



## **CHARACTERISTICS AND CONTEXT OF THE SCHOOL**

Holy Family is a Voluntary Aided Roman Catholic primary school serving the needs of the parish of Holy Family and Holy Rosary, Oldham. There are 212 children on roll including 26 part time children in the nursery. The school lies within a significantly disadvantaged area of Oldham. 49% of the children are entitled to Free School Meals. Attainment of children on entry to school is significantly below the national average. Children make good progress during their time at the school and therefore leave the school with good levels of attainment. The school is predominantly White British with only 11% of children coming from an ethnic minority background. The school currently has 29% of children on the Special Needs Register.

## **OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL IS OUTSTANDING**

Holy Family is an outstanding Catholic school offering children a rich faith experience and exemplary pastoral care. The headteacher leads the school with a clear vision and sense of purpose, recognising the dignity and value of every member of the community. The governors are supportive, challenging, proactive and committed to their leadership role. They have been instrumental in shaping the vision of the school especially in the implementation of the 5W's and new RE initiatives. The school's priority for those in the greatest need, raising achievement, inclusivity and personal development, ensures that all pupils receive an outstanding education. Lessons are stimulating and innovative and high quality displays around the school clearly demonstrate the Word of God. Monitoring and assessment of the Religious Education curriculum has ensured that there has been significant development since the last inspection. The development of the chaplaincy team has enhanced the spiritual life of the school. Parents feel welcome and at ease in school and able to talk to staff about their child's progress. There is a good relationship with the parish and the parish priest is a regular visitor.

### **KEY STRENGTHS OF THE SCHOOL INCLUDE:**

- **The spiritual leadership of the Headteacher alongside her Deputy. Staff and governors share a collective vision and demonstrate a deep commitment to the Church's mission in education.**
- **The outreach to parents, families and the local community is outstanding.**
- **The quality of religious education and spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is outstanding.**
- **The work of the school Chaplaincy Team is outstanding.**

## **THE QUALITY OF CATHOLIC LEADERSHIP IS OUTSTANDING**

The leadership team are energised by the task of leading this school and outcomes for children have rapidly improved. The school has shown resilience and determination to adapt and has achieved great success in providing for the children in the context of challenging circumstances. There is unequivocal and explicit evidence that the dedicated Headteacher and her Deputy have gone above and beyond to support families and reach out to the local community. The Headteacher is committed to many community groups and partnerships within the locality and Diocese. The governors are supportive of her work, proactive and committed to the aims of the school. They effectively assist the Headteacher in formulating the vision and prioritizing those of greatest need within the school and community. The Chair of Governors works closely with the Headteacher to ensure all the governors are aware of current strengths and areas for development. Self-evaluation of the school's work at all levels is a coherent and accurate reflection of rigorous monitoring, searching analysis and self- challenge. Strong leadership from the Religious Education coordinators has ensured that there has been significant improvement since the last inspection. Appraisal of teachers is thorough and effective. Religious Education and the spiritual life of the school are prioritized in the School Improvement Plan and Headteacher reports to governors. Leadership skills for the children are developed through the varied organisations within the school, including the Chaplaincy Team. The Deputy Headteacher is a member of the REAL group and a lead teacher of the Diocesan curriculum pilot group. Spiritual, moral,

social and cultural education is fully embedded across all areas of the curriculum. The Parish Priest is fully involved in the religious life of the school.

