



## ARCHDIOCESE OF LIVERPOOL

### INSPECTION REPORT

### ST. JOSEPH CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

#### WITHNELL

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Inspection Date 4 July 2019

Inspectors Mrs. Pat Peel Mrs. Angela Paget

Unique Reference Number 119680

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

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Type of School Catholic Primary

Age range of pupils 4 - 11

Number on roll 101

Chair of Governors Mrs. Cath Jones

Headteacher Mr. Simon Lawman

School address  
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Withnell  
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Date of last inspection July 2014

## 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. Joseph's is a much smaller than average sized Catholic Primary School situated in Withnell serving the parish of St. Joseph.
- There are 101 children on roll of whom 62 are baptised Catholic, 19 come from other Christian denominations and 20 have no religious affiliation.
- There are six teachers in the school, four of which teach Religious Education. Five teachers are baptised Catholic. One teacher is currently undertaking the Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies.
- Since the last inspection a new Deputy has been appointed. She has recently undertaken the role of Religious Education subject leader alongside the Headteacher.

### Key for inspection grades

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

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# OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

St. Joseph's 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 at St. Joseph's. They know their Mission Statement, *'St. Joseph's family learn together with love and faith in Jesus, to become the people God calls us to be'* and subsequent motto derived from it, *'We work, We care, We pray, We share.'* They recognise their calling to live out Christian values in their lives as friends and followers of Jesus.
- Pupils show respect for themselves and others as made in the image and likeness of God. The behaviour of pupils is exemplary. They are kind and considerate to each other.
- In proportion to their years they show an ability to listen, to give thanks, to forgive and be forgiven. They are quick to congratulate others and have a good understanding of right and wrong.
- Pupils embrace the demands that members of the school community entail such as becoming prefects, dinnertime leaders, infant buddies, play leaders, school/sports councillors and eco warriors.
- They take a leading role in those activities which promote the schools' Catholic Life and mission both within school and in the wider community such as fundraising for numerous charities e.g. CAFOD, Nugent, MacMillan and the Shoe Box Appeal to name but a few. Within the locality they have supported the Chorley Foodbank collecting tins and supporting the Women's Refuge by collecting toys and books. Some children have supported the local cancer charity St. Catherine's Hospice by cutting their own hair. They are alert to the needs of others and seek justice for all.
- Pupils have benefitted from a visitor from CAFOD who introduced the 'Zero to Hero' Climate Change campaign. This has resulted in great home, school and parish initiatives to reduce their carbon footprint.
- Pupils value and fully participate in opportunities provided by the school including a range of during and after school clubs e.g. music and a range of seasonal sports including tri-golf, orienteering, basketball, gymnastics, football, netball and bikeability. They say that they enjoy taking part in many sports competitions.
- Pupils have participated in the 'Sing Together' concert at Blackburn Cathedral and performed at St. Georges Hall in Blackburn.
- Pupils take full advantage of the opportunities the school provides for their personal support and development they have a good sense of belonging. 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 begun Relationships and Sexual Education lessons within the context of a Christian understanding however this is in its infancy and needs further developing across the whole school to ensure coverage.
- Pupils across Years 3 to 6 have benefitted from the opportunity to stay on residential at the *Anderton Centre* in Rivington, Lancashire.

- Pupils 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. 'Animate' the Archdiocesan Youth Ministry group have worked with pupils from Years 4 to 6 in support of this.
- Pupils enjoy their weekly assemblies. Good work and behaviour are rewarded with 'shinies' which they collect and store up in a jar. When the jar is full pupils benefit from a whole school 'shiny jar treat'.
- Pupils highly value and respect the Catholic tradition of the school and its pastoral links with the Parish Priest, and the parish catechist and local parish community. Given the schools unique position of being situated underneath the church pupils are regularly involved with parish celebrations irrespective of their own faith commitments.
- Pupils benefit from Forest Fridays, the chance to experience, learn and grow in the outside spaces around school.
- Pupils highly value the time they spend with Muslim pupils from Valley Primary School in Bolton. They share reciprocal visits, working and playing together forging strong links between the two communities.
- Pupils have benefitted from links with Holy Cross Catholic High School. They are excellent ambassadors for the school with very high aspirations.
- Pupils have recently undertaken their own SYNOD questionnaire. Their contributions were valuable and thoughtful.

