

INSPECTION REPORT

St Herbert's RC Primary School, Edward Street, Chadderton, Oldham, OL9 9SN

Inspection date 6th May 2016
 Reporting Inspectors Brendan Hennessy
 John Thorpe

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

Type of School Primary
 URN 105722
 Age range of pupils 3 - 11
 Number on roll 320
 Appropriate authority The Governing Body
 Chair of Governors Paul Devine
 Headteacher Susan Milligan
 Religious Education Subject Leaders Margaret Kane
 Date of previous inspection June 2011

The Inspection judgements are:	Grade	
Overall effectiveness of the school	1	Explanation of the Grades 1 = Outstanding 2 = Good 3=Requires Improvement 4 = Inadequate
The quality of Catholic Leadership	1	
The quality of the Word	1	
The quality of Welcome	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 Herbert's Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary School serves the parish of St Herbert, Chadderton, Oldham. This is a larger than average sized primary school with 320 pupils on roll, 79% are baptised Roman Catholic. The school is situated in an area of mixed housing, 21% of pupils are currently entitled to free school meals. On entry to nursery the attainment of the majority of pupils is in line with the national average. Most pupils have made good or better progress in their learning by the time they leave at the end of KS2. The school currently has 16.6% of the pupils with Special Educational Needs and 9% with English as an additional language. There are 13 teachers in the school, 11 of whom are Catholic, 10 hold or have started the Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies. School provides extended provision for those children who need it both before and after school. The school holds national awards for School Games and the Gold Award for Healthy Schools.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL IS OUTSTANDING

St Herbert's is an outstanding Catholic primary school, where making Jesus known and loved is at the centre of everything it does. The mission and ethos statements are visible and understood by all in the school community. Gospel values are clearly evident and lived out by the whole school community. Prayer and worship is very much at the heart of this school, enriching everyone's experience of God's presence and enhancing their individual faith journeys. A strong Catholic ethos is evident throughout the school and this has helped to create a vibrant community where the happy and confident children thrive as they learn, play and pray together. The dedicated headteacher supported by a committed RE subject leader, enthusiastic leadership team and hardworking staff, do all they can to ensure that the spiritual and pastoral needs of all are met in this inclusive Catholic school. The quality of teaching in religious education is always at least good and more often better, which ensures high standards are achieved across the school; as evidenced in the children's books and work around school. The friendly, polite and well-mannered children are very proud of their school, their behaviour and attitude to learning is excellent. Parents feel very welcome, included and valued. School takes every opportunity to build on the excellent links with the parish and home. The parish priest and governors are very supportive and committed to ensuring that Catholic education of the highest standard is provided for all. Effective monitoring, assessment and evaluation of religious education has ensured that the school has continued to develop since the last inspection.

THE KEY STRENGTHS OF THE SCHOOL INCLUDE:

- The dedicated headteacher has a clear vision for the Catholic life of the school.
- The affirming atmosphere of teamwork and a shared common approach among all the staff that impacts positively on the children's learning and well-being.
- The excellent behaviour of the polite, well-mannered children and their positive attitude to learning.
- The quality of the relationships across the whole school community.

THE QUALITY OF CATHOLIC LEADERSHIP IS OUTSTANDING

St Herbert's is extremely well led by a dedicated headteacher who has a clear vision for Catholic education and a sense of purpose for the education of the whole child. She has a strong spiritual commitment and clearly values the worth of every member of the school community. The headteacher is very well supported by a committed RE leader, an enthusiastic leadership team and a hard working staff team. The governors have a clear, strategic plan for the school and are deeply committed to the success of the school. They are proactive in providing support and challenge. Together with all of the staff, they do all that they can to ensure that RE and the development of the Catholic life of the school is at the core of the school's thinking and practice. The supportive parish priest is a regular visitor to school and all in school value his contribution to and impact on the spiritual life of the school. Pupil leadership has been established through the school

council and pupil voice has been strengthened by the contribution of the very enthusiastic and active school chaplaincy team. Self-evaluation is rigorous and robust, honest and accurate; this, combined with relevant professional development for staff, has made a positive impact on the quality of provision in RE. It has also ensured that the leadership team is clear about the strengths of the school and what needs to be done to develop even further. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural education was found to be outstanding and permeates all aspects of school life. All school leaders set the example as role models, demonstrating a strong commitment to the Church's mission in education and making a significant contribution to the outstanding provision for Catholic education in St Herbert's.

