



ARCHDIOCESE OF LIVERPOOL

INSPECTION REPORT

OUR LADY OF COMPASSION CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

FORMBY

Inspection Date 17th September 2019

Inspectors Mrs. Denise Hegarty, Mrs. Jude Ryan

Unique Reference Number 104930

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

Type of School Catholic Primary

Age range of pupils 3 - 11

Number on roll 249

Chair of Governors Mrs C. Hamilton

Headteacher Mr A. Houghton

School address Bull Cop
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Date of last inspection 30th September 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 Team and their associates approved by the Archbishop of Liverpool for this purpose.

Information about this school

- Our Lady of Compassion School is an average sized Catholic primary school situated in Formby in the Sefton area of the Archdiocese and serves the parish of Our Lady of Compassion, Formby.
- There are 249 children on roll of whom 245 are baptised Catholic and 3 pupils have no religious affiliation. There is one pupil from another faith or religious tradition at the school.
- Twelve teachers teach at the school, 11 of whom are baptised Catholic. Ten teachers teach Religious Education. Eight teachers have a suitable qualification in Religious Education.
- Since the last inspection, the school has a new headteacher, a new Religious Education co-ordinator and a new chair of governors.
- There was no mid-inspection monitoring visit.

Key for inspection grades

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

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OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

Our Lady of Compassion 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 and mission of the school.
- Pupils participate in the school's evaluation of its Catholic Life and mission and some, especially the school improvement team, are part of planning improvements to it.
- Pupils have created a visual display to celebrate the Mission Statement in the school hall. Pupils show a respect for themselves and others as made in the image and likeness of God. A Year 6 child commented, "Everyone here is so nice, you couldn't ask for a better school!" Pupils enjoy being rewarded for their excellent attitude and behaviour and are quick to give thanks and to congratulate others on their achievements. They show an understanding of the need to forgive, be forgiven and have a growing understanding of right and wrong. Their behaviour is exemplary as seen on the day of inspection and evident in the number of positive comments received from members of the public. Parishioners enjoy and value the children's presence in church and comment frequently on their respectful behaviour.
- 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 and the wider community. They are aware of the needs of others and seek justice for others within and beyond the school community. They are heavily involved with a variety of fundraising opportunities throughout the year including CAFOD, St. Joseph's Hospice (Jospice) and Macmillan Cancer Support as well as others causes that are pertinent to the school community. Events, prompted by the pupils, have included a 'Mad Hair' day, cake sales and Mufti days.
- Pupils in the school enjoy undertaking a range of roles of responsibility in an age appropriate manner. Year 5 and 6 pupils are trained as play leaders to support the younger children during lunch and play times. They promote teamwork, positive behaviour, friendship and forgiveness through a range of games.
- Pupils are making a positive contribution to the care of our common home by working together recycling plastic and paper.
- All pupils from Years 4 to 6 have the opportunity for a residential experience to YMCA Lakeland and Crosby Hall. This benefits the children's personal development as they gain in confidence, independence and self-respect. They undertake certain responsibilities and learn how to work together as a team for the good of all.
- The school improvement team, composed of children from Year 3 to Year 6, have developed a vegetable and herb garden and show their care for others by inviting parents and visitors to help themselves to the produce they have grown.
- Pupils, appropriate to their age and capability, have a very good understanding of loving relationships and personal development within the context of a Christian understanding.

- Pupils respond well to the many opportunities the school provides for their personal support and development. They embrace a holistic approach to education, understand what it means to have a vocation, recognise and celebrate their individual gifts and talents and understand the importance of using their gifts in the service of others. As a result, they are happy, confident and secure in their own stage of physical, emotional and spiritual growth.
- The school has forged strong links with the local high schools and children from the older classes have visited the schools and enjoyed developing their talents in technology, art and drama. They also appreciate the links with another Archdiocesan school and taken part in a 'school swap' to broaden their awareness of diversity and difference.
- Pupils value and respect the Catholic tradition of the school and its links with the parish community and the Archdiocese. As a result, they respect and are involved with parish and diocesan celebrations and activities. They enjoy visiting the parish church for Masses and celebrations.

