

**INSPECTION REPORT St Charles RC Primary School**

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Inspection date 26<sup>th</sup> September 2013

Reporting Inspector Sister Judith Russi  
Mrs Donna Kiernan

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

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Type of School	Catholic Primary
URN	3553519
Age range of pupils	3-11 years
Number on roll	243
Appropriate authority	The Governing Body
Chair of Governors	Mrs Noreen Collins
Head teacher	Mrs Clare Campbell
Date of previous inspection	June 2009

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<b>The Inspection judgements are:</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Explanation of the Grades</b>  1 = Outstanding  2 = Good  3 = Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness of the school	3	
The quality of Catholic Leadership	3	
The quality of the Word of God community	3	
The quality of the Welcome community	1	
The quality of Welfare	1	
The quality of Worship	2	
The quality of Witness	2	
<i>The following pages provide reasons to support these judgements</i>		

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

St Charles' Roman Catholic Primary School is an average-sized primary school with 209 pupils on role. 92% of the pupils are Catholic and 78% of teaching and support staff. Most children are of White British heritage. A small number are from minority ethnic backgrounds and speak English as an additional language. The school has undergone significant and repeated changes to staffing and leadership since the previous inspection. There have been four changes in headship over the past three years. This has had a considerable impact on the school. The current Head teacher took up post in 2012. The proportion of pupils supported through school action is below the national average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is below average. There are breakfast and after-school clubs which are not managed by the governing body. The school has the Healthy School and Investors in People awards.

## **OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL REQUIRES IMPROVEMENT**

Significant improvement has taken place across the whole school community in the past twelve months. The recently constituted Governing body and Head teacher are working closely to ensure that all pupils receive the best possible Catholic education. The capacity of the senior leadership team has been recently strengthened and is now well placed to move the school forward from 'Requires Improvement' to a 'Good' school by continuing to develop leadership at all levels. Monitoring, review and evaluation procedures are now in place providing the leadership team with a more accurate overview of progress in teaching and learning. The Mission Statement, *As a family of God, we love to learn and learn to love*, is both implicit and explicit throughout and provides the driving force and focus for the day to day life of the school. Parents spoke passionately about their support for the new Head teacher stating that *'For the first time we feel welcome coming into school'*. Concerns are addressed quickly and many now felt confident that their children would receive the best possible Catholic education. Governors showed a clear and in depth understanding of the challenges facing them and demonstrated great enthusiasm for the future progress of the school. *'We just want to get on with the job and feel we now have the team to do it!'*

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

- The welcome and outreach to parents and families in the local community is outstanding.
- The welfare and inclusion of pupils is outstanding.

## **THE QUALITY OF LEADERSHIP REQUIRES IMPROVEMENT**

Following a time of considerable change, the new governing body is now well poised to move the school forward both as a critical friend and in exercising their leadership role. Governors were clear in their understanding of their role in leading this Catholic school forward. Together with the leadership team, they are fully committed to the professional development of all staff and governors in order to achieve this aim. Governors have identified the need for training on the 'Framework for Review, Evaluation and Celebration', and are working with the senior leadership team to ensure that all members of staff are involved in this process. The senior leadership of the school demonstrate a real commitment in the support of vulnerable groups within the school which is making a significant difference. Links with the church are strong and the support of the Parish Priest contributes significantly to the Catholic life of the school. Although there has been rapid progress in the last year under the new leadership team, they are still in the process of developing the Church's mission in education and raising standards throughout. The school has identified the need to continue the strengthening of middle leadership and is working towards ensuring that Religious Education is the

lead academic area of learning through bespoke targeted support for staff teaching RE. Pupil leadership will be further developed through the introduction of the pupil Chaplaincy initiative.

### **THE QUALITY OF WORD REQUIRES IMPROVEMENT**

The school is developing the RE scheme 'The Way, The Truth and The Life'. Of the lessons observed, teaching and learning ranged from 'requires improvement' to 'outstanding'. Where teaching and learning was found to be outstanding, expectations were high and pupils were challenged to engage with higher order questions and to think independently. In the best lessons pupils were actively making connections with other areas of learning and able to give practical examples of their faith in action. The sharing of good and outstanding practice would benefit all classes, thereby enabling all teachers to set high expectations, personalised pupil targets and further develop the embedding of diagnostic marking which clearly identifies next steps in learning for all pupils. In some lessons, however, activities were sometimes pitched below the ability levels of some of the children. Behaviour for learning was mainly good, however, in some instances; pupil's behaviour distracted their learning. The greater majority of pupils were found to be enthusiastic and keen to learn. Provision for the Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural education is developing and when it is fully embedded it will significantly enhance children's learning and ability to make connections across the curriculum. All classes receive 10% curriculum time and the Religious Education Curriculum Directory areas of study are covered through the scheme of work.

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

This is an area of outstanding progress which is greatly appreciated by all. Parents said, *"We are always welcomed into school and we are made to feel like one big, extended family"* and *"education now is about the whole person"*.

The positive, welcoming, inclusive culture throughout the whole school is clearly demonstrated by staff, children and governors. Parents spoke extensively of the importance of a Catholic education, the need for the school and the parish to provide a consistent and coherent message about the centrality of the faith and the care extended to all families. Members of the school community are clearly proud of their school and feel valued. Pupils spoke about the many and varied extra-curricular opportunities for everyone to enjoy, *"It's fun at school now, there are lots of new toys and equipment to enjoy and there are lots of different clubs – something for everyone"*. The comprehensive behaviour policies have eliminated bullying and any form of marginalisation or discrimination. The dignity of all is given the highest priority.

