



## ARCHDIOCESE OF LIVERPOOL

### INSPECTION REPORT

### ST. BRIGID'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

#### KNOWSLEY

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Inspection Date 15 May 2017

Inspectors Mrs. Denise Hegarty, Mrs. Maria Eves

Unique Reference Number 104474

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 5 - 11

Number on roll 187

Chair of Governors Father David Potter

Headteacher Mrs. Rachael Tyler

School address Waterpark Drive,  
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Liverpool  
Merseyside  
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Date of last inspection 19 June 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 Brigid's is an average-sized, one-formed entry Voluntary Aided Catholic Primary School situated in Stockbridge Village, in the Knowsley area of the Archdiocese and serves the parish of St Albert's.
- There are 187 children on roll, of whom 137 are baptised Catholic. There are 32 pupils attending the school from other Christian denominations, 4 pupils are from another faith tradition and 14 pupils have no specified denomination.
- There are 11 teachers at the school, 7 of whom are Catholic. Eleven teachers teach Religious Education and 2 have a suitable qualification in Religious Education. One teacher is currently enrolled and studying for the *Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies*.
- St. Brigid's now has its own Governing Body (established in September 2015) but still has strong links with its sister school, St Albert's, following a hard federation of their Governing Bodies (2009-2015).
- The Religious Education Co-ordinator is new to the post since the last inspection.
- Proposals are in place to create a nursery attached to the school from September 2017.

### Key for inspection grades

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

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## Overall effectiveness:

St Brigid's School provides good 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 were involved in the inception and subsequent reviews of the school's Mission Statement. Opportunities are provided at the start of each school year for them to discuss it and appreciate how they can live it out.
- They evidently understand the demands and duties that the living the mission places on them especially in the way they grow in confidence through the school, take responsibility for their actions, and are proud of their achievements.
- They are great ambassadors for the school who have a strong sense of loyalty and take pride in their community.
- They willingly develop the Catholic Life of the school in their day to day classroom life and school activities. They are considerate, caring and polite at all times.
- Because of the good relationships that exist with their teachers and other adults in the school, pupils feel valued and listened to. This contributes to their positive attitudes, outstanding behaviour and enjoyment of school.
- Pupils embrace opportunities to meet their potential in all aspects of school life and benefit from a good range of extra-curricular activities e.g. computing, sports clubs, children's university opportunities etc. These extra-curricular clubs give a sense of belonging and the responsibility of representing the school. Through them, they learn values such as commitment and teamwork.
- Pupils are encouraged to take on roles of responsibility in the school and wider community e.g. as school councillors, play leaders and prefects. Within these roles, they raise awareness to the needs of others and promote justice and reconciliation.
- Pupils are actively involved in developing the Catholic character of the school by raising awareness of and supporting a variety of charities including CAFOD, The Good Shepherd Fund for Nugent Care and Barnardo's. These efforts equip them to lead good lives in following values from the gospel including love, sharing and kindness both now and in the future.
- All pupils from Years 4-6 have the opportunity to actively participate in residential trips (such as Conover Hall). Such experiences impact on the pupils' social, spiritual and moral development as they learn to challenge themselves, make good choices and consider the needs of others in team building activities etc.
- Each year, the Year 6 pupils are invited to attend a retreat day held by the Parish priest at the ancient shrine of Ladyewell. They also attend a day's reflection on Christian living at a local secondary school. These opportunities considerably enhance their spiritual development.

- Restorative Practice is embedded throughout the school and the children learn to be responsible, reflective citizens. Consequently, pupils have a very good sense of right and wrong and apply this in their personal relationships. They take an increasing responsibility for themselves and their actions within the moral framework upheld by the school. They fully appreciate the need to forgive and be forgiven and understand the consequences of their behaviour.
- The children have positive attitudes to personal relationships and show utmost respect to their peers.
- Pupils praise and acknowledge the contribution of others. They show a readiness to embrace and celebrate their lived experiences. They know that they are cared for and appreciate what the school has to offer them.
- They are involved in service to the local community e.g. through singing at a local care home and in collecting and donating food to give to a local food-bank.
- Pupils have also enjoyed learning about Judaism and Hinduism within the curriculum.

