



ARCHDIOCESE OF LIVERPOOL

INSPECTION REPORT

HOLY CROSS CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

LIVERPOOL

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| Inspection Date | 13 March 2019 |
| Inspectors | Rev. D Melly Miss J Coughlan |
| Unique Reference Number | 104633 |

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 | 3-11 |
| Number on roll | 162 |
| Chair of Governors | Mr. S. McElroy |
| Headteacher | Mrs H Bannon |
| School address | Fontenoy Street Liverpool L3 2DU |
| Telephone number | 0151 236 9505 |
| E-mail address | ao@holycrossprimaryschool.co.uk |
| Date of last inspection | 7 May 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

- Holy Cross school is an average sized Catholic Primary School situated in Liverpool and mainly serving the parish of St Sylvester.
- There are 162 children on roll of whom 79 are baptised Catholic. One child is from another Christian denominations and 76 are from other faith or religious traditions. Six have no religious affiliation.
- There are 7 teachers baptised Catholic. Five teachers have a suitable qualification in Religious Education and a further five are currently studying for the Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies.
- Since the last inspection a New Religious Education co-ordinator has been appointed.

Key for inspection grades

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

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OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

Holy Cross school is outstanding 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. The Catholic Life of the school is outstanding which is amazing considering the percentage of children who are Catholic. All are valued, cared for and celebrated.
- Pupils appreciate, value and actively participate in the Catholic Life and mission of the school. They actively participate in Collective Worship and all, even those who are not Catholic, obviously enjoy the whole worship experience and gain a lot from it. Pupils also appreciate the regular Masses and liturgical celebrations. Worship Warriors are now becoming a significant part of the life of the school. The 'Smart School Council', the School Councillors and the Ambassadors and Cadets also contribute greatly. Pupils also work towards the 'Faith in Action Award'.
- Pupils participate in the school's evaluation of its Catholic Life and mission and are part of planning improvements to it. They have been involved in renewing the Mission Statement.
- Pupils show a respect for themselves and others as made in the image and likeness of God. The behaviour of all pupils is outstanding all of the time. They show an understanding of the need to forgive, be forgiven and have an excellent understanding of right and wrong.
- Pupils accept the responsibilities of living within a Catholic school community. As a result, they are regularly involved with those activities which promote the Catholic Life and mission of the school both within school, the parish and the wider community. They are aware of the needs of others and seek justice for others within and beyond the school community. They support the Roy Castle Lung Cancer foundation, CAFOD, Missio and the Good Shepherd.
- Pupils respond well to the opportunities the school provides for their personal support and development. Here the mindfulness groups and play therapy are very beneficial. As a result, all pupils are happy, confident and secure in their own stage of physical, emotional and spiritual growth.
- Pupils, appropriate to their age and capability, have an excellent understanding of loving relationships and sexual development within the context of a Christian understanding. The teaching of Relationships and Sex Education has recently been introduced and is working well.
- Pupils embrace a holistic approach to education, have an understanding of what it means to have a vocation and recognise the importance of using their gifts in the service of others.
- Pupils, including those who are not Catholic, value and respect the Catholic tradition of the school and its links with the parish community and the Archdiocese. Pupils recently took part in the Adoremus Poster Competition. One pupil won and had his poster published. As a result of all of this they respect and are involved with parish and Archdiocesan celebrations and activities. Pupils feel able to express a pride in their own religious and cultural identity and beliefs. One pupil said: 'This is a Catholic School where each is valued as an individual and made to feel part of the 'family' which respects everyone.'

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, 'A family living, loving and learning together through the light of Christ' clearly expresses the educational mission of the Church.
- Staff are extremely committed to its implementation across the curriculum and the whole of school life. They participate in school activities which reflect the Catholic Life and mission of the school, such as staff prayer, Come and See for Yourself and avail of Continuous Professional Development on Catholic Life especially that provided by the Department for Christian Education.
- There is a strong sense of community at all levels, evident in the quality of relationships and the centrality of prayer in the community. Prayer is at the heart of all that is done.
- The school environment reflects its mission and identity through obvious signs of its Catholic character. There is great love and laughter shared among all members of the community. The displays are outstanding as are the focuses for worship and other religious artefacts throughout the school. The learning environment, both in the school and the grounds, enhances the children's learning and development.
- Staff promote high standards of behaviour and are excellent role models of mutual respect and forgiveness for pupils.
- The curriculum reflects a commitment to Catholic Social Teaching, to care for our common home and the dignity of every human person.
- The school provides many opportunities for the Spiritual and Moral development of pupils and staff.
- The work that Fr. Richard does is very effective in supporting and promoting the Catholic Life of the school and is very much appreciated.
- Policies and structures are in place, which provide excellent pastoral care for the pupils, and there is a commitment to the most vulnerable and needy in both policy and practice.
- The school has a regard for the pastoral needs of staff and all members' needs are understood and catered for even their eating habits.
- Pastoral programmes, Personal, Social and Health Education and Relationships and Sex Education are planned, well taught and reflect Catholic teachings and principles.

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.
- Leaders and governors demonstrate a public commitment to the mission of the Church. They are well regarded as models of Catholic leadership by both staff and pupils. 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 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 and its Mission Statement.
- This leads to planned improvements to further enhance the Catholic Life of the school.
- Continuous Professional Development focusing on the Catholic Life of the school occurs and is valued and effective. As a result, staff understanding of the school's mission is outstanding. Staff are involved in shaping and supporting it.