### **THE QUALITY OF THE WORD OF GOD COMMUNITY IS OUTSTANDING**

The school is continually developing the RE scheme, The Way, The Truth and The Life through new initiatives and the creative curriculum. The school has been invited to join a pilot group of schools to consider an alternative RE provisions over the next 6 months. The Diocese has supported the school's application for a Quality Mark in Religious Education. Overall, teaching and learning was found to be outstanding due to some inspirational teaching and exemplary questioning by teachers. Using of works of art and video to inspire and challenge pupils was also considered exemplary practice. Pupil background knowledge was found to be of a higher than normal level due to significant prior knowledge. Lessons moved forward quickly and in the majority of lessons pupils clearly achieved the learning objective because they were given time to do so. In lessons that were judged 'good' during the inspection, more could have been done to challenge the able pupils and give them the opportunities to lead their learning. Marking is having a positive impact on learning and pupils are responding to the teacher's comments, but this would be further improved through a more rigorous insistence that best practice was adopted by all teachers. Pupils are given target for RE based upon the assessment guidelines. Standards are high in pupils' exercise books and progress over time is outstanding. Pupils Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural education was found to be outstanding and throughout all aspects of the school. World religions are taught as part of the Religious Education curriculum and this helps children to understand and respect the beliefs and culture of others. The Religious Education budget is set according to the needs of the curriculum and the Catholic life of the school and is adjusted on a yearly basis in line with other core subjects. The school prioritises Religious Education on their professional development programme. Religious Education is not just a subject, but a lived experience in this school.

### **THE QUALITY OF THE WELCOME COMMUNITY IS OUTSTANDING**

Jesus Christ is at the heart of this welcoming and caring school. During the past 18 months the school has embraced the 'what would Jesus do' initiative which has had a significant impact on relationships within school. The school reaches out to vulnerable members of the school community and they work extremely work to ensure all pupils achieve their full potential. Pupils clearly understood the importance of welcoming others into their community and caring for each other. They demonstrated their understanding in a variety of contexts and they are living examples of the school's Mission Statement. The pupils' sense of ownership and responsibility for what happens in their school was outstanding. The school actively seeks to engage with and support all members of the wider community. Parents were extremely appreciative of all the things the school does to support families and vulnerable pupils. They are particularly appreciative of the way the school communicates with parents, the welcome they receive when visiting the school and work of the Learning Mentor. Parents are encouraged to be actively involved in school life. Members of the parish and local community share in the life of the school. The parish and school share responsibility for supporting pupils through the Sacramental Programme. All members of staff demonstrate a keen sense of community affiliation and the quality of relationships exemplifies respect for all members of the school community. The school is highly regarded within the local community.

### **THE QUALITY OF THE WELFARE COMMUNITY IS OUTSTANDING**

The mission statement reflects the ethos of the school by showing love and respect for everybody. Behaviour in the classrooms and around the school is outstanding. The mindfulness and medication activities are helping the children with self-control and self-awareness. Parents were extremely complimentary about the support they receive from all members of staff, but reserved particular praise for the support they receive from the Headteacher. The school provides a variety of activities to ensure pupils are nurtured and cared for, including: breakfast club, free fruit in KS2, nurture room, free school meals for nursery pupils, Learning Mentor, 'concern box' and 'talk to the teacher time', gardening activities and a wide

range of extra-curriculum activities. Those children needing extra support with behaviour, welfare and learning are very well supported by all. Pupils with more extreme need for support can access counselling within school and by external services. The school employs a Learning Mentor and Attendance Officer to support pupils and families. The school promotes high attendance and punctuality, which is effectively promoted by the Attendance Officer. The provision for SRE is through the 'In the Beginning' scheme. Play partners and Chaplains look after and care for younger children; they encourage and pray for each other. Pupils are confident that if they have any problems they can speak to a member of staff and that any problems will be dealt with sympathetically. Children know what to do if they have worries and all felt bullying was not an issue because of the clear procedures in place. Teachers are approachable and parents feel able to talk with them about issues that concern them and their concerns are dealt with effectively. The quality of transition and induction are such that all children quickly feel part of the school community and loved by those around them. Pupil Premium pupils achieve well and often exceed other children in school.

