



ARCHDIOCESE OF LIVERPOOL

INSPECTION REPORT

ST. JULIE'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

ECCLESTON

Inspection Date Thursday 4th July

Inspectors Mrs Julie Rourke Mr Dave Williams

Unique Reference Number 104819

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 245

Chair of Governors Mrs Teresa Sims

Headteacher Mrs Anne Hodgson

School address Brookland Road
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Date of last inspection 25th February 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. Julie's school is an average sized Catholic Primary School situated in Eccleston, St. Helen's mainly serving the parish of St. Julie's.
- There are 245 children on roll of whom 235 are baptised Catholic, 5 children come from other Christian denominations and 2 are from other faith or religious traditions. Three children have no religious affiliation.
- There are 14 teachers at the school, including the headteacher, of whom 13 are baptised Catholic. Six teachers have a suitable qualification in Religious Education.
- Since the last inspection, a new Chair of Governors has been elected and a new headteacher has been appointed.

Key for inspection grades

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

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OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

St. Julie's Catholic Primary School 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 at St. Julie's are ambassadors of their mission, 'A caring family School, where we Learn, Grow and Walk in the footsteps of Jesus.' It is reviewed annually by pupils at the beginning of each year. Pupils take every opportunity to participate in the Catholic Life of the school and promote the mission and on the day of inspection spoke enthusiastically about living it out.
- Pupils show a respect for themselves and others as made in the image and likeness of God. Children's behaviour is exemplary, they show an ability to listen, to give thanks, to forgive and be forgiven. They are also quick to congratulate and celebrate each other's achievements.
- Children are praised regularly through a variety of celebrations such as, house awards, Dojos, Walk to School, Lunchtime award and Children's University.
- Pupils enthusiastically embrace a holistic approach to education, have a profound understanding of what it means to have a vocation and they joyfully offer their gifts in the service of others.
- They are involved in a variety of roles such as, playground buddies, Eco Council, Junior Road Safety Officers and a Science Council.
- Pupils enthusiastically embrace the demands that membership of the school community entails. As a result, they take a leading role in those activities which promote the school's Catholic Life and mission both within school and in the wider community. They are alert to the needs of others and seek justice for all within and beyond the school community.
- The children have fundraised for a wide variety of causes, such as, CAFOD Harvest Festival, Fairtrade, local Foodbank, Shoe Box Appeal and the Good Shepherd.
- Pupils take the lead through for example, their Pupil Councillors and Faith in Action group, to actively contribute to Grandparents afternoon, Laudato Si and as class fundraisers for a variety of causes. The local community have benefitted from children participating in the Holocaust Remembrance Day, a Junior Democracy debate with the local town hall, Empathy Day and the local hospice. They embrace refugees in their local town by being part of the local charity, 'Our Warm Welcome.'
- Pupils deeply value and respect the Catholic tradition of the school and its links with the parish and diocesan community. Pupils are regularly involved with parish and diocesan celebrations and activities, for example being, participating in writing bidding prayers for Sunday mass, as altar servers and taking part in the Leyland Good Shepherd mass.
- St. Julie's prides itself on being an inclusive school, this is lived out with the pupils in a variety of ways. Pupils have links with St. Patrick's in Toxteth. They meet to share their curriculum and also exchange via blogs. Pupils enjoy many visitors from different faith backgrounds and learn about other faiths and religions, which widens and celebrates other beliefs and cultures.
- They learn about the Jewish faith each year. Islam, Hinduism and Sikhism are taught in different year groups which enables the children to know and experience a range of religions.

- Pupils take full advantage of the opportunities the school provides for their personal support and development. Pupils can access support for bereavement counselling through the *Rainbows* programme and mindfulness workshops. Pupils and their families are signposted to support, such as, Young Carers, the school nurse and Barnardo's. 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, are developing an understanding of loving relationships and sexual development within the context of a Christian understanding.