- The school has strategies for engaging with parents/carers to the benefit of pupils, including those who might traditionally find working with the school difficult. As a result, parents/carers have an outstanding understanding of the school's mission and are supportive of it. They attend the Masses and other liturgical celebrations in good numbers.
- As leaders, the governing body is ambitious for the Catholic Life of the school and leads by example in the way it emphasises Catholic Life as a school improvement priority. Governors make an outstanding contribution to the Catholic Life of the school. They are very keen to promote the school's mission, are involved in its evaluation and are ready to challenge as well as support where necessary. The governors are obviously passionate about the school and willingly share their time and expertise.
- The school website promotes and celebrates the Catholic Life of the school in an outstanding manner.
- The school responds well to Archdiocesan policies and initiatives and promotes the Archdiocesan vision throughout the school.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education

- The extent to which pupils achieve in Religious Education is outstanding.
- Pupil's enjoyment of Religious Education is outstanding. Some pupils said that Religious Education gives them an opportunity to explore new ideas and learn from their mistakes. It also offers a chance to think about others. They all said that they love Religious Education.
- Pupils, from their varied starting points, make outstanding 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. They are given the opportunity to think very deeply about life and are very articulate in expressing their thoughts. As a consequence all 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. There is a range of marking within and across the key stages to enhance progress through challenge and praise.
- Pupils concentrate extremely well, have an understanding of how well they are doing and of what they need to do to improve. They 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 outstanding because teachers make it fun to learn and so pupils really enjoy Religious Education.
- Pupils' attainment, as indicated by teacher assessment, is outstanding.
- The quality of pupils' current work, both in class and in written work, is outstanding.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education is outstanding.

- Teachers consistently plan outstanding lessons linked to pupils' current assessment so that pupils learn well. They are very creative in their use *Come and See*. As a result of this teaching is mainly outstanding.
- Teachers are confident in their subject expertise and have an outstanding understanding of how pupils learn. It is a great tribute to the school that so many of the staff have undertaken the Catholic Certificate Religious Studies. As a consequence, pupils apply themselves well and make outstanding progress in lessons and over time. There is obvious progression as pupils move up the school.
- Teachers employ a range of appropriate strategies, including individual and collaborative work, talking partners, networking and role play. Consequently all pupils are highly motivated and concentrate well in lessons.
- Teachers ensure pupils are involved in evaluating how well they are achieving. This contributes to the outstanding progress and increases their confidence in making further improvements.
- Teachers manage time well to secure good learning in lessons and across sequences of lessons.
- Teachers use observation and questioning during lessons in order to adapt tasks and explanations, so improving learning for pupils.
- High quality resources, including other adults, music and Information and Communication Technology are used effectively to optimise learning for pupils. The virtual pilgrimage was a first and a mind-blowing experience. The quality of the Teaching Assistant's contribution in lessons is outstanding. Excellent use is also made of the outdoor area especially the garden
- Teachers communicate high expectations about Religious Education to their pupils, all of whom respond positively and with enthusiasm.
- High quality feedback and affirmation leads to the engagement, interest, achievement and progress of pupils.
- There is a rich culture of celebration in 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 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 outstanding assessment, tracking, monitoring, analysis and self-challenge which is informed by current best practice in Religious Education. This results in strategic action taken by the school which leads to outstanding outcomes in Religious Education.

- The current curriculum leaders for Religious Education have a clear vision for teaching and learning and have an outstanding level of expertise in securing this vision. These are used effectively to improve teaching and learning in Religious Education, resulting in teaching that is likely to be outstanding. Both are obviously very passionate about Catholic Life, Collective Worship and Religious Education. They are obviously well supported by the headteacher who shares this passion.
- Leaders and governors ensure that Religious Education is very well planned to meet the needs of different groups of pupils and to secure coherence across different key stages and phases.

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 regularly prepare and lead worship with confidence, enthusiasm and a degree of independence encouraged and helped by the Worship Warriors.
- Pupils use a variety of approaches to prayer which includes scripture, religious artefacts, liturgical music and other forms of prayer both traditional and contemporary.
- Pupils have an outstanding understanding of the Church's liturgical year, its seasons and feasts and the approaches this requires in the planning of appropriate worship opportunities.
- The experience of living and working in a faithful, praying community has a massive impact on the spiritual and moral development of all pupils, irrespective of ability or faith background. They have a well-developed sense of respect for those of other faiths. This is reflected in the manner in which all pupils participate in prayer and liturgy.

The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school

- The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school is outstanding.
- Collective Worship is obviously a major part of the life of the school and prayer is included in all school celebrations. They see it as part of the fabric of the school and praying together is part of the daily experience for pupils and staff beginning with the meet, greet and reflect at the start of the day.
- Collective Worship has a real purpose, message and direction.
- Collective Worship is obviously given a high priority in terms of planning, evaluating and resourcing. As a result, experience of Collective Worship is very engaging and all members of the community speak positively about these opportunities.
- Relevant staff have an outstanding understanding of the Church's liturgical year, seasons and feasts and ensure that pupils have an excellent experience of the Church's liturgical life. This is enhanced by the service Fr. Richard provides and which is very much appreciated.
- 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 and the wide variety of methods and styles of prayer.
- Opportunities are planned in a manner that facilitates attendance by other adults associated with the pupils and school and response to this invitation is excellent.

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 policies and guidelines to plan and deliver quality Collective Worship.
- They have an outstanding 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 outstanding practice for staff and pupils.
- They promote pupils' planning, leading and evaluating Collective Worship.
- Leaders offer regular professional development of staff incorporating liturgical formation and the planning for Collective Worship. Here good use has been made of the in-service provided by the Department for Christian Education and which has been greatly valued.
- Leaders and governors regularly review Collective Worship as part of their self-evaluation processes.

What the school needs to do to improve further

- Raise the standards of attainment in Religious Education further by:
 - continuing to address the areas identified on the Self Evaluation Document.

INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

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| How effective the school is in providing Catholic Education | 1 |
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CATHOLIC LIFE

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| 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

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| 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

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|---|---|
| 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