### **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 Mission Statement 'St. Joseph's family learn together with love and faith in Jesus, to become the people God calls us to be' is known and lived out by everyone in this small school community.
- Staff are fully committed to its implementation across the curriculum. They participate in school activities which reflect the Catholic Life and mission of the school.
- There is a real sense of community at all levels, evident in the quality of relationships and the centrality of prayer to the whole community.
- The school environment reflects its Mission and identity through concrete and effective signs of the school's Catholic character. The school has worked with an artist to produce high quality visual pieces to support St. Joseph's values and ethos.
- Staff promote very high standards of behaviour and are outstanding role models of mutual respect and forgiveness for pupils inside and outside of the classroom.
- The curriculum reflects a commitment to Catholic Social Teaching, to care for our common home and to the dignity of every human person through its fundraising, eco stewardship and numerous outreach opportunities. This is a real strength in the school.
- The school provides opportunities for the spiritual and moral development of all pupils and staff through prayer and continuous professional development opportunities such as attendance at Archdiocesan Headteacher residentials, Subject leader in-service days and retreats.
- Clear policies and structures are in place which provide outstanding levels of pastoral care for pupils and their families and there is an explicit and concrete commitment to the most vulnerable and needy in both policy and practice. The school roll has increased considerably in recent years due to the reputation the school has built up in providing outstanding care for its pupils. It works with numerous outside agencies to provide comprehensive care and support.
- The parish priest is a regular visitor to the school and presides at the celebration of Mass across the liturgical year. He is fulsome in his praise of the work of the school community.

- The school is equally attentive to the pastoral needs of members of staff and ensures that every member's needs are understood and catered for.
- The school supports the pupils and their families undertaking the *With You Always* Sacramental programme. The parish catechist supports pupils and families in many different ways, and this is highly valued.
- All the relevant documentation is in place and the school has made a commitment to support Relationships and Sex Education alongside Personal, Social and Health Education. This is an area the school has recognised needs to be further developed to embed it fully into the curriculum across the school year and begin mapping it out to show when and where it takes place alongside other curriculum initiatives i.e. Kidsafe.
- The school uses *Rainbows* a programme for supporting pupils who have suffered a loss or bereavement.
- The school provides both a breakfast and after school club throughout the year. This is popular and very well attended.
- The school has a very active Parent, Teacher and Friends Association they fundraise and socialise throughout the year at events such as fairs, bingo, quiz nights etc.

### **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 leadership team 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 provision for the Catholic Life of the school is given the highest priority by leaders. The school is using the new Self Evaluation Document and it is an accurate reflection of where the school is now. It is clearly and explicitly focussed on maintaining high quality experiences for all its members.
- Relationships at every level are outstanding in the school. Its Mission Statement describes St. Joseph's as a 'family' and the love and care shown across the school truly reflects that. The aims and objectives need updating to reflect explicitly 'how' the school lives them out in each of the areas.
- Leaders and governors have shown a commitment to training and further development of staff including a recent appointee. However, there is only one person who has begun the Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies. The Headteacher and Deputy must undertake this as a priority as it is commensurate with the roles they hold. Continuous Professional Development focusing on the Catholic Life of the school takes place.
- The school has developed successful strategies for engaging with parents and carers to the benefit of pupils. The school offers an open-door policy, sends out regular newsletters and has an up-to-date website. As a result, parents and carers have a very good understanding of the school's mission and are very supportive of it.
- There is a link governor with responsibility for Catholic Life. As Chair of Governors she visits the school regularly and undertakes her role effectively.
- The school responds well to Archdiocesan policies and initiatives and promotes the vision of the Archdiocese throughout the school. Some policies need to be standardised with 'appendices information' as they come up for renewal.