### **How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education**

- Pupils' achievement and enjoyment in Religious Education is good.
- In general, they make good progress in relation to their starting points and capabilities.
- Their attainment in Religious Education is good overall. Analysis of assessments undertaken provides evidence of pupils generally attaining an appropriate level for their age and stage of development in each key stage.
- There is little or no difference in performance between pupils of different gender.
- High quality relationships and targeted support ensure that outcomes for pupils with additional or special needs are also good.
- Pupils are becoming increasingly more religiously literate. Their knowledge, understanding and skills are developing appropriate to their age or capacity.
- 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.
- During their interview on the day of inspection, children in Year 2 agreed that they should 'all follow the teachings of Jesus so they can become better people as this would make everybody happier'. Year 6 pupils felt that Jesus' teachings made a difference to their lives as it 'helped them through difficult times and shows them how to forgive'.
- Pupils' engagement in their learning is very good as shown by their interest, sustained concentration and outstanding behaviour in lessons observed.
- Their prior knowledge and understanding of their current topics was very good and clearly evident during lesson introductions, questioning and discussions.
- At interview, pupils proudly showed off their work and explained how they enjoyed their lessons and found them fun and interesting.
- In lessons, pupils are enabled to work independently and collaboratively. They participate actively, co-operate very well with each other in group work and enjoy working with their talking partners in paired discussions. It was a joy to see during lesson observations, how eager and willing they were to report back to the larger group.
- Across the school, children are very courteous and considerate of each others' views and opinions in lessons. They take time to listen to and encourage one another respectfully.

### **How well pupils respond to and participate in Collective Worship**

- Pupils' response to and participation in Collective Worship is good.
- They show interest, respond well and act with reverence and respect at such times.
- Pupils' knowledge of prayer and liturgy is increasing as they progress through the school.

- They appreciate and are open to the Word of God in the scriptures showing reverence and esteem.
- They understand the recognised format for Collective Worship and have a good understanding of the Church's main seasonal celebrations. Their liturgical skills are developing well. They are becoming practised in the use of scripture, religious artefacts and in writing their own prayers. They are at ease and act with integrity when praying with others who have different beliefs and attitudes to spirituality.
- Pupils sing joyfully, reflect in silence from an early age and join in community prayers appropriately and with confidence at designated times throughout the day.
- The older pupils have enjoyed planning and delivering worship for their peers.
- Children across the school thoroughly enjoy their class assemblies and are excited to invite their families to share in their celebrations.

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

- The quality of teaching and purposeful learning in Religious Education is good. It is consistently effective in ensuring that pupils are interested, engaged and make good progress.
- Teachers work hard and plan well. They are good role models for the children to emulate. A range of teaching styles are deployed across the school to interest and motivate pupils.
- Teachers build on pupils' prior learning so that the work consolidates and extends their knowledge and understanding.
- A great start is made in Early Years where work matches the interests and curiosity of children. This is built on across the school.
- Time is used well and lessons are well-paced.
- Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to work effectively on their own and collaboratively in pairs and groups.
- All adults have high expectations of the pupils they work with in terms of attitude and behaviour. Pupils respond enthusiastically and with outstanding behaviour for learning.
- Pupils' contributions are valued and appreciated.
- Very good use is made of resources including Information and Communication Technology to maximise learning. These resources are relevant, readily available and appropriate to the age and capacity of the pupils.
- Staff members are encouraged to be creative in their approach.
- Adults in the classroom are excellent role models for pupils to emulate. Additional adults support pupils with special educational needs and enable them to make similar progress to their peers.
- Key words are used well, displayed and reiterated during lessons thus enabling pupils to improve their religious vocabulary.
- Many teachers use excellent questioning techniques skilfully to challenge children's thinking and address misconceptions.
- The assessment of pupils' work in Religious Education is good. Pupils are provided with feedback, orally and through the marking process. Good use is made of 'fix-its' by most teachers to correct misunderstandings. Teachers use their assessments well to inform future planning.
- The school has good assessment strategies which provide information on the achievement of all the pupils. Work is moderated and good use is made of context sheets to facilitate this process. Data collected is entered onto tracking sheets which are used effectively to identify areas of development for individuals and groups of pupils. Teachers are thus able to identify how well pupils are achieving and tackle underachievement of individuals and in groups.
- Lessons frequently contain opportunities for children to pray and reflect on their work.

- Effort and achievement are celebrated through positive marking and verbal encouragement. Up to date displays are used to celebrate and reinforce learning and to create a positive atmosphere for learning.

