



ARCHDIOCESE OF LIVERPOOL

INSPECTION REPORT

ST STEPHEN'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

WARRINGTON

Inspection Date: Tuesday 18 November 2014

Inspectors Rev D Melly Mrs M Eves

Unique Reference Number 111310

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

Type of School Catholic Primary

Age range of pupils 4 - 11

Number on roll 204

Chair of Governors Rev G Abbs

Headteacher Mrs M McGarry

School address
Sandy Lane
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Warrington
Cheshire
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Date of last inspection 23 June 2009

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 Stephen's, which is an average sized Catholic Primary Schools, is situated in Warrington and mainly serving the parish of St Stephen.
- There are 204 children on roll of whom 110 are baptised Catholic, Forty eight come from other Christian denominations, and 3 from other faith or religious traditions. Forty three pupils have no religious affiliation.
- There are 11 teachers of whom 8 teach Religious Education and 9 have a suitable qualification in Religious Education. A further 2 teachers are currently completing the CCRS and 1 has undertaken part of the qualification. Eight teachers are baptised Catholic.
- Since the last inspection a new religious education coordinator has been appointed together with a number of new members of staff.

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 Stephen's 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.
- Pupils know and understand the school's Mission Statement and understand the part they play within it. They were very much involved in its recent evaluation.
- Pupils have an outstanding sense of belonging to the school community and very much respect and value each other. There is a strong sense of collegiality in the school which enhances the learning process. St Stephen's School is truly a joyful, nurturing family.
- Pupils are encouraged to take on roles of responsibility in the school and wider community. They act as Head Boy and Head Girl, Prefects, School Councillors, members of the Healthy Schools Team, School Safety Officers, Trusted Listeners, Eco Teams, Reading Buddies, Librarians, Play Leaders and Prayer Group Leaders. They plan and lead Collective Worship. They are keen fundraisers. All of this outstanding practice encourages children in their understanding of fairness, respect, tolerance, democracy and service to others.
- Pupils are actively involved in developing the Catholic character of the school as they live out the Mission Statement, endeavouring to work together to succeed through faith in Jesus Christ. They respond extremely well to Collective Worship and are taking a greater role in its planning and delivery.
- Pupils have an excellent sense of right and wrong and apply this in their personal relationships. They take an increasing responsibility for themselves and their actions.
- They praise and acknowledge the contribution of others. They show a readiness to embrace and celebrate their lived experiences.
- Pupils embrace opportunities to meet their potential in all aspects of school life as they strive to achieve excellence.
- Pupils are involved in service to the local faith and religious communities. The school actively supports charities and appeals which include The Good Shepherd Fund, CAFOD, Mission Together, St Rocco's Hospice and Ciaran's Cause. Speakers have come in to school to speak to the Children about CAFOD, Fair Trade and St Rocco's Hospice. The school has also invited the parish to take part in their fundraising events and have enjoyed a Fair Trade Big Bake event together. They have also enjoyed carols and mince pies at Christmas when they also sing in local care homes and in the Golden Square. In 2010 the school took part in the papal Big Assembly in Twickenham when their trip to London was televised by Daybreak Television. The school has also taken part in a number of local community activities which included the Holocaust Memorial Service, the Orford Musical Festival, the Mayor's Tag Festival and Anti Bullying initiatives linked to the Peace Centre and the community police service. They also take part in the children's university.

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education

- Pupils' achievements and enjoyment in Religious Education is outstanding.
- Their attainment in Religious Education is outstanding.

- They make outstanding progress in relation to their starting points and capabilities.
- On entry to school many children have a limited or even no knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith.
- There is no difference in performance between pupils of different gender.
- Outcomes for pupils with additional or special needs are outstanding.
- Analysis of assessments undertaken provides evidence of pupils generally attaining appropriate levels for their age and stage of development in each key stage while some are exceeding.
- Pupils are becoming increasingly more religiously literate. Their knowledge, understanding and skills are developing appropriate to their age or capacity. During the inspection pupils of all ages were able to discuss Religious Education with confidence.
- 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. Evidence in books and conversations with pupils affirm that pupils are given many opportunities to reflect on the links between the life and teachings of Jesus and their own lives.
- Pupils' engagement in and enjoyment of their learning is outstanding as shown by their interest, enthusiasm and outstanding behaviour.
- Pupils are encouraged to work independently and collaboratively.
- Pupils are anxious to learn and improve their knowledge, understanding and skills as they become independent learners.

How well pupils respond to and participate in Collective Worship

- Pupils' response to and participation in Collective Worship is Outstanding.
- They show interest and respond enthusiastically in Collective Worship.
- They act with reverence and are keen to participate in a variety of gatherings.
- Pupils' knowledge of prayer and liturgy is increasing.
- They are becoming familiar with a variety of prayer styles. The guided meditation and spontaneous prayer at the end of one lesson was particularly impressive. They appreciate and are open to the Word of God in the scriptures which is well proclaimed.
- They reflect in silence and join in community prayers appropriately and with confidence and enthusiasm.
- They are becoming increasingly more confident preparing and leading worship from their earliest age.

