



DIOCESE OF  
**SHREWSBURY**

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DENOMINATIONAL INSPECTION REPORT:

**THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL  
AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

School: St Anne's Catholic Primary School  
Address: Highfield South  
Rock Ferry  
Birkenhead  
Wirral  
CH42 4NE

Tel No: 0151 645 3682

URN: 105088

Headteacher: Mrs L Prescott

Chair of Governors: Mrs M Tyrell

Date of Inspection: 25 May 2022

Inspectors: Mrs C Morgan  
Mrs R Moores

# **ST ANNE'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT**

Loving and learning together in Harmony with  
Christ

**SCHOOL: St Anne's, Rock Ferry**

**DATE OF LAST INSPECTION: 09 November 2015**

**JUDGEMENT FROM PREVIOUS INSPECTION: Outstanding**

**AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT FROM PREVIOUS INSPECTION**

The monitoring inspection in 2015 did not identify any areas for development.

The school, however, identified its own areas for progress:

- i. To develop and further embed high quality child-led Prayer and Liturgy in all year groups
- ii. To use 'Balance' to track progress throughout the school for 'The Way, the Truth and The Life'
- iii. To be prepared and achieve a good Diocesan Inspection.

**PROGRESS MADE WITH AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT FROM THE PREVIOUS**

Although the recent pandemic has impacted considerably on the school, they have made good progress in all the areas identified for development:

- i. Throughout the school, pupils experience high quality prayer or liturgical prayer, either with the whole school or in their class. All pupils are actively involved with Prayer and Liturgy: leading, discussing, sharing and reflecting. A Prayer and Liturgy evidence book in each class demonstrates both picture evidence and pupil responses.
- ii. Work in pupil books is of high quality, and children now make greater progress from their individual starting points, therefore increasing the number of pupils assessed as working at a higher level. The 'Balance' assessment tool is used for each Religious Education (RE) lesson and at the end of each half term. Staff use 'Balance' to assist with planning, progression, and coverage and use 'Balance' scores when marking pupil books. Teachers encourage pupils to use them for self-assessment.
- iii. A file for each area to be inspected has been created and maintained. RE assessment evidence files have been created for each academic year (children's work and assessment evidence from each year group are kept in these files). Evidence has been collected to illustrate 'good' RE being a central part of everyday school life. Observations and monitoring of curriculum RE has been carried out and feedback given. The DSEF has been updated and used as a working document.

**OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS:** how effective is the school in providing Catholic Education.

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**This is an outstanding Catholic school**

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*The above judgement on overall effectiveness is based on all the available evidence following the evaluation of:*

**CATHOLIC LIFE**

1

**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

1

**COLLECTIVE WORSHIP**

1

**Summary of key findings:**

- St Anne's Catholic Primary School is an outstanding school where the incredibly caring and supportive community is committed to its Mission Statement, *'Loving and Learning Together in Harmony with Christ'*. Pupils feel safe and nurtured by this faith-centred school and know that their needs and opinions form a vital part of all the school does
- The dedicated Headteacher is unswerving in her drive to carry out the Church's mission in education and she, with the team of staff, is a strength of the school. Supported by the whole school community, the school strives to provide for the needs of pupils and their families
- Hard-working, informed and deeply committed governors are passionate about St Anne's; they challenge and support the Headteacher and staff in providing outstanding Catholic Education
- The school is an oasis of calm. Pupils, staff, and the school community are surrounded by an environment where they are encouraged to flourish physically, emotionally, and spiritually. Pastoral support is outstanding and relationships at all levels are a strength of the school Pupils contribute to, and benefit extensively from, the Catholic Life of St Anne's
- From their varied starting points, the majority of pupils make good, and some make outstanding progress in RE, especially when their learning is enhanced and deepened through the use of a range of creative strategies
- Staff, parents, and pupils appreciate the calm atmosphere and the help and support available to them as part of the Catholic Life of the school
- Parents are extremely supportive of the school. One commented, "The school is a warm inviting place where the ethos of the Catholic faith is clearly visible."
- Leaders and governors, through appropriate professional development in school, and from diocesan and other external providers, ensure St Anne's delivers high quality RE and Collective Worship

- Leaders and Governors have, after the easing of restrictions surrounding the recent pandemic, restarted their monitoring and evaluation of all aspects of Catholic Education at St Anne's, identifying areas for development and setting targets for improvement to ensure the school fulfills its mission.