THE QUALITY OF THE WORD IS OUTSTANDING

The importance of the Word of God is clearly demonstrated all around the school in the many thoughtful and enriching displays. The mission statement is at the heart of the school; it is understood, lived and witnessed by all in school as they strive to be "Strong in faith, hope and love for the common good". The religious education of the children is at the centre of the school's core curriculum and all staff place a high priority on the teaching and learning of RE. Throughout the school Sacred Scripture is made relevant and meaningful to the children. It is known and understood by pupils and shared in many vibrant, joyful ways. Teachers have a very good knowledge and understanding of RE, they employ a consistent model of assessment and moderation to monitor children's progress. Teaching and learning in RE was found to be at least good, and more often better. Creative and inspiring lessons that engaged and challenged the children's learning were observed in all phases of the school. These lessons were well planned with many common attributes; consistently high expectations, clear learning objectives, differentiated activities, challenge, good pace, engaging learning, with many opportunities for the children to share their thoughts and ideas. Thoughtful and effective questioning, including the use of the "big questions", was observed in all lessons to challenge the children's thinking and move the learning on. The creative use of IT was evident across the whole school and was effectively used to support the children's understanding of RE. Children show a real interest and enthusiasm in RE, they have an excellent attitude to learning and were happy and confident to share their understanding of their faith. They knew how to improve their work and constructive marking was used to help them reflect on and improve their learning. Teaching Assistants have a very good understanding of the teaching of RE, they effectively interacted with pupils to support their learning and pastoral needs. The children learn about other faiths through religious education and assemblies, and this helps them to understand and respect the beliefs and cultures of others.

THE QUALITY OF WELCOME IS OUTSTANDING

St Herbert's school is a warm, welcoming and inclusive community, where a talented and committed staff encourage full participation in every area of school life. The school's welcoming nature sees happy, smiling children and staff striving to be the best that they can be. A friendly welcome, built on an acknowledgement of Christ's presence in others, is extended to visitors by all the children and staff from the moment you enter the school. The school welcomes a wide range of visitors, parents and members of the wider community with love and respectful care. All members of staff demonstrate a caring nature for the children, parents and each other, this gives a sense of belonging and an affirming ethos throughout the school. Respect for the dignity of the individual is clearly evident across the school and all staff set the example for children to follow. The children are polite and well-mannered with a cheerful outlook in this caring and compassionate school. The parish priest is a welcome visitor and the children and staff look forward to his regular visits. St Herbert's school welcomes parents and encourages their contribution to the life of the school; they in turn feel appreciated and involved in all that their children do. Parents stated that they very much appreciate the willingness of staff throughout the school to listen to them. They are encouraged to contribute to their child's learning

by emailing evidence of their child's progress through Evernote. Children and staff who are new to the school are quickly made to feel welcome and valued members of the school community. There is a loving family feel that permeates the school and beyond as witnessed at the school assembly attended by many parents. The school's caring ethos and the development of the children's personal qualities are of paramount importance to the staff and governors. Children, parents, staff and governors quite rightly have a great sense of pride and belonging in this happy, caring Catholic school.

THE QUALITY OF WELFARE IS OUTSTANDING

St Herbert's is a very inclusive school community that acknowledges Christ at the heart of the school. The Christ-centred ethos provides a very caring and supportive atmosphere for everyone associated with the school. There is clear evidence of excellent relationships between staff, parents and children. All staff and children do their best to follow the example of Jesus and clearly demonstrate respect, love and compassion for each other. Procedures to safeguard and protect are given the highest priority. Throughout the school there is good practice enabling the children and staff to feel safe, well cared for and able to adopt safe practices themselves. There is a genuine concern from all staff for the welfare of all pupils and Christ is used as an example for the whole community to aspire to. The school gives a high priority to those in the greatest need in the way that they reach out beyond the school community. The compassionate and caring ethos is evident in the number of charities supported by the school, including, CAFOD, Samaritan's Purse, St Joseph's Penny, MacMillan Nurses. The school prefects and chaplaincy team speak with great enthusiasm about their role in supporting and caring for the children. Governors and senior leaders ensure that careful consideration is given to supporting the needs of all pupils when making budget, staffing and resourcing decisions, for example, the creation of the Learning Centre and funding of "Commando Joe" developing the health and well-being of all pupils with a positive impact on the vulnerable children. The school and parish community are currently engaged in fundraising for a Sensory Room in school. Caritas in Action is used throughout the school, helping to develop the children's sense of responsibility and service. Children, staff and parents work co-operatively at St Herbert's to ensure that the welfare of each other and the wider community is fostered. Through securing the welfare of the children, the school seeks to develop independent learners who will be equipped with the knowledge and skills to make good choices based on their faith and school experiences.