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

- The Religious Education curriculum is good at meeting pupils' needs and promoting pupils' learning. It is treated as a core subject.
- Using the *Come and See* programme recommended by the Archdiocese, the school meets the requirements of the Religious Education Curriculum Directory. 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.
- Planning ensures full coverage of the Religious Education programme. Imaginative and well-planned strategies are deployed to enrich pupils' learning. These are evaluated effectively.
- The school implements new curriculum developments as appropriate and purchases suitable, modern resources in support.
- Displays around the school are linked to the curriculum and celebrate work.
- Gospel values are taught implicitly and explicitly.
- Enrichment activities such as visits and visitors have a positive impact on the curriculum and widen horizons for pupils. Parish volunteers and workers e.g. members of the Legion of Mary speak to the children and activities undertaken with Barnardo's, N.S.P.C.C. and CAFOD enhance the curriculum. Visits are made to other places of worship and children meet with pupils from other schools.
- Many cross curricular opportunities are taken especially in art and literacy.
- The extra-curricular activities provided by the school promote respect for the gifts and talents of each individual and help to raise self esteem. These gifts and talents are acknowledged and celebrated well in assemblies, newsletters and on the school website.
- The Religious Education curriculum provides good opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral development and vocation. Alongside teaching, learning and the life of the school, pupils receive a good understanding of their rights and responsibilities as citizens. A full and varied calendar of activities supports this development.
- Education for Personal Relationships has fostered positive attitudes in pupils.
- Children have explored the beliefs and values of the Jewish faith and Hindu religion. This helps to promote tolerance and respect for those who think differently.

### **The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school**

- The quality of Collective Worship provided is good and reflects the Catholic character of the school well. It has a high profile and is central to the life of the school.
- Collective Worship plays a key part in meeting the spiritual needs of the pupils. They are supported and guided well through their understanding of their place in the world.
- Opportunities are provided to ensure full, active and conscious participation of the whole school community. All adults present participate appropriately and are excellent role models for the children to emulate. Worship is generally engaging and inclusive.
- Prayer and liturgy are used effectively as a source of inspiration to help pupils reflect upon their lives and work within the local and wider community.
- Children are enabled to pray formally and informally.

- Experiences are provided to increase the children's spirituality, awe, wonderment and excitement. Very good use is made of music, artefacts and information and communication technology to enhance worship.
- The liturgical calendar is followed well and significant times in the Church's year e.g. Advent, Lent, harvest time and St Brigid's day, are recognised and celebrated. The parish priest and other visitors often enhance these celebrations.
- Training in planning and leading Collective Worship has been provided since the last inspection. Suitable, modern resources have been purchased and are used efficiently.
- The teachers provide some opportunities to help children, particularly in the older year groups, to develop the skills necessary to plan and lead Collective Worship and to evaluate it effectively.
- Some opportunities are provided for parents, carers and the local community 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 at 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.
- St. Brigid's Catholic Primary School has a welcoming Catholic ethos and a strong family feeling of belonging. There are positive relationships at every level within the school and close links with their sister school and the parish community.
- An ethos of respect and empathy permeates throughout this inclusive school and leaders expect all members of the school community to act in keeping with this ethos to enable all to flourish.
- The values the school upholds include love, care, charity, honesty, tolerance and peace. These are regularly referred to and are evident in the day to day life of the school. Certificates and rewards are given to celebrate pupils who depict these values and who are role models in their conduct and in their relationship with others. The dedicated Headteacher leads by example.
- Diversity is valued and celebrated. There is a great willingness throughout the school to serve the community and promote the common good. Pastoral care has a high priority and is given to groups, individuals and classes as needed.
- Leaders are committed to developing the Catholic Life of the school and show an excellent understanding of and commitment to the Mission of the Church. They strive to provide a stimulating learning environment in which the uniqueness of each individual is recognised and valued.
- This commitment is reflected in the school's own Mission Statement, '*Trusting in God, we love, believe and achieve.*' All who form part of the school community were involved in the development of the Mission Statement and its subsequent reviews. It underpins the school's approach to managing behaviour and effective learning for each individual. Past pupils have been invited back to share how they lived out the school's mission during their time at the school with the current cohort.
- The school provides induction and in-service training to enable all staff members to further understand the Church's Mission in Education and to play their unique parts in it.
- Leaders, governors and managers use the monitoring data available well to evaluate the school's performance, celebrate, and plan future improvements.

- The Self Evaluation Document provides strong evidence of the school's monitoring, analysis and self challenge. It is a comprehensive document which gives an honest and accurate picture of the Catholic Life and work of the school. The analysis provides a basis to celebrate strengths and outlines areas for development. It is rigorous in identifying targets, timescales and lines of accountability.
- The quality of provision for Collective Worship is important to the school. A policy and guidelines for its implementation are in place.
- A range of opportunities for spiritual and moral developments are provided for pupils, such as the promotion of gospel values and retreat days. There are many opportunities for personal reflection on their lives and their learning experiences.
- Matters of social justice are given prominence with examples of awareness and fund raising for a variety of good causes e.g. the local food bank.
- Leadership at all levels respects difference, values diversity and ensures equal opportunities for all. Funding is available to invite visitors of other faiths and religions into school to share their faith and help to foster positive attitudes and respect for the beliefs of others.
- The school works in partnership with the church to ensure children are prepared for and receive the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Eucharist. It assists with communication between parents and parish catechists. Members of staff attend the key celebrations and support the wider Catholic Life of pupils and their families.
- Parents are consulted very regularly and involved in a variety of ways in the life of the school. They are kept well-informed through regular newsletters which always contain good information about the school's Catholic Life.
- The Governing Body is significant in its contribution and pro-active involvement in the day to day life of the school. Members fulfil their responsibilities outstandingly and are involved in monitoring and evaluating the Catholic Life. Governors held a 'Day of Recollection' at the start of the school year to prayerfully reflect on their roles within the school community. They support and challenge leaders and ensure all policies reflect the school's mission and ethos.
- The chair of governors is also the link governor for Religious Education and the parish priest. He is a regular and welcome visitor to the school who ensures the Catholic Life of the school is given a high profile.