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

The school demonstrates a high level of loving care, respect and the valuing of each individual as a unique brother and sister made in the image and likeness of God. Children are confident that teachers will treat their concerns seriously and were able to outline procedures they could follow if they were worried or upset. The school is a joyful place where children readily smile and engage with each other, staff and visitors. Parents are frequently invited into school and the open door policy of the Head teacher has done much to build bridges and restore confidence. The school's provision for safeguarding and keeping children safe is outstanding. The provision for Sex and Relationships Education is through the Diocesan Guidelines for Education for Personal Relationships and the SEAL units of work. Pupil voice opportunities are growing with the School Council. Children, staff and parents know that they will always be listened to and if necessary action will be taken quickly. Quality before and after school care is provide for families needing extra support. Commitment to healthy lifestyles for all is a priority. The school offers a wide range of clubs and creative activities to develop the whole person. The school actively reaches out to those in need at

home and abroad through a wide variety of charity work. Behaviour of pupils around the school was very good with a strong emphasis on behaving in the St Charles way.

### **THE QUALITY OF WORSHIP IS GOOD**

The whole school policy for prayer and worship ensures a wide range of opportunities to develop and enrich the prayer life of the community. Pupils were found to be keen to take part and clearly valued these opportunities. The pupils enjoy their times of prayer and worship and are very keen to contribute and lead in prayer and worship times. Parents, Governors and staff spoke of their desire to further develop prayer and worship so that more families engage in the life of the parish. The school is actively exploring ways of strengthening these links with the full support of the Parish Priest. There is a comprehensive collective worship rota in place which follows the liturgical cycle and offers a wide range of different experiences for pupils. These include class Masses, Gospel sharing, prayer services and every Friday family and friends join the school to celebrate the children's achievements. The proposed introduction of the Pupil Chaplaincy programme will further enhance and develop the prayer and worship across the school and the parish.

### **THE QUALITY OF WITNESS IS GOOD**

Staff and pupils are confident in witnessing to the beliefs and values of the Catholic Community. The leadership team are working hard to ensure that the spiritual, moral, social and cultural dimensions of the curriculum are fully inculcated in all aspects of the children's learning and that the pupils can make the necessary connections between the teaching of the Church and their daily life choices. Pupils are actively encouraged to engage in charity work for the common good and to support those in the greatest need within the school community. Good progress is being made in displaying children's work and ideas connected with the liturgical cycle and the teachings of Jesus Christ. The explicit display of religious artefacts, signs and symbols has much improved the environment of the school. The ongoing development of the sacred garden, with the beautiful cross designed by the pupils, is greatly appreciated by everyone. The chaplaincy provision is provided by the parish priest, Fr Paul Smith who is keen to see this develop further through home, school and parish links. Parents spoke at length of their appreciation of the sacramental programme and the need to encourage more parents to support both the school and the parish in the witness to their faith. The leadership team and the governors are keen to continue the review and development of whole school policies to ensure that Gospel values which are clearly outlined are being followed through out.

### **AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT:**

- Where teaching and learning is outstanding, share this practice in order to raise the level of teaching and learning in all lessons to at least good.
- Continue to develop the good practice already in place for assessment for learning so that all pupils can clearly identify specific targets and next steps for learning.
- Continue to build the Catholic leadership capacity of both governors and staff through training and the sharing of good practice.

October 31<sup>st</sup> 2013

Dear Pupils

Thank you so much for the wonderful, warm welcome you gave us when we came to visit you and for showing us around so beautifully. We loved seeing all the animals and you look after them so well. Your school is continuing to improve. This is because you and your teachers are working so hard to always do your very best and you look after one another.

We could clearly see that you take your learning very seriously and are proud of your achievements. To help you develop even further your teachers are going to identify exactly what you need to do next to improve through personal targets. Your creative ideas are good and we could see that you can make connections between what you are learning in RE with other areas of the curriculum. Thank you for letting us share so much of what you are doing.

Your plans for developing the Sacred Garden are very interesting. Well done for making such an interesting giant cross.

We enjoyed being with you for assembly and seeing everyone together.

God bless you all and have a really happy term.

Yours sincerely

Sr Judith Russi

(Section 48 Inspector)

### **Summary Report to Parents**

On 26<sup>th</sup> September 2013 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.

### **OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL REQUIRES IMPROVEMENT**

Significant improvement has taken place across the whole school community in the past twelve months. The recently constituted Governing body and Head teacher are working closely to ensure that all pupils receive the best possible Catholic education.

The capacity of the senior leadership team has been recently strengthened and is now well placed to move the school forward from 'Requires Improvement' to a 'Good' school by continuing to develop leadership at all levels. Monitoring, review and evaluation procedures are now in place providing the leadership team with a more accurate overview of progress in teaching and learning.

The Mission Statement, *As a family of God, we love to learn and learn to love*, is both implicit and explicit throughout and provides the driving force and focus for the day to day life of the school. Parents spoke passionately about their support for the new Head teacher stating that *'For the first time we feel welcome coming into school'*. Concerns are addressed quickly and many now felt confident that their children would receive the best possible Catholic education. Governors showed a clear and in depth understanding of the challenges facing them and demonstrated great enthusiasm for the future progress of the school. *'We just want to get on with the job and feel we now have the team to do it!'*

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