

INSPECTION REPORT

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St Chad's RC Primary School, Balmfield St, Cheetham Hill, Manchester M8 0SP

Inspection date **1st July 2016**

Reporting Inspectors
Mr Andrew Sowerby
Mrs Anne Heard

Inspection carried out in accordance with Section 48 of the Education Act 2005

Type of School **Roman Catholic Primary**

URN **355792**

Age range of pupils **3-11 years**

Number on roll **235**

Appropriate authority **The Governing Body**

Chair of Governors **Dr Paul Leigh Baker**

Headteacher **Mr John Travis**

Religious Education Subject Leader **Mrs Margaret Foster**

Date of previous inspection **June 2008**

The Inspection judgements are:	Grade	Explanation of the Grades
Overall effectiveness of the school	1	
The quality of the Word community	1	
The quality of the Welcome community	1	
The quality of Welfare	1	
The quality of Worship	1	
The quality of Witness	1	
The following pages provide reasons to support these judgements		

CHARACTERISTICS AND CONTEXT OF THE SCHOOL

St Chad's RC Primary School is a smaller than average sized single form entry Catholic Primary School serving the parish of St Chad's, Cheetham Hill, Manchester. There are currently 235 children on roll; of these, 48 % are baptised Catholics. Of the 128 non-Catholic children, 66% are Muslim. 75% of pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds, with the largest groups being of African or Pakistani heritage. A high proportion of children receive the pupil premium, whilst the number of pupils eligible for free school meals is also above the national average. The number of pupils with English as an additional language is very high with 24 different languages being spoken in the school.

The school provides a wide range of before and after school activities, as well as a Breakfast and After School Club.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL

St Chad's is an outstanding Catholic Primary school. All who enter the school are immediately struck by the wonderfully warm and friendly welcome given to all. Every child is provided with a Catholic education in a caring and supportive environment, where individual needs are exceptionally well catered for. The Word of God is clearly central to the life of the school. The pastoral and spiritual needs of families and children are very well met. The passionate headteacher, enthusiastic deputy headteacher and staff have very high expectations of adults and children. This can be seen in the way that children are cared for in a calm and supportive atmosphere. Examples of this work can be seen through the provision of additional support for the high number of vulnerable families that attend the school and for those for whom English is not their first language. This work is further enhanced by the support of a very effective, experienced and knowledgeable governing body.

THE KEY STRENGTHS OF THE SCHOOL INCLUDE:

- Strong and determined leadership by the passionate headteacher ensures that a clear vision of Catholic education is evident throughout St. Chad's. He is supported in this vision by the hard working and enthusiastic acting deputy headteacher and the strong and effective governing body.
- In St Chad's School the welfare of the pupils, families and the wider community are of paramount importance. This was clearly demonstrated through the provision of a wide range of tailored interventions, which ensure that the needs of every child are met.
- The quality of teaching across the school is excellent. This is due to careful planning and the high quality relationships that exist between all staff and pupils.
- The school provides a wide range of high quality acts of collective worship, which are often planned and delivered by the children. Worship is very creative and often enable members of the school to witness to their faith in a practical and yet reflective manner.
- Throughout the school there is a great sense of respect and understanding of other faiths which enhances the feeling of belonging which permeates the whole of St Chad's.

THE QUALITY OF CATHOLIC LEADERSHIP IS OUTSTANDING

Driven by a great determination to ensure that the children of St Chad's receive a high quality Catholic Education, the passionate headteacher, ably assisted by the enthusiastic acting deputy headteacher, ensures outstanding Catholic leadership. They are well supported by an experienced and well informed governing body. Together they ensure that the development of the Catholic life of the school is at the forefront of their work. Examples of this work are evident in the way the headteacher and his staff prioritise pupil welfare and the spiritual needs of all pupils. This is a school where every child irrespective of their culture or beliefs really does matter. The school provides very clear guidance and support to those members of staff who are not Catholic, so as to ensure that the teaching of RE and the development of the Catholic life of the school has an extremely high priority. The leadership team has a clear plan for developing RE across the school. Evidence

for this can be found in the school's detailed self-evaluation plan, which is based on the 5Ws model. The school is very aware of its next steps and has clear plans for implementing them.

THE QUALITY OF THE WORD IS OUTSTANDING

The school's mission statement is clearly evident in all areas of the school. It is very child centred and reflects the determination of all to ensure that the school provides the highest quality Catholic education. The staffing and resources devoted to RE are of the highest standard, reflecting its significance and importance in the school. Children clearly enjoy RE and were keen to express this to the inspection team during their visit to the school. Pupils are challenged to engage with the 'big questions' of the purpose and meaning of life throughout the curriculum. There are also additional examples of this on the bright and attractive displays that are to be found throughout the school. The newly developed prayer garden and outdoor provision further enhance the clearly Catholic atmosphere that permeates the school. Scripture is clearly known, understood and made relevant. The recent introduction of the 'Come and See' and 'Caritas in Action' schemes has further enhanced the RE curriculum, so that it is increasingly creative and vibrant. The school, however, is very aware of the need to ensure that non-Catholic staff are well supported through the provision of additional training, so as to develop their knowledge of the faith. The school consistently monitors progress in R.E. in order to ensure standards in RE are equally as high as in other subjects. The school's structured programme of RE assessments are currently being further enhanced, so that they accurately match the changes in the school's RE curriculum. This therefore enables all pupils to be creative, independent and reflective learners throughout their time at St. Chad's.

