



# ARCHDIOCESE OF LIVERPOOL

## INSPECTION REPORT

## ST. MICHAEL'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

### LIVERPOOL

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Inspection Date                      5<sup>th</sup> December 2017

Inspectors                              Mrs Julie Rourke  
   Mrs Maureen Hillsdon   Mr Andy Cocker   Mr David Ashley

Unique Reference Number    104656

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                        379

Chair of Governors                Mrs Jeanette Riley

Headteacher                         Mrs Alyson Rigby

School address                        Guion Street  
   Kensington  
   Liverpool  
   L6 9D

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Date of last inspection            4<sup>th</sup> December 2012

# 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. Michael's Catholic Primary is a larger than average sized Catholic Primary School situated in Kensington, Liverpool serving the parish of St. Michael's, Sacred Heart and the wider surrounding area.
- There are 379 children on roll of whom 205 are baptised Catholic, 83 come from other Christian denominations 77 from other faith or religious traditions and 14 with no religious affiliation.
- There are 24 teachers in the school. 15 are baptised Catholic. Seventeen teach Religious Education. Nine teachers have a suitable qualification in Religious Education.
- Since the last inspection a new headteacher has been appointed and a new subject leader is in post.

### Key for inspection grades

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

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# OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

St. Michael's Catholic Primary 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.
- Pupils at St. Michael's are inspired by their mission, *'With Jesus we can achieve what we dream and believe.'* They contribute to the school's evaluation of its mission. They live its clear message fully and on the day of inspection one child commented, *'If we live it we are a happy school.'*
- Pupils show a deep respect for themselves and others as made in the image and likeness of God. The behaviour of pupils is exemplary. In proportion to their years they show an outstanding ability to listen, to give thanks, to forgive and be forgiven. They are also quick to celebrate the achievement of others.
- Pupils enthusiastically embrace the demands that being members of the school community entails, such as, becoming prefects, school councillors and class monitors.
- 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, for example, CAFOD, Children in Need and Red Nose Day. They are alert to the needs of others and seek justice for all and regularly respond to any disasters that affect the lives of their global neighbours. Pupils recognise the importance of serving others.
- Pupils value and fully participate in opportunities provided by the school, including a range of after school clubs such as, choir, sports, cookery, art and dance. The school supports outdoor educational visits to Wales and Crosby Hall Educational Trust. The school is keen to further opportunities for pupils to take part in retreats to enhance their emotional and spiritual growth.
- Pupils value and respect the Catholic tradition of the school and its links with the parish community. They are regularly involved with parish and Archdiocesan celebrations irrespective of their own faith commitments, for example, at Harvest, St. Michael's Feast Day and Holy Week. They help to prepare, plan and lead celebrations.
- Pupils are confident in expressing pride in their own religious and cultural identity and beliefs. Pupils have taken part in a National Language Celebration to gain insights into other cultures and communities.
- Pupils take full advantage of the many outstanding opportunities the school provides for their personal support and development which is a strength of the school. A specialist nurture group within school ensures opportunities for social, emotional and learning needs are met. The school embraces their diversity and employ an ambassador for children who have English as an Additional Language, enabling all pupils and their families to be fully supported in communication, and learning.

### 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 with its clear aims and objectives is an inspiring expression of the educational mission of the Church. It has an impact on the whole of school life.
- All staff are fully committed to its implementation across the curriculum. They enthusiastically participate in a variety of school activities which reflect the Catholic Life and mission of the school, such as, regular staff reflections and spiritual development. A member of the school commented, *'The Catholic ethos of the school is present everyday between every interaction, decision, celebration and school events.'*
- Prayer is central to school life and there is a strong sense of community at all levels which was clearly evident on the day of inspection through the caring quality of relationships throughout the school.
- The school environment reflects its mission and identity through concrete and effective signs of the school's Catholic character. Time, care and worth is given to every area of the school with creative and interactive displays. The well-presented school ensures that children and their families are given the best possible surroundings to *achieve, dream and believe.*
- Staff promote high standards of behaviour and are outstanding examples of mutual respect and forgiveness for pupils.
- The entire curriculum reflects a commitment to Catholic Social Teaching, to care for our common home and the dignity of every human person. Throughout the school year pupils develop an understanding of local, wider and global charities and the impact of caring for those communities, such as, their response to world disasters, CAFOD fundraising and prayer for others through Collective Worship.
- Clear policies and structures are in place, which provide the highest levels of pastoral care to pupils, and there is an explicit and concrete commitment to the most vulnerable and needy in both policy and practice.
- The school is equally attentive to the pastoral needs of members of staff and ensures that almost every member's needs are understood and catered for. There is a staff well-being committee which ensures an ethos and culture of support for staff in their day to day work.
- All the relevant documentation is in place and the school has undertaken training and purchased relevant resources to support Relationships and Sex Education alongside Personal, Social and Health Education. The school is at the beginning stage of mapping and planning links associated with Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) and PSHE. This is an area the school has recognised needs to be further developed and embedded throughout the school.