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

- As part of their future development, St Anne's should seek to develop further links and initiatives with the parish and to re-establish links with other Catholic schools
- St Anne's should look at the way in which Scripture is shared with pupils to ensure progression throughout the school. The use of a Lectionary and age-appropriate Bibles would enhance provision
- Monitoring and Evaluation procedures were paused during the pandemic. As these procedures resume, St Anne's would benefit from a more rigorous approach.

### **Information about the Inspection**

The Inspection of St Anne's Catholic Primary School was carried out under the requirements of the Education Act 2005, and in accordance with the Shrewsbury Diocesan Framework and Schedule for Denominational Inspections approved by the Bishop of Shrewsbury. The inspection reviews and evaluates how effective the school is in providing Catholic education. This process begins with the school's own self-evaluation and the inspection schedule follows the criteria set by the National Board of Religious Inspectors and Advisers (NBRIA 2017).

The inspector reviewed in detail the following aspects:

- The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school
- The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school
- How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education
- How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship
- The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school
- How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education, Collective Worship and the Catholic Life of the school

The inspection was carried out by two inspectors over one day:

- The Inspectors observed teaching and learning in the eight classes
- Five Acts of Collective Worship (Prayer and Liturgical Prayer) were observed: one was led by the Headteacher and the Y5 Prayer Leaders; two were led by teachers in YR and Y2, with contributions from pupils and one in Y6 was led by pupil prayer leaders
- Discussions were held with the Headteacher, Religious Education Coordinator, the interim Parish Priest, the Chair of Governors, two other Governors, a group of pupils, and 6 members of staff (support staff, teaching support staff and teachers)
- A sample of pupils' Religious Education workbooks from every class in the current school year was scrutinized, along with a wide range of documents evidencing the school's Religious Education, Catholic Life, and Collective Worship
- RE Coordinator files, Denominational Inspection files, the Headteacher's reports to governors and minutes of governing body meetings were also scrutinised
- Pupil, parent, and staff questionnaires were reviewed
- A range of documents was made available and scrutinised including the Diocesan Self Evaluation Form (DSEF), the Religious Education Action Plan which is within the School Improvement Plan, the school's Monitoring and Moderation files, the school's CPD records, as well as a range of school policies
- The school's website was checked for further evidence
- Displays around the school and in classrooms were also noted
- A range of class books and other evidence showing the celebrations, events and prayer life of the school were also noted.

### **Information about this school**

- St Anne's Catholic Primary School is a one form entry primary school, which is made up of 8 classes, including the Nursery, which also admits 2 years old children. There are currently 222 pupils on roll, 46% of whom are baptised Catholics
- The school serves St Anne's Parish, Rock Ferry
- The Headteacher was appointed in 2016 and there have been several changes in the Senior Leadership Team and staffing since the last inspection
- There is the equivalent of 10 teachers and 12.6 support assistants in the school
- Of the 12 teachers in the school, 70% are Catholic
- 5 teachers hold the Catholic Certificate of Religious Studies (CCRS) qualification, and two are currently undertaking the qualification
- The percentage of pupils with SEND, and those who are disadvantaged are all well above the national average
- Most of the Y6 pupils transfer to a Catholic secondary school
- The deprivation indicator places many of the school's pupils in the bottom 5% of deprived areas in England.