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 is a clear and inspiring expression of the educational mission of the Church.
- All staff are fully committed to its implementation across the curriculum and the whole of school life. They enthusiastically participate in school activities which reflect the Catholic Life and mission of the school, such as, regular prayer times and reflection points within in-service days, a host of fundraising and themed weeks. Staff promote high standards of behaviour and are exemplary role models of mutual respect and forgiveness for pupils.
- The school is keen to develop staff spirituality on a regular basis supporting well-being and opportunities to reflect on the mission and Catholic Life of the school.
- There is a strong sense of community at all levels, evident in the high quality of relationships and the centrality of prayer to the whole community. The school is a supportive and joyful community. Staff members expressed through written comments to the inspectors, 'The loving family atmosphere and living by Gospel values is the golden thread that runs through our school.' 'I feel like a valued member of St. Julie's school and church community.'
- The parish fully supports and promotes the Catholic Life of the school. The parish priest is a regular and familiar face in school. He provides class masses, children visiting and celebrating in church. The parish priest and the school meet to timetable yearly liturgical events.
- The *With You Always* Sacramental programme ran by the parish has an excellent response from the school's families and is fully supported by the school.
- The school is attentive to the pastoral needs of members of staff and pupils and ensures that every member's needs are understood and catered for. St. Julie's staff describe themselves as a family. They are led by a supportive team of senior leaders who have introduced workload reduction strategies, and regular Continuous Professional Development. Staff have recently taken part in, 'Spread the Happiness' training.
- 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. There is extensive Special Educational Needs and Disability provision with links to a wide variety of outside agency support. The school also has a dedicated Pastoral Lead for emotional, social and mental well-being.
- The school provides opportunities for the spiritual and moral development of the pupils. Older children have attended retreat days with the Animate Youth Group at Lowe House. The Religious Education programme, *Come and See* and Personal, Social and Health Education permeate the curriculum.
- The school is keen to now introduce the Relationships and Sex Education programme, *Journey in Love* recommended by the Archdiocese. They can then plan for the programme throughout the school year, and for each year group. This will help the school to provide mapping to see its impact and identify links with Religious Education, Science and Personal, Social and Health Education.

- The school environment reflects its mission and identity through concrete and effective signs of the school's Catholic character. The school is a well-presented learning environment. There are a variety of creative displays. There are two beautifully constructed prayer gardens dedicated to Our Lady and St. Julie. The grounds are aesthetically pleasing and are used to their full advantage with links in the curriculum to wildlife and nature opportunities.
- The curriculum reflects an outstanding commitment to Catholic Social Teaching, to care for our common home and to the dignity of every human person. The school provides ways to fundraise for those in need. The school's Eco club is supported in making key environmental decisions for their school and community. The club has eco prayer and code to act by. Members of the club are inspired by Pope Francis and the prayers of St. Francis of Assisi.

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 provision for the Catholic Life of the school is given high 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.
- The Governors, headteacher and senior leaders are highly ambitious for the Catholic Life of the school and lead by example in the way it consistently emphasises Catholic Life as a school improvement priority. They make a highly significant contribution to the school. They are fully involved in the schools' evaluation and are ready to challenge as well as support where necessary.
- Leaders, governors and staff share in the purpose of the school's mission and are keenly involved in shaping and supporting it. Policies relating to the Catholic Life of the school are up to date and ratified by governors.
- Leaders support and are involved in Continuous Professional Development focusing on the Catholic Life of the school ensures all staff are informed. To continue and sustain the outstanding Catholic Life of the school, leaders must keep the lines of communication open to governors and consistently make them aware of and celebrate for example, the self-evaluation document and the latest guidance from the Archbishop concerning Relationships and Sex Education.
- The school has strategies for engaging with parents/carers to the benefit of pupils. The school's website has a wealth of information, regular newsletters, invitations to Collective Worship and masses. There is an active Parent and Friends Association and all parents/carers are welcome to join. Parents gave overwhelmingly positive feedback in their questionnaires about the Catholic Life at St. Julie's. Parents expressed how the school has an amazing, warm and welcoming ethos. A parent commented, 'A Catholic school with Catholic teaching central to everything they do.'