### **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 school's leadership 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 possible priority by leaders. This is reflected in the school's self-evaluation which is a coherent reflection of rigorous monitoring, searching analysis and self-challenge and is clearly and explicitly focused on the Catholic Life of the school.
- This leads to well-targeted and planned improvements, often creatively conceived with key partners, to further enhance the Catholic Life of the school.

- Curriculum Professional Development focusing on the Catholic Life of the school is well planned and effective. Recent training has included a full revision of the mission statement and Relationships and Sex Education development across school. Staff understanding of the school's mission is outstanding, they share its purpose and are keenly and actively involved in shaping and supporting it.
- Leaders and governors are keen to encourage more staff to take part in the Catholic Certificate in Religious Education which will enhance their involvement and understanding of policies and practices of a Catholic school.
- The school has highly successful and outstanding strategies for engaging with parents and carers to the benefit of pupils, including those who might traditionally find working with the school difficult. The school ensures the EAL Ambassador, an additional learning mentor, a family support worker and safeguarding lead are accessible to families and offer support or signposting to any need.
- Parent questionnaires show that the majority of parents are in full agreement of the Catholic values and welcome they receive at school.
- As leaders, the governing body is highly ambitious for the Catholic Life of the school and leads by example in the way it consistently emphasises Catholic Life as a school improvement priority. Governors make a highly significant contribution to the Catholic Life of the school. They are passionate about the school's mission, are actively involved in its evaluation and are ready to challenge as well as support where necessary. The links between home, school and parish are strong, effective and well maintained.
- The school is enthusiastic in its response to Archdiocesan policies and initiatives and actively promotes them throughout the school, including, Archdiocesan Newly Qualified Teacher training, Religious Education training and Catholic headteacher meetings.

## **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 good with many outstanding features.
- Pupils, from their varied starting points, make good progress in each key stage.
- Pupils with special educational needs, are supported through careful planning for teaching assistants and support given to them in their work.
- 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 concentrate well and are actively engaged in lessons and are committed to improving their knowledge, understanding and skills, in order to further develop as competent learners.
- Pupils approach lessons with great interest, passion and enthusiasm. Pupils enjoy tackling challenging activities, and respond exceptionally well to opportunities which extend their learning. Behaviour in lessons is outstanding because pupils enjoy Religious Education and they are rarely off task even in extended periods without direction from an adult.
- Pupils' attainment, as indicated by teacher assessment is good. Pupils achieve at least average attainment.
- The subject leader is keen to develop tracking of pupil progress and introduce Religious Education groups that will use data to inform planning. Formal assessments provide good evidence to the pupils' overall progress.

- The quality of pupils' current work, both in class and in written work, is good. Pupils workbooks are presented well. They celebrate and affirm pupils' achievements. There is some evidence of developmental marking with the use of driver words. This should be shared across the school to be consistent and to enable all pupils to benefit from challenges, know how they are progressing and how to keep improving.

## **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, all lessons observed were outstanding. Teachers have a high level of confidence because of their subject expertise and their understanding of the breadth of teaching methods. As a consequence, pupils are inspired to learn and make rapid and sustained progress.
- Teachers are highly effective in planning high-quality lessons. This will continue to impact on pupils' progress when planning is linked to tracking data. Teachers will have further opportunities to challenge individuals, consolidate and extend pupils' knowledge and understanding.
- Planning includes driver words which are used very well to show differentiation. Sharing outstanding planning, where teachers create challenges and extending learning with driver words, would have a further impact on all planning across the school.
- Teachers are enthusiastic and passionate in their delivery and linked Scripture to their own and the lives of the pupils. They have high expectations and pupils respond enthusiastically.
- On the day of inspection all teaching showed an enthusiasm when teaching Religious Education. As role models, teachers inspired pupils who were highly motivated with high levels of concentration. Teachers employed a wide range of teaching strategies, including, individual and collaborative work; excellent use of key vocabulary; prior learning; creative use and explanation of scripture; challenging plenaries; use of driver words in questioning and reflection of learning.
- Celebration of achievement and effort are central to the teacher's assessment strategy. Within lessons teachers ensure pupils are involved in evaluating how well they are achieving. This contributes to their progress and provides them with a high level of confidence in making further improvements.
- Teachers consistently use time effectively to maximise learning opportunities in lessons and across sequences of lessons.
- Teachers carefully observe and skilfully question during lessons to adapt tasks and explanations, maximising learning for every pupil.
- High quality resources for groups of pupils and interactive whiteboards, were used very effectively on the day of inspection and optimised learning for each pupil.
- Teaching assistants are carefully planned for and they provide varied, creative and outstanding care and support to many individuals and groups throughout 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 has full parity with other core curriculum subjects including professional development, resourcing, staffing and accommodation. The subject leader regularly attends all Archdiocesan in-service training and is keen to meet with a cluster of other schools to support monitoring and evaluation of the subject.
- Any additional requirements and policies of the Archdiocese regarding the Religious Education curriculum are embraced and fully implemented. Since the last inspection the *Come and See* programme has been fully implemented across the school.
- The curriculum leader has high aspirations and an inspiring vision for Religious Education across the school. She has only recently been appointed to the post and has, in a short time, worked tirelessly to reflect on, analyse and provide action planning for Religious Education practices across the school.
- Governors are supportive, knowledgeable and aware of the many demands and standards of Religious Education in a Catholic school. They have begun to work closely with the new subject leader and are keen to continue to develop their understanding of standards and monitoring. This support will enable the focused action planning to continue to thrive across the school.
- The parish priest is a regular visitor to classrooms and fully supports the religious education programme as the need arises. He has been inspired by the imaginative ways that pupils are receiving and sharing Scripture across the school.