## Full report – inspection judgments

### CATHOLIC LIFE

**The Catholic Life of the school is outstanding**

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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 of the Catholic Life of the school	1

- At St Anne’s the Mission Statement, ‘*Loving and Learning Together in Harmony with Christ,*’ is understood and lived out daily by all members of the school community. Pupils, staff, and governors regularly review the statement and renew their commitment to developing and embedding the Gospel values
- The dedicated headteacher, experienced RE coordinators, Senior Leadership Team, interim Parish Priest, and Deacon, together with governors, are deeply committed to the Catholic Life of the school. Through their welcome and support for all those involved with the school, they give daily witness to their faith
- Pupils are offered many opportunities to develop their personal faith, both in their school and in their community. Almost all pupils take advantage of these opportunities, and they understand and appreciate how the Catholic Life of the school contributes to their own and others’ lives
- Leaders and governors show great commitment to ensuring the Catholic Life of the school has the highest priority. Many give generously of their time and talents to develop ways in which the school can engage with its community
- The recent pandemic had a significant impact on the usual Catholic Life of the school. However, Leaders and Governors worked hard to ensure all pupils and families were included, using online assemblies, online RE Lessons and social media apps, as well as supporting families by providing space in school to help support the local community
- It is evident, through their outstanding behaviour, that pupils understand how the values learned as part of the school’s Catholic ethos support them and others in living and learning in harmony. They show respect and care for visitors, for their teachers and for each other
- From the earliest years, pupils develop an understanding of how working together supports them in their faith and in their learning. They show tolerance and understanding of each other’s needs
- St Anne’s is committed to developing pupil voice. Leaders and governors listen and respond to pupils’ ideas and interests, and this contributes to the ways in which pupils are encouraged to respond to the needs of others, especially those who are less fortunate than themselves
- Pupils speak about how they can help others and how this is part of what they do in living out the Mission Statement. They regularly raise funds for CAFOD and local charities
- The members of the Mini Vinnies group are enthusiastic about their work and commitment. Year 5 pupils show great dedication to their roles as Prayer Leaders and

regularly support other classes in planning and delivering Prayer and Liturgical Prayer. Pupils report that they enjoy their times of prayer and the different ways in which they can offer thanks and praise to God

- During the recent pandemic, many families appreciated the online assemblies, Prayer, and Liturgical Prayer, that the school planned and delivered. Many pupils had to remain at home and the school also ensured that online RE lessons took place
- As part of the practical support for families during this period, the school cook provided food parcels and the Headteacher and staff also lent practical and emotional support
- St Anne's provides outstanding pastoral support for its pupils and often for their families. The whole school environment has been planned to provide a place where, as soon as they enter, pupils are enveloped in atmosphere of purposeful calm
- Staff give freely of their time to ensure that, even before the school day begins, they are available to talk and support with pupils. This time of 'Calm and Connect' enables pupils to start their day in a positive and calm way. In addition, there is a 'Rainbow' room and a Nurture room where the Deputy Head works with pupils who may be struggling to deal with their emotions and problems can sit quietly or talk. A therapy dog is an additional source of comfort and emotional support
- The school employs an Educational Psychologist, a Counsellor and a Speech and Language therapist to ensure high quality support for pupils from the earliest age
- Staff and pupils appreciate the many ways in which they are encouraged to develop their personal skills and attributes to become happy, confident members of the community
- The Catholic tradition of the school is respected and valued by pupils and their families. Links with other local, Catholic schools are in place and these provide support and challenge
- Sacramental preparation and celebration will take place this year for the first time since the restrictions surrounding the pandemic eased
- Parents are looking forward to being welcomed into school once again to share in celebrations and Masses for feast days and special occasions. They appreciate the inclusive atmosphere of the school. One commented, "... love going to school, they feel happy and safe. They know they have teachers who will listen to them and encourage them to be the best they can be."
- Leaders and governors ensure that Diocesan policies and guidance are followed and show great commitment to ensuring that staff new to the school are supported in understanding and developing the Catholic Life of the school
- Attendance at Diocesan events and Continuing Professional Development and Formation (CPDF), as well as involvement in representative groups is a priority for the school and helps to ensure the Catholic Life of the school is nurtured
- Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is taught in line with Diocesan policies and, following appropriate consultation and CPDF, the school uses the scheme 'Life to the Full'. The RSE lead supports staff in planning and delivering high quality lessons in RSE, appropriate to the age and ability of the pupils, so that they are developing a good understanding of loving relationships within a Christian context
- Governors are fully committed to the Catholic Life of the school. Many are also involved with St Anne's parish, support the school in celebrations and liturgies and are once again becoming more involved in the life of the school now that the rules around the pandemic have eased
- Governors and leaders understand the school very well and are knowledgeable about the community and the part the school plays in supporting its pupils and families in many aspects of their lives. The Chair of Governors meets regularly with the Headteacher, and Catholic Social Teaching is at the heart of the school's mission