THE QUALITY OF WELCOME IS OUTSTANDING

St Chad's provides an exceptionally warm welcome for all who attend the school. Parents were keen to express how they feel included and that any concerns they have are quickly and sensitively dealt with. They spoke with great passion about the fact all children and adults from whatever background or culture are welcome in school. They spoke of the great sense of community that exists in the school. This, they said, was due to the very approachable headteacher and staff. Evidence of this was observed by the inspection team throughout the school day, where the headteacher and staff greeted children and parents warmly and individually. All parents spoke of the supportive manner in which the staff ensure that the children are made to feel welcome. Children love coming to school. As one child put it, 'This school is lovely as everyone really cares for each other.' Parents also spoke positively about the high quality communication the school provides as well as the varied programme of additional support, and after school clubs, so that everyone is well informed and included. It is clearly a warm, inclusive and all-embracing establishment, where everyone feels appreciated and cared for.

THE QUALITY OF WELFARE IS OUTSTANDING

The whole staff pay great attention to the pastoral and emotional needs of the children in St Chad's, so that one can truly say that in this school every child does indeed matter. This was witnessed throughout the day in the manner in which the staff supported children with disabilities and provided additional support for those who are in the early stages of learning English. It is further enhanced through the provision of the 'walking buses', which enables children to attend school punctually each day. The structures and procedures that the school employs to ensure that pupils and staff feel safe and are treated with respect and dignity are of the highest quality. This is evident in the way that the school ensures that every child can access the full curriculum and each child's social and emotional needs are met. Calm support is offered by very sensitive adults when children have difficulty remaining on task. The outreach support provided by the school ensures that the needs of parents and young families are met in a sensitive manner. A breakfast and after school club is available to those families who need it. The provision of wide range of out of school activities, including sports, art and dance enhances the curriculum. Relationships at St Chad's are exceptional. Pupils and staff are confident in expressing their opinions and knowing that these will be valued. This was evident during discussions with the children, who stated how their views were listened to and how they were able to play an active part in the development of the school as a Catholic community, for example, the children were included in the development of the new prayer garden.

THE QUALITY OF WORSHIP IS OUTSTANDING

The school provides a wide variety of worship opportunities for pupils throughout the school including small and large groups, in a variety of settings. This was observed during an uplifting reflection on the theme of 'saying sorry' in the school's newly developed prayer garden and a joyful celebration by the whole school of the recent celebration of 1st Holy Communion. This provided an opportunity for older members of the school community to bear witness to their catholic beliefs in a most reflective and memorable setting. There are developing links between the parish and the school, particularly with regard to the preparation of the children for the sacraments of initiation and the current celebration of the Jubilee Year of Mercy. The parish clergy are regular visitors to the school, whilst the children are provided with the opportunity to attend services on a regular basis in the church. Each class has a special prayer focus. The children know many school prayers and compose prayers for themselves. Attractive displays seen around school are used to show and stimulate prayer opportunities. The school's prayer leaders are beginning to have a real impact on the development of the prayer life of the school. They are becoming more effective at planning and leading prayer services. The school has developed a beautiful outdoor prayer garden, which is regularly used by the school chaplaincy team when they prepare and lead their own prayer services. This was witnessed by the inspection team during its visit.

THE QUALITY OF WITNESS IS OUTSTANDING

Staff act as excellent role models for the children and help them in recognising that God is with them in every aspect of school life. Pupils are actively trained in outreach to the local community. This is seen in the way the school promotes support for various charities. Examples of this are the regular fund-raising activities organised by the children to support not only the Catholic charities such as CARITAS, CAFOD and St Joseph's Penny, but also many local ones chosen by the children themselves. The staff have implemented the 'Caritas in Action' scheme well, so that the children have a strong sense of social justice. Children are very respectful of each other and their behaviour is outstanding. Adults work as a committed team, have very high expectations of the children and in this atmosphere the children at St Chad's thrive.

AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT:

- To continue to review and enhance the schools formal assessments of curriculum RE.
- To further develop and embed the improvements that have taken place in the moderation of teaching and learning in religious education.

Department for Formation, Office for Education

2nd July 2016

Dear Pupils

Thank you for making our visit to St Chad's so enjoyable when we came to inspect your school for the Bishop. We really enjoyed being with you. Thank you for looking after us so well and helping us to feel very welcome. St Chad's is an outstanding Catholic school.

We enjoyed being part of your lessons and were sorry not to see everyone. Thank you for showing us so much of your work and activities. We could see that you are very proud of your school and all that you have achieved together. We were particularly impressed that you thought that the most important part of your learning and life together was that you '*felt connected to one another as all part of God's family*'. I know the Bishop will be delighted to hear this.

Your teachers are really helping you to learn very well and we were very impressed by your excellent relationships and behaviour. It was good to see so much of your mission statement coming through everything you are learning; your relationships and the special way you make everyone feel valued. It is wonderful to see a school made up of pupils and adults who get on so well together, so that everyone is cared for as a member of God's family. This is a true reflection of being part of a Catholic community where everyone is welcome and has a place.

You have started using your new RE programme and are doing very well. You are a very creative school and we were most impressed by the way you work together so co-operatively in your lessons. The prayer services we saw were good and uplifting experiences. Your teachers have started to develop an excellent way of teaching RE using the 'Come and See' scheme and we have asked them to continue to develop this with you so as to help you all understand more about your faith and relationship with God. We have also suggested that the school continues to develop the way they assess your knowledge of the Catholic faith.

God bless you all and have a lovely summer holiday.

Yours sincerely,

Mr A J Sowerby and Mrs A. Heard
(Section 48 Inspectors)

Department for Formation, Office for Education

Summary Report to Parents

On 1st July 2016 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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