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, 'Flying on the Wings of God's Love and Compassion' was compiled by representatives from the whole school community. Together with its accompanying school hymn, it clearly expresses the educational mission of the Church.
- Staff are 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, retreats, staff prayer, Continuous Professional Development on Catholic Life.
- There is a clear sense of community at all levels, evident in the quality of relationships and the centrality of prayer to the whole community. There is a strong sense of team morale. Staff members are loyal members of the school community. They are positive role models for pupils to emulate and encourage those in their care to develop the skills to become responsible citizens of the future.
- Beautiful photo books, put in place over a considerable time, demonstrate and celebrate the vast range of activities that contribute to the school's Catholic Life.
- On entering the school, all visitors receive a warm welcome. A parent commented, "Faith underpins the ethos and resonates throughout the building. It can be felt as a visitor to the school and also witnessed in the displays and symbols which show the presence of Jesus in all that is lived out at Our Lady's."
- The school environment, both inside and outside, reflects its mission and identity through obvious signs of its Catholic character. Throughout the school many colourful and vibrant displays promote the Catholic Life and mission. Externally, the school's site manager has built numerous wooden structures, including the new school chapel, all of which are well-used and appreciated by pupils and staff alike.
- Staff promote high standards of behaviour and demonstrate mutual respect and forgiveness for pupils. Older pupils also model excellent, caring behaviour. Children are rewarded for following the school's code of conduct by displaying appropriate, respectful behaviour. There are awards given weekly for kindness and following Gospel Values.
- The curriculum reflects a commitment to Catholic Social Teaching, to care for our common home and to the dignity of every human person. At Christmas time, the school undertook to 'make someone happy' by encouraging pupils to donate to foodbanks and fill shoeboxes for other children in need.
- Staff in the Early Years Foundation Stage have removed items made from plastic as far as possible in order to improve and protect the environment.

- The school provides many opportunities for the spiritual and moral development of pupils and staff. Staff members work hard to ensure that children have self-respect and self-confidence.
- There are strong links with the parish and the parish priest is a much valued member of the school community. He effectively supports and promotes the Catholic Life of the school and is a regular visitor and attends special events including assemblies, Masses etc. He has recently blessed and opened the school chapel.
- Pastoral programmes, Personal, Social and Health Education and Relationships and Sex Education are planned, well taught and reflect Catholic teachings and principles. Staff members, with the support of parents and carers of pupils, use the *Journey in Love* programme to support Relationships and Sex Education. This helps children in all year groups to develop their understanding of healthy relationships.
- Policies and structures are in place, which provide excellent pastoral care to pupils, and there is a commitment to the most vulnerable and needy in both policy and practice. Annual events such as Anti Bullying Week, Behaviour Awareness Week and workshops such as Community Nurses for Healthy Eating, Bully Busters, Railway Police and Young Carers contribute to the children's holistic development. Exercise and relaxation sessions are provided for pupils and staff to support their health and well-being.
- The school provides Breakfast and After School Clubs to assist working parents and vulnerable pupils. Staff members make every effort to ensure the activities they provide at such times are fun and engaging.

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. Policies pertaining to the Catholic Life of the school are reviewed by staff and governors and updated regularly.
- 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 the Mission Statement. Staff are involved in shaping and supporting it. They readily celebrate the school's values, mission and ethos. This leads to planned improvements to further enhance the Catholic Life of the school.
- The mission statement is displayed centrally and underpins the whole of school life. It informs all school policies and practices.
- All staff participate in a Continuing Professional Development programme focusing on education and the Catholic Life of the school thus allowing it to flourish. All are encouraged to undertake the *Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies*. As a result, staff members' understanding of the school's mission is outstanding. Time is always given at meetings for prayer and personal reflection.
- A member of the support staff commented, "It's a pleasure to be part of such a loving and caring school, guiding our pupils in the right direction to enable them to reach their full potential."
- Staff well-being is a priority and they feel valued and well-cared for. A day's reflection was held to 'make the school a better place' by flagging up issues that cause stress and subsequently finding strategies to help and support staff members in dealing with them.
- 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 a deep understanding of the school's mission and are supportive of it. Their views are regularly sought - after meetings and through questionnaires. Some parents and carers share their musical talents with the children by accompanying them in celebrations throughout the year. The school's twitter pages and website are used outstandingly to share and celebrate the Catholic Life of the school with the community.
- As leaders, the governing body is highly 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 a positive contribution to the Catholic Life of the school. They are dedicated to the school's mission, are very involved in its evaluation and are ready to challenge as well as support where necessary. They are regularly invited to Masses and assemblies.
- Leaders have forged strong links with the parish and liaise closely with the parish priest to enable him to support the Catholic Life of the school. The school supports and facilitates the parish *With You Always* sacramental preparation programme very well by supporting the key celebrations. Members of the school community attend the parish Family Masses and pupils are encouraged to read and sing in the choir.
- The school responds well to Archdiocesan policies and initiatives and promotes the Archdiocesan vision throughout the school. This was evident recently in the sharing of views from the Synod questions.