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 good progress in each key stage, with many achieving outstanding progress.
- Almost all pupils, relative to their age and capacity, are religiously literate and engaged young people; they use their knowledge, understanding and skills effectively, to reflect spiritually, and to think ethically and theologically. As a consequence, they are fully 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. A teacher explained in the questionnaire, 'The children are immersed in their Religious Education learning and this is reflected in their positive attitudes.'
- Pupils concentrate exceptionally well, have a clear understanding of how well they are doing, and of what they need to do to improve, and can fully articulate how they have made progress. From pupil questionnaire responses, all children who were asked said that teachers show them how to improve their work.
- Pupils approach their lessons with great interest and enthusiasm. They reflect on their learning, enjoy tackling challenging activities and respond exceptionally well to opportunities which extend their learning.
- Behaviour in lessons is outstanding because pupils enjoy Religious Education. They are rarely off task even in extended periods without direction from an adult.
- The quality of pupils' current work, both in class and in written work, is outstanding. Their work is presented to a very high standard, depict a variety of activities and progress is evident across the year groups.
- Pupils workbooks celebrate their achievements. There is outstanding evidence of developmental marking with the use of driver words. This enables pupils to benefit from challenges, know how well they are progressing and know how to keep improving. Pupils formal assessments reflect a snapshot of quality work and high expectations.
- The children's Religious Education journals and portfolios reflect and celebrate the rich experiences and opportunities they are given. They are presented to a high standard.
- The school has implemented the new standards for Religious Education and have begun a new system to track the development and progress of pupils. They are keen to continue to develop and embed this process and over time will be able to show how Religious Education is affecting different groups of children such as, gifted and talented and children with specific needs. This will support differentiated planning and teaching and learning.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education is outstanding.
- Teachers have a high level of confidence because of their subject expertise and their understanding of the breadth of teaching methods. Pupils are inspired to learn and make outstanding and sustained progress.
- Outstanding practices within school are monitored and shared to enable consistency in Religious Education lessons. Teachers are highly effective in consistently planning high-quality lessons.
- Religious Education is imaginatively and thoughtfully planned for and builds upon previous learning.
- Teachers plan for and use driver words correctly and effectively to differentiate and challenge pupils. This enables them to communicate high expectations. Currently, the school has begun using new standards for Religious Education.

- In a lesson observed on the day of inspection, the teacher's extensive understanding, use of prior knowledge, Scripture, visual explanations and quality questioning enabled to children to be fully immersed in their learning. Driver words were used exceptionally well by making links with paper chains. The teacher fully explained Genesis to the children, she meaningfully explained, 'It is almost a beautiful poem of the beauty of the Earth.' The children were engaged, curious and were keen to understand new learning and discuss their progress.
- Teachers employ a wide range of appropriate teaching strategies. Throughout the day of inspection children enjoyed a variety of learning including, collaborative learning, key questions, the use of 'Big Questions,' using their faith in and for life and music with PowerPoints. Consequently, pupils are highly motivated and sustain high levels of concentration.
- On the day of inspection, teachers used plenaries well to consolidate learning and to challenge children in their thinking. Children were asked to reflect and consider how their learning may affect their lives. This is outstanding practice however, teachers should try not to mix a plenary with worship. This will ensure that liturgy and worship is at a protected time of the school day.
- Teaching assistants provide outstanding understanding and consideration of the specific needs of pupils in their care and encourage progress. They are enabled to optimise learning for pupils.
- Teachers consistently use time effectively to maximise learning opportunities in lessons and across sequences of lessons.
- Celebration of achievement and effort are central to the teacher's assessment strategy, securing high levels of motivation from pupils.

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.
- They ensure that the required amount of curriculum time is given to Religious Education in each key stage. Religious Education has full parity with other core curriculum subjects, in terms of Continuous Professional Development, resourcing, staffing and accommodation.
- Any additional requirements and policies of the Archdiocese regarding the Religious Education curriculum are embraced and implemented.
- Leaders and governors' self-evaluation of Religious Education is a coherent reflection of rigorous assessment, tracking, monitoring, searching analysis and self-challenge which is well-informed by current best practice in Religious Education. This results in targeted planning and strategic action taken by the school which leads to outstanding outcomes in Religious Education.
- Governors are fully informed of standards in Religious Education and the subject leader regularly reports to governors. They know the standards of children's work and have taken part in learning walks and guided in work scrutiny. They are fully aware of their responsibilities and ratify all policies linked to Religious Education.
- The Religious Education governor is also the Parish priest. He may wish to consider with the Chair of Governors how sustainable this might be for the future. He is fully supportive of the *Come and See* Religious Education Programme and regularly offers his support for children and teachers.