## **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.
- Acts of Collective Worship engage all pupils' interest and inspire in them deep thought and heartfelt response. There is a genuine enthusiasm for Collective Worship, reflected in the quality of communal singing, in the quality of prayerful silence and the depth of reverent participation in communal prayer.
- Pupils readily lead worship displaying confidence and enthusiasm. They are creative and resourceful in their planning of liturgy. Pupils are visibly uplifted by the worship opportunities created by their peers. When questioned on the day of inspection, pupils were enthusiastic about taking part and leading Collective Worship.
- Pupils have an excellent understanding of the Church's liturgical year, seasons and feasts. Appropriate to their age and ability, teachers support pupils to prepare and take part in acts of Collective Worship.
- On the day of inspection, families were invited to celebrate Advent and its meaning. It was a joyous celebration of dance, role play, singing, silent reflection and prayers. In another worship, younger pupils sang with vigour and experienced a positive, enriching, purposeful worship.
- The experience of living and working in a faithful, praying community has a profound and visible effect on the spiritual and moral development of all pupils, irrespective of ability or faith background. They have a deep sense of respect and are an inclusive prayerful community.
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### **The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school**

- The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school is outstanding.

- Collective Worship is central to the life of the school for all pupils and forms the heart of every school celebration. Praying together is part of the daily experience for all pupils and staff.
- Opportunities are planned in a manner that attracts and facilitates attendance by other adults associated with the pupils and school and there is a great response to this invitation.
- Collective Worship reflects an understanding of the liturgical season and the Church's mission in education. To enhance this practice, the school would benefit from using planned themes across the school year giving further focus for worship in line with the liturgical year.
- Staff are skilled in helping pupils to plan and deliver quality worship when appropriate. They understand the purpose of Collective Worship and the wide variety of methods and styles of prayer.
- The subject leader ensures that worship is inclusive to all pupils. She has begun to develop ways to invite, encourage and enable prayer for pupils who need specific support by developing a '*collective worship nurture group*.' This is yet a further example of the outstanding pastoral care within the school.
- The school has had recent training in Collective Worship and this is beginning to have an outstanding impact on planning, evaluating and resourcing; as a result, experiences of Collective Worship are of a high quality. With further support by using advice from the Christian Education Department, the school can continue to embed this practice.

### **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.
- As the school has had recent Collective Worship training, monitoring and evaluating of worship can now be fully embedded into the monitoring cycle.
- Leaders have expert knowledge of how to provide policies and guidelines to ensure quality planning and delivery of Collective Worship.
- They have an extensive understanding of the Church's liturgical year, seasons and feasts.
- They are always able to make these accessible to pupils in a contemporary context.
- Leaders are very visible as leaders of Collective Worship within the school and in the locality. Staff are spiritually fed and are models of outstanding practice for pupils because they too pray and reflect.
- They extensively promote pupils' planning and leading Collective Worship in a variety of contexts.
- Leaders place the highest priority on the professional development of staff incorporating liturgical formation and the planning of Collective Worship.
- Leaders, governors and the parish priest ensure that they are an inclusive worshipping community where they do not merely tolerate but embrace and welcome all into their school family. They are consistently updated, informed and are a part of the impact of worship across the school.

## What the school needs to do to improve further

- **Continue to develop pupils' achievement in Religious Education by;**
  - developing the tracking of pupil progress and use the data to inform planning;
  - sharing outstanding planning across the school that shows challenges and extending learning by using the driver words;
  - ensuring consistency of developmental marking across the school to enable pupils to benefit from challenges, know how they are progressing and how to keep improving.
- **Continue to embed Collective Worship practices by;**
  - planning themes across the school year giving further focus for worship across the school;
  - continuing to embed the Collective Worship training from the Christian Education Department;
  - continuing to monitor and evaluate Collective Worship through the monitoring cycle.

# INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

## OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

How effective the school is in providing Catholic Education	1
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## 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	2
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 Good, Grade 3 Requires Improvement and Grade 4 Inadequate***