- A commitment has been made by leaders and governors to further enhance Equality and Diversity in the school by linking with Valley Primary School in Bolton. This enables pupils to engage with and experience other cultures first-hand and highly promotes mutual respect.
- Leaders and governors have made a commitment to further develop Relationships and Sex Education throughout the school alongside Personal, Social and Health Education.
- Leaders need to begin mapping out Relationships and Sex Education to show when and how this is being delivered across the whole school curriculum.

## **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 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. Pupils are aware of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life.
- During lessons and interviews pupils were very articulate and insightful about both their learning in Religious Education and aspirations for themselves and the school. They said that they enjoyed all that the school offered them.
- Pupils are actively engaged in lessons and are committed to improving their knowledge, understanding and skills to further develop as competent learners.
- Pupils concentrate well and understand how well they are doing. This can be improved even further by teachers and other adults using the language of the standards i.e. driver words routinely during lessons, to generate greater depth.
- Pupils approach their lessons with interest and enthusiasm. This was evident as pupils quickly settled to tasks and responded positively throughout.
- Pupils enjoy a range of activities and respond well to tasks which extend their learning when given the opportunity. Behaviour for learning is outstanding because pupils enjoy Religious Education and disruptions in lessons are unusual.
- Pupils have studied Judaism. Previously they have visited a Sikh Temple and a Mosque and had an Islamic visitor into speak with them to share his beliefs. This helps to promote tolerance and respect for those who think differently to themselves.
- The quality of pupils' current work, orally in class and written, is very good. Presentation in books is of a very high standard and pupils have a great pride in them.
- Pupils attainment, as indicated by teachers is good. Most pupils achieve at least good attainment using Archdiocesan statistical data analysis.
- Pupils' are undertaking formal assessment in line with Archdiocesan guidance and evidence kept.

### **The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education**

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education is outstanding.
- On the day of inspection there was some outstanding practice observed with nothing less than good.

- Teachers are very confident in their subject knowledge and have a very good understanding of how pupils learn. They have very high expectations for the pupils especially working with mixed age groups.
- Teachers employ a range of appropriate strategies, including individual, paired and collaborative work. Consequently, pupils are interested, motivated and concentrate extremely well in lessons. However, they need to provide much more opportunities for greater depth and challenge by using the driver words throughout lessons to target groups of children further.
- In books there is evidence of continuity in lessons and across sequences of lessons. However, pupils are not yet using *Rejoice* learning journals to record and celebrate all the work that the pupils have covered across lessons.
- In the best lessons observed teachers used pace and questioning techniques very well. However, there was limited open ended and adapted explanations using the language of the standards i.e. driver words catering for the needs of all pupils. This needs further development to become routine practice in all classes.
- High quality resources e.g. *Come and See* website, *God's and Church's Story*, audio and visual media are employed to engage pupils in their learning.
- Other adults are used effectively to optimise learning for pupils who need their intensive support.
- Evidence in books shows that marking is always positive, and some teachers use next steps effectively to move pupils on in their learning.
- Achievement and effort are celebrated immediately with 'shinies' leading to high levels of motivation from pupils. There was spontaneous applause in a class when a child was able to define the word 'pilgrimage'.
- Whole school assessment is being undertaken and evidence kept. There is a tracking system in place which outlines standards are very high across the school.

### **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 are ensuring that the Religious Education curriculum meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference.
- Since the last inspection the *Come and See* programme has been fully implemented across the school and all relevant documentation is embedded. Leaders need to ensure that Other Faiths and Religions are planned effectively in the autumn and spring term.
- Leaders and governors' self-evaluation of Religious Education is very good. It is an accurate reflection of assessment, tracking, monitoring, analysis and self-challenge which is informed by current best practice in Religious Education.
- Leaders and governors' have made a commitment to support the new subject leader in her role. She has begun to attend Archdiocesan in-service training to support planning, monitoring, evaluation and assessment of the subject. She has already attended a cluster meeting with other schools in the locality to support on-going teaching and learning.
- Whole school tracking directly linked to the changes to the interim standards in Religious Education will need to be in place for September. The data analysis must be shared at Governor meetings and more importantly the impact of them discussed regularly to raise standards further.
- There is a link governor with responsibility for Religious Education. As Chair of Governors she visits the school regularly and undertakes her role effectively. This will ensure that standards are shared regularly at governor meetings.