- Governors are able to plan strategically and understand and contribute to the RE Action Plan and the DSEF so that the Catholic Life of St Anne's continues improve and develop
- Parents report that they look forward to resuming a full part in the life of the school. They appreciate the ways in which the school supports the pupils and provides a welcome for all. One said, *"The children often come home excited to tell us what they have learnt and show in their actions how they are learning about their faith"*.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

### Religious Education is outstanding

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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

- St Anne's has given a high priority to improving the progress of pupils throughout the school. It is evident from the high standards and in the variety of challenges and activities seen in pupils' workbooks that almost all pupils make good, and some make outstanding progress, given their various starting points
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons is excellent; they settle to work quickly, are attentive and respond well to challenge
- Pupils demonstrate considerable knowledge about their faith and show that they are able to apply this knowledge to their decision making about their behaviour and their actions towards others. They are able to talk about how being involved in group such as Mini Vinnies helps them put their Catholic faith in action to help, and supports others in their school, their community, and the wider world
- Pupils with additional needs are well supported in lessons. Teaching and support staff ensure that all pupils are given appropriate challenge to help them develop and achieve to the best of their ability
- In all the lessons observed, pupils were able to recall prior learning and to demonstrate their knowledge of the topic being taught. They were quietly confident in expressing their opinions. They worked well in lessons and any discussion between pupils was quiet and thoughtful, reflecting the pacy but calm atmosphere all staff endeavour to create and sustain
- The calm and purposeful environment in each teaching area and around the school helps pupils to concentrate in their lessons and to focus on their learning, giving them the time and space to inform their thinking
- In all the lessons observed, teaching was at least good, and some was outstanding. Teachers plan and deliver a variety of activities that support and engage pupils in their learning, ensuring that they extend their thinking and link what they have learnt about their faith to their own words and actions
- Parents are confident that the school provides a high quality RE curriculum which engages the pupils and promotes high standards. A parent commented: '*...I am very happy with RE at St Anne's...*'
- During the pandemic, 29% of pupils were in school and many were learning at home. St Anne's ensured that communication with pupils and their families was paramount. Using online apps and an online classroom accessed through the school website, all pupils had the opportunity to experience high quality RE lessons. 55 (government) laptops were distributed, and home learning packs were available for all pupils
- Once pupils returned to school, St Anne's made arrangements for an additional RE lesson each Friday morning so that any gaps identified in pupils' learning during the pandemic could be addressed. This ensured pupils were ready to study subsequent topics in the RE scheme, '*The Way, The Truth and The Life*'

- The dedicated RE lead and interim RE lead have worked hard to develop an effective and efficient way of assessing pupils' progress in RE. Working with colleagues in other schools, the assessment tool 'Balance' now includes RE, and teachers assess against these statements for every lesson and assess overall progress every half term
- In discussion, staff were clear about the ways in which they are supported to deliver high quality curriculum RE by the RE leads and the Headteacher
- The Headteacher, senior leaders and governors are relentless in their drive to improve the provision for pupils, and, through their skilled leadership, St Anne's is in a good position to embrace developments in curriculum RE such as the new Religious Education Curriculum Directory due in September 2022
- In discussion, governors and leaders were able to articulate their commitment to St Anne's and the depth of their knowledge of the school, its community and the needs of the pupils and families
- Leaders and Governors fully comply with the Bishops' Conference Requirements and RE is very well resourced to support the high priority given to it. At least 10% is clearly identified in the timetable for specific Religious Education teaching in all key stages.

## COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

**Collective Worship is outstanding**

**1**

How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship	1
The quality of provision for Collective Worship	1
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship	1

- Pupils at St Anne's happily participate in different forms of Prayer and Liturgical Prayer. They are reverent, sing joyfully and reflect in silence. Their behaviour is excellent
- Mini Vinnie Prayer Leaders regularly prepare and lead Prayer and Liturgical Prayer for class groups and support whole school worship. The Prayer Leaders help and support others in planning and leading prayer. There are well-established processes in place to support this
- Pupils have very good knowledge and understanding of the church's liturgical year, seasons, and feasts and this is evident in the displays in the classrooms and around the school
- Following the pandemic, when the majority of online Prayer and Liturgical Prayer was planned and delivered by the Senior Leadership Team, pupils are now becoming more confident in praying, leading and taking part in prayer times together
- According to their age and ability, pupils are encouraged to choose appropriate religious artefacts for their prayer focus and as they grow, to choose readings and music as well. The use of a Lectionary would enhance provision further
- Almost all pupils are confident when praying traditional and more contemporary prayers. They sometimes offer their own extempore (spontaneous) prayers during Class Prayer times
- Pupils appreciate that the experience of being part of a faithful, praying community helps them to develop spiritually and morally. They show deep respect for those of other faiths and recognise that others also have experience of living in a strong faith community
- St Anne's promotes a variety of Prayer experiences, including whole school worship, class group worship and Key Stage worship. Whole school and Key Stage worship have been limited because of the pandemic but the school has worked hard to ensure high quality Collective Worship was available for all pupils, both in school and at home
- Prayer & Liturgy is central to the life of the school for pupils and staff. It is given the highest possible priority and there is a clear purpose, message, and direction
- Pupils and staff enjoy the opportunities they are given to participate in various forms of prayer and worship
- Resources are appropriate although further thought should be given to ensuring that resources such as Bibles match the skills and ages of the pupils
- Through support and CPDF, staff are becoming more skillful in helping pupils to plan and lead high quality prayer and liturgy with a variety of methods and styles of prayer
- Now that the restrictions relating to the pandemic have eased, St Anne's is able to welcome parents and carers into school and church. Parental responses show that they

have missed being part of the school celebrations and that they are looking forward to joining them again

- St Anne's Parish Church is near to school and so frequent visits, to enhance their learning in RE and for celebrations, are again taking place
- The deeply committed Headteacher, along with the committed and experienced Religious Education leads, support staff to deliver high quality Prayer and Liturgical Prayer through modelling and through CPDF
- During the inspection, the Mini Vinnies group was able to describe how they planned and led prayer and how they supported other pupils with planning and delivering class prayer and liturgical prayer. They could give examples of how they tried to live out the Gospel message in their daily lives
- St Anne's provides many opportunities for prayer, liturgical prayer, and liturgy, in school and in church, where pupils are offered a wide range of experiences, which help to deepen their faith
- An appropriate and relevant prayer focus in each classroom encourages pupils to gather for prayer, to engage in individual, silent prayer, and an opportunity to reflect on the Gospel message
- Governors and link Governors are pleased to return to visiting school regularly. They participate in meetings to discuss Prayer and Liturgical activities. Monitoring and Evaluation of Collective Worship has been interrupted but is now resuming. Along with the Headteacher and Religious Education Coordinator, Link governors report regularly to governors on the quality and provision for Collective Worship either through verbal feedback or more formal reports
- Governors and parents are proud of the high standard of Collective Worship offered by the school and appreciate it as a firm foundation for the school's mission in celebrating its Catholic faith.