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

- The quality of teaching and purposeful learning in Religious Education is outstanding.
- It is consistently effective in ensuring that pupils are interested and engaged and make outstanding progress.
- Teachers display excellent subject knowledge and deploy a wide range of teaching styles to motivate and inspire pupils.
- Teaching encourages pupils' enjoyment of and enthusiasm for Religious Education.
- Teachers obviously take into account pupils' prior learning and ensure differentiated tasks when planning so that the work on the day consolidated, built on and extended their knowledge and understanding. There was evidence of differentiation both in class and in the workbooks.
- Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to work independently and collaboratively. Excellent use is made of time and resources including other adults and Information and Communication Technology, all of which were used to maximise learning.

- Pupils are informed of their progress and how to improve both orally and through marking. Effort and achievement are always celebrated.
- The assessment of pupils work in Religious Education is outstanding.
- The school has excellent assessment strategies which provide accurate and detailed information on the achievement of all the pupils.
- Teachers are able to identify how well pupils are achieving and tackle underachievement especially with the support of teaching assistants.
- There was some evidence of teachers enabling pupils to evaluate their own work.

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

- The extent to which the Religious Education Curriculum promotes pupils' learning is outstanding.
- 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.
- 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.
- The school implements new curriculum developments as appropriate.
- Enrichment activities, especially the children's university, all have a positive impact on the curriculum. Eighty five children graduated last year.
- 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.
- Children have explored the beliefs and values of other faiths and religions. This helps to promote tolerance and respect for those who think differently. They hope to enhance this work by inviting speakers from other faiths and religions to the school to talk to the children and by organising visits to places of worship.

The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school.

- The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school is outstanding. It reflects 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 life of the school. A great deal of time and effort has obviously been given to developing Collective Worship.
- 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.
- Children are enabled to pray formally and informally using a variety of prayer methods and styles.
- The school has provided excellent opportunities for staff to develop the skills in planning, leading and evaluating Collective Worship.
- The teachers are providing 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.

- Opportunities are provided for parents and carers 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, monitoring and evaluating the provision for the Catholic life of the school and in the way they plan and implement improvement to outcomes for pupils.
- This is reflected in the school's own Mission Statement. All who form part of the school community including parents, parish priest, governors and children were involved in the development of the current Mission Statement. Its aims and practical objectives direct and guide every aspect of school life and are a useful tool by which the school can evaluate its effectiveness.
- Leaders, governors and managers are outstanding in the way they use monitoring data to evaluate the schools performance, celebrate, and plan future improvements. This is a real strength of the school.
- Outstanding opportunities are provided for the staff and pupils to play an active part in Catholic life and Mission of the school by the way they live out the Mission Statement which they know, own and live out.
- The Self Evaluation Document provides evidence of the schools monitoring, searching analysis and self challenge.
- Their analysis provides a basis to celebrate the school's strengths and outline areas for development. The Self Evaluation Document is comprehensive and obviously impacts well on the Catholic life of the school.
- The school provides excellent induction and in-service training to enable staff to further understand the Church's Mission in Education and play their unique part in it.
- The quality of Collective Worship is a strength the school. It is effectively monitored and evaluated by leaders, governors and managers. An up to date policy is in place.
- 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 warm, positive relationships at every level within the school.
- Parents are consulted regularly and involved in a variety of ways in the life of the school for e.g. through questionnaires, attendance at assemblies and school celebrations. They receive newsletters and information on the school web site which encourages involvement in the Religious Education of their children.
- Governors are outstanding in fulfilling their responsibilities. They have effectively helped to shape the direction of the school through the generous sharing of their own expertise. They are incredibly hard working and committed. The contribution of the Chair of Governors is particularly appreciated by all.

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 promoting, monitoring and evaluating the provision for the Religious Education of the school and in the way they plan and implement improvement to outcomes for pupils.

- Monitoring data is used effectively to evaluate the schools performance and plan for future improvements.
- There is a robust 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 headteacher and subject leader are outstanding in guiding Religious Education. They demonstrate enthusiasm, determination and great commitment to secure the very best outcomes for all pupils. They introduce new initiatives when appropriate. Excellent documentation guides and directs all staff in the delivery of the subject. This is updated as necessary.
- The Action Plan is rigorous in identifying targets, timescales and lines of accountability.
- Curriculum outlines are provided for parents who are consulted on different issues depending on the topic being covered.
- Achievement and effort are celebrated.

What the school needs to do to improve further?

- Improve provision for the teaching of other religions by:
 - implementing their plans to invite people of other religions to speak to the children and organising visits to other places of worship.
- Improve the provision for Collective by:
 - implementing the plans to develop outside prayer spaces.

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