- The Religious Education subject leader is an outstanding role model for Catholic education. She is an organised, effective and creative subject leader. She seeks out ways to continually improve, keep outstanding progress and works closely with a highly effective cluster group of local Catholic schools.
- The subject leader is fully aware of children's standards across the school and knows the impact that data can have for consistently improving teaching and learning. She communicates high expectations and has an inspiring vision for outstanding teaching and learning and a high level of expertise in securing this vision. She is passionate about Religious Education and pupils and staff respond with enthusiasm.
- Parents receive regular updates and newsletters about Religious Education, formal reports on the achievement of their children and there is a wealth of information on the schools' website.

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 value and regularly participate voluntarily in liturgy and prayer. They display confidence using a variety of traditional and contemporary approaches to prayer, scripture, religious artefacts and liturgical music.
- Pupils have an excellent understanding of the Church's liturgical year, seasons and feasts. Appropriate to their age and ability, they are able to prepare acts of Collective Worship, which fully reflects this understanding.
- Pupils are fully involved in planning and leading worship appropriate to their age and stage of development. Elected pupils across the school are part of a worship group named, 'Worship Welcomers.' As well as delivery of worship, they also train their peers and younger children worship responsibilities.
- Pupils are creative and resourceful in their planning of liturgy and want it to be the best it can be. Other pupils are engaged by the worship opportunities planned by their peers.
- Older pupils are prayer buddies and enjoy their role in supporting the youngest children in Mass, services and reflections throughout the year.
- There is a genuine enthusiasm for Collective Worship, reflected in the quality of resources and planning and the depth of reverent participation in communal prayer.
- Acts of Collective Worship engage all pupils' interest and inspire heartfelt responses.
- On the day of inspection, children and adults planned their worship and prayed together. Older children experienced a meditative Taizé chant, which enabled children to gather into calm and environment of prayer.
- Both worships observed were age and stage appropriate. Scripture was shared, and children thoughtfully gave heartfelt responses to God's Word, either in silence or by using a holding cross. They joined in community prayer appropriately and with confidence. Children sang joyfully and were reverent throughout.
- 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. This is reflected in the manner in which many 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 central to the life of the school and forms the heart of every school celebration. Praying together is part of the daily experience for pupils and staff.
- Collective Worship has a clear purpose, message and direction. The themes chosen for worship reflect a deep understanding of the liturgical seasons and the Church's mission in education.
- Weekly themes are chosen for worship and plenty of support is given to teacher's planning of the variety of suitable Scripture. This leads to outstanding planning, resourcing and quality liturgical experiences, cherished by every member of the community.
- The school's worship portfolio is an outstanding supportive document for teachers with examples and ideas for worship. It encourages and strengthens understanding and delivery enabling teachers to offer meaningful liturgy and worship.
- Staff are skilled in helping pupils to plan and deliver quality worship, when appropriate. They have a thorough and comprehensive understanding of the purpose of Collective Worship and a wide variety of methods and styles of prayer.
- The parish priest is fully active in the prayer life of the school. He celebrates a variety of liturgical events throughout the year with the school community and parishioners, including class Masses.
- Throughout Lent, the parish priest along with school provided children, their families, staff and parishioners the opportunity to take part in Eucharistic Adoration. This had a great impact for the school together as a worshipping community. The parish priest is keen for this to continue.
- St. Julie's takes every opportunity to attract and facilitate attendance by parents/carers associated with the pupils and response to this invitation is outstanding.

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 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 and they are able make these accessible to the pupils in both a traditional and contemporary context.
- There are visible leaders of Collective Worship within the school. They are models of outstanding practice for staff and pupils.
- Leaders place the highest priority on the professional development of staff incorporating liturgical formation and the planning of Collective Worship.
- They extensively promote pupils' planning and leading Collective Worship in a variety of contexts.
- Leaders and governors place the highest priority on the school's self-evaluation of Collective Worship with regular and robust reviews of school performance.
- Governors are fully immersed in the prayer life of the school and regularly attend liturgies throughout the school year.

What the school needs to do to improve further

- Implement the Archdiocesan recommended Relationships and Sex Education programme to all year groups.
- Continue to follow actions outlined in the school's Self Evaluation Document and recommendations within this report.

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	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 Good, Grade 3 Requires Improvement and Grade 4 Inadequate