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.
- Pupils with special educational needs are also making progress comparable to that of other pupils. Currently, girls tend to outperform the boys, but the school has plans in place to redress the balance.
- 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. Consequently, 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.
- In general, pupils concentrate very well and sustain their concentration throughout their lessons. They can articulate how they have made progress during lessons, understand how well they are doing and know what they need to do to improve.
- Pupils approach lessons with great interest and enthusiasm and work very well together in co-operation and collaboration. They listen courteously to each other and respect other's views and opinions. They give mature, eloquent answers to questions posed.
- It is clear from pupil interviews, questionnaires and lesson observations that pupils thoroughly enjoy their Religious Education and approach the subject with great interest and enthusiasm. Pupils particularly enjoy challenging activities and respond very well to any opportunities given which extend their learning. On the day of inspection, inspectors witnessed pupils thoroughly enjoying a range of strategies including drawing, storyboards, art, modelling, creating recipes, and using Information and Communication Technology. They appreciate the variety of activities presented to them and the different ways they are encouraged to record them.

- Behaviour in lessons is excellent because pupils enjoy Religious Education and have a great rapport with their teachers and additional adults in the classroom. Disruption to lessons is very unusual.
- Pupils' attainment, as indicated by formal and teacher assessment is very good. Pupils achieve at least average attainment with many achieving beyond expectation. This has been sustained over time and is an improving trend.
- The quality of pupils' current work, both in class and in written work, is outstanding. Pupils take great pride in their work and are proud to talk about it and share it with others.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education is outstanding.
- Teachers are very effective in consistently planning high quality lessons linked to pupils' current assessment and their knowledge of each individual, so that pupils learn very well. As a result of this, teaching is mainly very good or outstanding.
- Driver Words from the draft *Standards of Attainment in Religious Education* are used very effectively in planning, questioning and tasks.
- Teachers are confident in their subject expertise and have an excellent understanding of how pupils learn. They consistently build on prior learning. As a consequence, pupils apply themselves well and make outstanding progress in lessons and over time.
- Teachers employ a wide range of appropriate strategies, including individual and collaborative work. Good use is made of talking partners and group discussions to enable pupils to widen their knowledge and gain in confidence to answer questions posed to them. Tasks set are carefully differentiated and well-targeted. Consequently, pupils are highly motivated and concentrate hard in lessons.
- Teachers ensure pupils are involved in evaluating how well they are achieving. This contributes to their excellent progress and increases their confidence in making further improvements.
- Teachers manage time well to maximise learning in lessons and across sequences of lessons. There is no time slippage during the smooth transition from input to task work.
- Teachers use observation and probing questioning to great effect during lessons in order to adapt tasks and explanations, so improving learning for pupils. They direct their pupils' discussions highly effectively to encourage them to think more deeply.
- High quality resources, including other adults are used effectively to optimise learning for pupils. Additional adults have a significant impact on pupils' learning.
- Key words from the topic and pupils' work are prominently displayed in every classroom.
- To enable pupils to further their understanding in the topics, some homework is given. This is generally well-received.
- Teachers communicate high expectations about Religious Education to their pupils, and they respond positively.
- Quality feedback leads to the engagement, interest, achievement and progress of pupils. Pupils are given the opportunity to respond, which improves their understanding of what they need to do to improve.
- Effort and achievement are consistently celebrated and praise is used to great effect. Thus adults create positive climates for learning which lead to high levels of motivation from pupils.
- Homework is sometimes given to pupils and *Come and See* newsletters are regularly sent home to inform parents about what their children are learning in the topics. Parents and carers are thus enabled to assist with their children's Religious Education.
- Dedicated Other Faith and Religion Weeks have explored Judaism and Islam. Children visited a Mosque and a visitor of the Jewish faith shared their experiences with the pupils. At the end of each week, the school community gather together to share and celebrate their new learning.