### **THE QUALITY OF THE WORSHIP COMMUNITY IS OUTSTANDING**

Prayer is at the heart of the school community and pupils are provided with a range of opportunities to develop and enrich their prayer life. Children pray together in the morning, at lunchtime and at the end of the day. There are regular celebrations of the mass to which parents and parishioners are invited and these are well attended. The school has recently introduced mindfulness and meditation into their weekly and daily acts of worship. The Learning Mentor and a Teaching Assistant led a Key Stage 2 meditation assembly during which the children were encouraged to talk to God and to pass their worries and concerns onto Him. The Staff were confident at planning this activity and creating the right environment for meditation, but the development of these activities is at an early stage and I am sure their confidence to lead prayer will develop even further overtime. The pupils have developed highly reflective practices which means they are well placed to enjoy prayer and their singing during the assembly was spiritually uplifting. The pupils have developed a good knowledge of traditional prayers and they are encouraged to say the rosary in October and May. Collect worship in the classroom was reflective and was having a high level of impact on spiritual development. The organisation and implementation of these activities was excellent and resulted in a deeply spiritual experience for all those present. These activities could be enhanced further by creating greater opportunities for child initiated prayer and worship. The School Chaplaincy Team is leading new initiatives to enhance the spiritual life of the school. Throughout the school there was evidence of high quality resources in all areas. Prayer tables in classrooms, display materials and artefacts demonstrate creativity and relevance to the children. The school has developed strong links with the parish and Holy Rosary RC Primary School in the preparation of the children for the Sacraments.

### **THE QUALITY OF THE WITNESS COMMUNITY IS OUTSTANDING**

The school nurtures, supports and challenges the pupils to live out and to give witness to the Mission Statement in their everyday experiences and by developing their sense of responsibility. They place pupils' at the centre of the school's Mission and encourage them to reach out to those in need. The work of charities such as CAFOD and CARITAS are fully supported and outside speakers visit the school to raise awareness of social justice issues. Pupils clearly demonstrate witness to justice, compassion, reconciliation, love and forgiveness. Observations showed that children treated each other with respect, care, patience, concern and with dignity and there is an emphasis on creating a pleasant working environment for everyone in school. Staff and pupils are confident and secure in their witness to Christ, the gospels and the teaching of the church. The school fosters a spirit of awe and wonder through religious education and the broader curriculum. Relationships are excellent between all members of the community and pupils are not afraid to talk about loving one another. A strong sense of belonging to the school community exists and pupils are given leadership responsibilities and their opinions are valued. Close links with the parish are enhanced with the regular visits of the Parish Priest and the work of the catechists for the sacramental programme. The school choir sings in the local community. The leadership team fully recognise their education endeavour as being integral to the redemptive activity of Christ. The support for families in difficulty is exceptional.

#### **AGREED AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT**

- **Continue to improve the quality of teaching and learning by raising expectations even further for high achieving pupils and creating opportunities for teachers to observe each other.**
- **Improve marking to ensure that pupils respond to feedback and know how to improve their work in the future.**
- **Enhance the work of the school Chaplaincy team by creating greater opportunities for 'child led' worship.**

Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> June 2014

Dear Pupils

Thank you so much for the wonderful welcome you gave me when we came to visit you. We really enjoyed learning about all the wonderful things you do at Holy Family. You and your teachers are working so hard to always do your very best and as a result your school is outstanding.

We know that you are very proud of your caring school. The band you wear around your wrist reminding you “what would Jesus do” is fantastic and we can tell that you treat each other differently as a result. Continue to look after each other and help those in need around you.

We enjoyed being part of your lessons and were sorry not to see everyone. Your work is of a very high standard and we could clearly see that you have outstanding knowledge of bible stories, the Church and the life of Saints. Thank you for showing us so much of what you have been doing. We were extremely impressed with the standard of work in your RE books and your work on display.

It was wonderful to see how you participated in Collective Worship and mediation. Your behaviour was exemplary, your singing was beautiful and your prayers were uplifting. The Chaplaincy Team are doing a wonderful job helping you in school. We have asked them to continue working with you on prayer and worship in the future.

Your teachers are keen to help you develop the Catholic life of your school even further and to do this they are going to improve the quality of teaching and learning by raising expectations even further so you all make outstanding progress in Religious Education. They are also going to make some changes to the way they mark your work.

God bless you all and enjoy your summer holiday.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Susan Gedzielewski and Mr Brendan Hennessy  
(Section 48 Inspectors)

## Summary Report to Parents

On 18<sup>th</sup> June 2014 the school was inspected in accordance with Section 48 of the Education Act 2005.

The full report has been made available to the school and can also be accessed via both the school website and the Education section on the website of the Diocese of Salford.

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Yours sincerely

Mrs Susan Gedzielewski and Brendan Hennessy  
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