Pupils are becoming familiar with a variety of prayer styles and their knowledge of liturgy is increasing.

- Pupils 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 purposeful learning is outstanding in ensuring that pupils are interested, engaged and make excellent progress.
- Teachers' planning is effective in meeting the needs of the pupils and uses the language of the level descriptors i.e. driver words. This needs to be further developed into their teaching repertoire to enhance and challenge pupils further particularly during mini plenary sessions.
- Teachers take into account pupils' prior learning in Religious Education lessons. Pupils are very insightful when recalling previous lessons.
- Teachers display very good subject knowledge and deploy a range of teaching styles. On the day of inspection some outstanding teaching was observed.
- In some classes pupils are being challenged and inspired which enriches their enjoyment of Religious Education. This was particularly evident in a Key Stage 1 class where pupils sorted words and images in a challenging 'giving thanks' activity.
- Good use is made of time and resources e.g. interactive white board, Information Technology, God's and Church's Story, audio and visual media etc.
- The school is very effective in deploying teaching assistants to enhance lessons for those children which require additional support.
- Pupils are positively affirmed throughout their lessons and relationships are outstanding at every level.
- Marking is positive and written in the language of the level descriptors to support pupils' next steps. Effort and achievement are celebrated.
- The school has implemented assessment strategies which provide information on the achievement of all pupils.
- The school has built up a wealth of assessment evidence. This needs to be sorted into a portfolio of levelled exemplars to support staff when moderating pupils work and levelling future assessments in line with current Archdiocesan guidance.
- The tracking of pupils' work in Religious Education is in place and shows trends over time.

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

- The Religious Education curriculum is outstanding in promoting pupils' learning.
- The many community links both local and global have helped to promote the wider aspects of the subject.
- Staff and governors see Religious Education as the core subject and at the very heart of the curriculum.
- 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.
- Planning ensures full coverage of the Religious Education programme. Termly newsletters are provided for parents and carers and there is a wealth of information on the school website.

- The school implements new curriculum developments as appropriate and the programme is securely embedded across the school. Come and See promotes in pupils a real sense of engagement and enjoyment.
- Enrichment activities such as choir, netball, crafts, environmental and a range of multi-skill sports i.e. rugby and football have a positive impact on the curriculum.
- The Religious Education curriculum provides outstanding opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral development and vocation.
- Children have explored the beliefs and values of other faiths and religions; Judaism, Hinduism, Sikhism and Islam. The children have benefitted from outside visitors who shared information about their faith and religion. 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 by the school is outstanding in reflecting the Catholic character of the school and takes into account the variety of Faith backgrounds among the pupils.
- Collective Worship has a high profile and is central to the prayer life of St. Oswald's.
- Collective Worship plays a key part in meeting the Spiritual needs of this worshipping community.
- Opportunities are provided to enable full, active and conscious participation of the whole school community.
- Pupils are enabled to pray formally and informally using a variety of prayer methods and styles.
- 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.
- The parish priest is a regular visitor to the school and is fulsome in his praise of St. Oswald's. The priest presides at celebrations of Mass throughout the Church's liturgical year and supports in Religious Education lessons when it is practical to do so i.e. during the Baptism topic. One of the pupils is an altar server at Mass.
- Prayer bags are provided for pupils to take home and share with their families at key times during the Church year. During Advent this was supplemented by the travelling crib. This outreach has a very positive impact on the wider faith community.

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.
- The Headteacher is deeply committed to the Church's mission in education. She is energised by the task and is a source of inspiration for the whole school community. As a result staff and pupils' understanding of the school mission is outstanding. The leadership team share its purpose and are keenly and actively involved in shaping and supporting it.
- The aims and practical objectives derived from the Mission Statement, "*...fully committed to offering excellence in education*" and the Code of Conduct derived from it direct and guide all aspects of school life and are a useful tool by which the school evaluates its effectiveness. The school has recognised the need to fully review the

Mission Statement. This is a priority to ensure all current stakeholders understand the school's aims and objectives.

- Excellent opportunities are provided for the staff and pupils to play an active part in the Catholic Life and Mission of the school through prayer, raising awareness of those in need and charitable outreach.
- The Self Evaluation Document provides evidence of the school's monitoring, analysis and self challenge. It is a comprehensive document which guides the school very well.
- The school provides very good in-service training to enable staff to further understand the Church's Mission in Education and play their unique part in it. The Headteacher, supported by the governors, attended the Archdiocesan Rome Pilgrimage as part of Pope Francis' Year of Mercy celebrations.
- A range of opportunities for Spiritual and Moral developments are provided for all staff and pupils including attendance at Archdiocesan spirituality conferences, Collective Worship and opportunities to join in *Come and See for Yourself* at the beginning and 'Rejoice' celebrations at the end of each new topic.
- Leadership at all levels respects difference, values diversity and ensures equal opportunities for all.
- Prayer, worship and the liturgical life of the school reflects and respects the religious diversity within the school.
- There are positive relationships at every level leading to a welcoming, happy, safe and caring learning environment for staff and pupils.
- Governors are very well informed about Catholic Life at St. Oswald's and discharge their responsibilities in an appropriate manner. Together they have effectively helped to shape the direction of the school. They are committed wholeheartedly to the Catholic Life of the school and are actively involved in its daily life and in its monitoring and evaluation processes.
- The school supports the parish *With You Always* family catechesis sessions.
- There is a very active *Friends of St. Oswald's* group which supports the school by organising social and fundraising activities.
- The school offers an in-house early start reading club which is well attended.

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.

- The way in which leaders, governors and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education is outstanding.
- The Self Evaluation Document is a coherent reflection of the subject leadership teams monitoring, analysis and self challenge.
- Teaching and learning is monitored regularly and appropriate feedback and support given as necessary.
- Continuing professional development opportunities are provided for all staff including attendance at Archdiocesan In-service Topic days and subject leader days.
- Formal assessment tasks are undertaken in line with Archdiocesan guidance. The evidence generated needs to be built up into a portfolio of accurately levelled exemplars to support staff when moderating pupils work.
- The school tracks pupil progress in Religious Education and standards are very good but inaccurate at the higher levels. More rigorous moderation of assessments will provide a firm basis for accurate diagnosis of the school's strengths and areas for development.

- The link governor with responsibility for Religious Education is also the Chair of Governors. She is very proactive in supporting the subject leadership team in their role.
- The subject leadership team is outstanding in guiding Religious Education and Collective Worship. They are enthusiastic and committed to their role and are very well respected in the school.
- Excellent documentation guides and directs all staff in the delivery of the subject and new initiatives are introduced when appropriate. Since the last Section 48 Inspection the subject leadership team have led the implementation of the Come and See programme and has updated all the subsequent documentation and policies in light of the changes.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further develop the work undertaken in the Catholic Life of the school by:
 - undertaking as a priority a full review of the Mission Statement with all stakeholders. It is recommended that this is led by a member of the Christian Education Team.
- Raise the standards of attainment in Religious Education further by:
 - continuing to address the areas identified on the Self Evaluation Document.
- Further develop the work being undertaken in assessment, monitoring and tracking of pupils' progress by:
 - continuing to work with the Archdiocese to build on the existing moderation procedures in place and develop portfolios of levelled exemplars within school and across schools.

INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

How effective the school is in providing Catholic Education	1
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OUTCOMES FOR PUPILS

How good outcomes are for individuals and groups of pupils	
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

How effective the provision is for Catholic Education	
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

How effective leaders, governors and managers are in developing the Catholic Life of the School	
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