**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 good at promoting, monitoring and evaluating the provision for Religious Education and in planning and implementing improvement to outcomes for pupils.
- The pupils across the school are offered a good provision to enable them to live out their faith and follow the teachings of Christ to the full.
- Governors take responsibility to ensure that 10% quality time is dedicated to the teaching of Religious Education.
- A good budget is provided for the subject that is commensurate with other core areas. Modern resources are purchased and deployed well.
- Planning, assessments and children's work are scrutinised, learning walks are undertaken, analysed and appropriate feedback and support given as necessary. Regular interviews with pupils inform leaders about their response to provision.

- Formal assessment tasks are undertaken in line with Archdiocesan guidance. Staff members are becoming more familiar with levels of attainment and more secure in their levelling of work. Class teachers' assessments and evaluations inform future planning. Work is moderated within the school and within the local cluster group. Results are analysed by the subject leader and inform development planning.
- The Religious Education co-ordinator leads and guides the subject well showing great organisation and commitment. She has a clear understanding of the performance of pupils and the priorities of the school. Assessment information is collated and progress is tracked across the school and shared with the leadership team and governors. Archdiocesan training and briefing sessions are attended and new initiatives introduced when appropriate. Good documentation guides and directs all staff in the delivery of the subject.
- Religious Education is regularly the focus of staff meetings and briefings. Continuing professional development opportunities are available for all staff both internally and at the Archdiocesan centre.
- Governors are kept well-informed. They are interested and enthusiastic.
- The designated link governor, who is also parish priest, meets regularly with the subject co-ordinator and is frequently involved in helping to deliver aspects of the curriculum. He is fully up to date with current practices and issues.
- Newsletters are provided for parents and carers each term that outline the curriculum and indicate how they can help to support their children's Religious Education. They receive an annual report on progress and are kept further informed through verbal reports on Parents' Evenings. Parents are thus able to discuss their children's learning and extend their knowledge and experiences outside of school.
- Achievement and effort are celebrated especially at school assemblies and celebrations which are much appreciated and enjoyed by pupils.

## What the school needs to do to improve further:

- Raise attainment and accelerate progress in Religious Education further to ensure the needs of all children are fully met and they are sufficiently challenged by:
  - the consistent use of 'Driver Words' in planning, questioning, tasks and marking;
  - making more effective use of plenary sessions and marking to move learning on;
  - consistently using the Archdiocesan planners for Religious Education thus focussing more emphatically on the differentiation of activities.
- Improve the provision for Collective Worship by:
  - providing children with more opportunities to develop the skills necessary to prepare and lead Collective Worship, in an age appropriate manner, across the whole school;
  - ensuring worship takes place each day in a variety of settings;
  - developing a range of prayer styles;
  - using Scripture consistently in the 'Listen' part of the structure for worship;
  - involving parents, carers and the wider parish community more regularly in Collective Worship.
- Improve the school's website to fully reflect the great things that go on in Religious Education and the Catholic Life of the school by:
  - posting photographs, appropriate policies and relevant curriculum information on it.
- Continue to implement the areas for development also identified in the school's own self-evaluation document. These include:
  - further developing whole school moderation of work and assessments to increase staff's confidence and accuracy;
  - looking for further ways to be innovative, creative and exciting so pupils receive a lively, relevant and inspiring Religious Education.

# INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

## **OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS**

How effective the school is in providing Catholic Education	2
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## **OUTCOMES FOR PUPILS**

<b>How good outcomes are for individuals and groups of pupils</b>	
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	2
How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship	2

## **PROVISION**

<b>How effective the provision is for Catholic Education</b>	
The quality of teaching and how purposeful learning is in Religious Education	2
The extent to which the Religious Education curriculum promotes pupils' learning	2
The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school	2

## **LEADERS AND MANAGERS**

<b>How effective leaders, governors and managers are in developing the Catholic Life of the School</b>	
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	2

<b>Key to judgements: Grade 1 is Outstanding, Grade 2 Good, Grade 3 Requires Improvement and Grade 4 Inadequate</b>
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