# 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 extended periods of silence and join in community prayer appropriately and with confidence.
- Evidence suggests pupils are involved in planning, preparing and leading worship with confidence and enthusiasm. Pupils commented that they really enjoy leading Collective Worship.
- Pupils routinely join in liturgy and make appropriate responses. These skills are well honed across the school.
- Pupils are not yet routinely evaluating Collective Worship, either as a leader or a participant. This needs to be further developed across the school.
- Pupils use a variety of approaches to prayer which includes scripture, religious artefacts, liturgical music and other forms of prayer.
- Pupils value and participate voluntarily in liturgy and worship. They say that they really enjoy these experiences.
- Pupils have a very good understanding of the Church's liturgical year, its seasons and feasts. They regularly celebrate together in school and at Mass as part of the wider parish community.
- Pupils have undertaken 'Stations of the Cross' in church during Lent with the help of the parish catechist.
- The experience of being a part of a praying community has a positive impact on the spiritual and moral development of pupils, irrespective of ability or faith background.

## 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.
- Prayer experiences and worship is given a high priority in the school and is timetabled accordingly.
- Staff keep Collective Worship record books. These are beautifully presented and provide evidence of a range of prayerful experiences, focuses and acts of going forth.
- Collective Worship is not currently being evaluated by pupils and staff either as a leader or participant and this needs to become routinely practised in the school.
- In some classes there is an over reliance on suggested idea/prompt cards for Collective Worship and these resources need to be withdrawn.
- Relevant staff have an excellent understanding of the Church's liturgical year, seasons and feasts and ensure that pupils have very good experiences of the Church's liturgical life.
- Opportunities are routinely planned in a manner that facilitates attendance by other adults associated with the pupils and the school throughout the liturgical year.
- The parish catechist leads the 'Rosary' once a week in school and at key times throughout the year.

- Parents and parishioners are welcomed to worship within the school community regularly on a Friday. This could be developed further through 'Rejoice' celebrations at the end of topics or 'Stay and Pray/ Pick up and Pray' opportunities being offered at the start or end of the school day.

### **How well leaders and 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 and governors know how to provide policies and guidelines to plan and deliver quality Collective Worship. A policy for Collective Worship is in place.
- Leaders and governors have an excellent understanding of the Church's liturgical year, seasons and feasts. They make these accessible to the pupils in a contemporary context.
- Leaders of Collective Worship within the school are appropriate models of good practice for staff and pupils. Pupils are enabled to facilitate the Collective Worship alongside the adult resulting in a meaningful, quality prayer experience for all.
- It is recommended that the school undertake Collective Worship training delivered by a member of the Christian Education Team to ensure that they are modelling best practice given the changeover of staff in the school.

## What the school needs to do to improve further

- Further develop the work being undertaken in Catholic Life by:
  - developing a clear set of aims and objectives for the Mission Statement which succinctly informs all practices within the school;
  - continuing to embed 'Journey In Love' lessons throughout the academic year to support Relationships and Sex Education;
  - further developing the curriculum map for Relationships and Sex Education to identify where it happens throughout the academic year and identify cross-curricular links.
- Further develop the quality of teaching and purposeful learning in Religious Education by:
  - ensuring teachers and other adults routinely develop the language of the standards i.e. driver words into their day to day repertoire to more accurately support pupils to achieve greater depth and challenge;
  - develop and begin to use a new tracking system which supports assessment, reporting and monitoring of Religious Education for the new interim standards in line with other core curriculum subjects.
- Further develop the work being undertaken in Collective Worship by:
  - undertaking Archdiocesan training for the whole staff in planning, leading and modelling quality Collective Worship.

# INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

## OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

|   |   |
|---|---|
| How effective the school is in providing Catholic Education | 1 |
|---|---|

## 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                            | 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 is good, Grade 3 Requires Improvement and Grade 4 Inadequate***