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 regarded as the core subject in the school and has parity with 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 embraced and implemented.
- Leaders and governors ensure that Religious Education is thoroughly planned to meet the needs of different groups of pupils and to secure coherence across different key stages and phases. Leaders rigorously conduct a range of monitoring activities and carefully analyse the tracking of progress and achievement to ensure pupils are meeting their true potential.
- Leaders' and governors' self-evaluation of Religious Education is a coherent reflection of frequent assessment, rigorous 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 excellent outcomes in Religious Education.
- Monitoring and evaluation systems are fully in place, rigorously undertaken and include lesson observations, scrutiny of planning and pupils' work, displays etc. Appropriate supportive feedback is given and any necessary strategic action is taken to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.
- Assessment and tracking procedures are well-established within school practice and data generated enables the identification of underachievement which can then be targeted for improvement. Moderation meetings are held to support staff in their standardising of work.
- The curriculum leader for Religious Education is new to the role since the last inspection but is undertaking it very competently and enthusiastically. She has a clear vision for teaching and learning and a high level of expertise in securing this vision. These are used extremely well to improve teaching and learning in Religious Education, resulting in teaching that is likely to be at least consistently good or better. A useful, comprehensive handbook to guide staff in their delivery has been produced.
- Governors are kept up to date of attainment and progress in Religious Education at termly governors' meetings. There is a named governor with responsibility for and experience in leading the subject who supports and challenges the curriculum leader.

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 gather together respectfully, act with great reverence and are keen to participate in Collective Worship. They enjoy singing, reflect in silence and join in community prayer appropriately and with confidence.

- Pupils regularly lead worship or aspects of worship with confidence, enthusiasm and a degree of independence. They are thoughtful in their planning of liturgy when given the opportunity to do so. Other pupils are engaged by the worship opportunities planned by their peers.
- 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 value and participate voluntarily in liturgy and prayer.
- Most pupils have a good understanding of the Church's liturgical year, seasons and feasts. Appropriate to their age and ability, they prepare acts of worship which fully reflect this understanding.
- The experience of living and working in a faithful, praying community has a positive impact on the spiritual and moral development of all pupils. They have a well-developed sense of respect others. This is reflected in the manner in which 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 prayer is included in all school celebrations. 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 an excellent understanding of the liturgical seasons and the Catholic character of the school.
- Collective Worship is given a high priority in terms of planning, evaluating and resourcing; as a result, experience of Collective Worship is engaging and all members of the community speak positively about these opportunities.
- Relevant staff have a deep understanding of the Church's liturgical year, seasons and feasts and ensure that pupils have exceptional experiences of the Church's liturgical life. Pupils participate in events at key times such as Harvest Festival, Ash Wednesday, Carol Service and the Village Nativity.
- Staff are skilled in helping pupils to deliver quality acts of worship when appropriate. They have a very good 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 positive. The school has great plans to improve provision in this area.

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 provide excellent policies, guidelines and themes to support staff members in their planning and delivery of quality Collective Worship.
- They have an excellent understanding of the Church's liturgical year, seasons and feasts and make these accessible to the pupils in a contemporary context.
- Leaders of Collective Worship within the school are models of excellent practice for staff and pupils.
- They promote pupils' leadership of Collective Worship.
- Leaders offer regular professional development of staff incorporating liturgical formation and the planning for Collective Worship.
- Leaders and governors place high priority Collective Worship as part of their self-evaluation processes with regular reviews of school performance.

What the school needs to do to improve further

- Further develop the work being undertaken in Catholic Life by:
 - continuing to address the areas identified on the Self Evaluation Document;
 - continuing to give children opportunities to undertake roles of responsibility throughout the school.
- Further develop the quality of teaching and purposeful learning in Religious Education by:
 - continuing to redress the balance between the achievement of boys and girls through a variety of methods of recording work;
 - challenging the higher achievers further.
- Further develop the quality of Collective Worship by:
 - continuing to facilitate the attendance and participation of parents and carers in Acts of Worship including Rejoice celebrations;
 - giving children further opportunities to plan Collective Worship in an age appropriate manner.

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