THE QUALITY OF WORSHIP IS OUTSTANDING

Prayer is at the heart of St Herbert's school community and staff are very confident in planning and leading prayer and worship. The very enthusiastic and active chaplaincy team are developing their leadership role and making a valuable contribution to the Catholic life of the school. They help teachers to develop the spiritual and prayer life of the school. The importance of prayer and worship is expressed and witnessed through: classroom acts of reflection and meditation, spontaneous prayer, assemblies, Mass and liturgies. Weekly "Statements to live by" give a theme for class reflection and worship. Sacred Scripture is effectively used to nurture the faith and spirituality of each child through meditation, prayer and reflection. Each classroom has an age appropriate and relevant focal point for prayer which are clearly valued by the children. Additional focal points for prayer are situated at key areas in the school, not least the sensory garden, which can be accessed by the children. The children pray together as a school, in classes, small groups and individually, with great reverence and respect. They are comfortable with their feelings and confident to write and share their own prayers, many examples were seen all around school. During the inspection, the school assembly, classroom acts of worship and the reflections within the lessons observed, provided opportunities for full participation, joyful singing and reflection. They were without exception uplifting, inclusive, creative and thoughtful spiritual experiences for all present. A wonderful "awe and wonder" moment was observed when a

KS1 class encountered St Bernadette at the Grotto. Children took a leading role in the acts of prayer and worship observed. These special moments of prayer and reflection were well respected by the children and enhanced their relationship with God and one another. Throughout the year parents, carers and parishioners are invited to attend Masses and assemblies, a large number were present at the school assembly. They were positive about the support for the Sacramental Programme and the range of opportunities the school offers for prayer and worship. The parish priest regularly visits the school and is actively involved in supporting the staff and children to deepen their own faith and understanding.

THE QUALITY OF WITNESS IS OUTSTANDING

St Herbert's is an inclusive and caring school that welcomes all and celebrates differences. The school's mission and ethos statements are a strong declaration of how all in the school community bear witness to a loving God in all that it does "for the Common Good". Together with the school's promises they guide all in the school community in living out the beliefs and values of the Catholic faith in their everyday lives. Relationships between all members of the school community are excellent and all are able to talk openly and confidently about their faith. Staff and children treat each other with respect, compassion and dignity clearly demonstrating that the Gospel values are lived across the school. The children have trust in the adults who support them and know that any difficult issues will be dealt with fairly. All staff are positive role models for the children. They promote the ethos and values of the school helping the children to recognise that Jesus is with them in all aspects of school life. There are strong home, school and parish links, which are enriched by the regular visits of the parish priest. Each year the school and parish community make a pilgrimage to St Herbert's island to celebrate Mass and share their faith. RE is at the core of the school curriculum. It is the foundation block that allows the children to develop their sense of identity and demonstrates how they can have a positive impact for good in the wider community. The children are encouraged to reach out to those in need through their wonderful support for local, national and world charities. They know that they have a vital role to play in looking after God's world. There is a tangible feeling of teamwork and belonging among the staff, children and parents, giving the school a true family feel and helping the children to become well rounded individuals.

AGREED AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT:

- To embed fully the Come and See programme across the school.
- To continue to develop assessment in RE using the statements from Come and See to support the children's involvement in self-evaluation.
- Continue to inspire the children and promote exceptional teaching across the school by coaching and modelling outstanding teaching that will further enhance the quality of RE.

Summary Report to Parents

On 6th May 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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6th May 2016

Dear Children,

Thank you for the very warm welcome you gave us and for making our visit to St Herbert's RC Primary School such a joyful occasion. We really enjoyed our time with you. You and all the adults in school are indeed inspired by Jesus and work very hard to always do your best, and because of this your school is an outstanding Catholic school.

We really enjoyed seeing your lessons and learning about all the wonderful things you do in St Herbert's. Thank you for sharing your work with us. We were very impressed with the standard of work in your RE books, your contributions in all the lessons we saw and in your wonderful displays around school. It was clear to us that you have an excellent knowledge and understanding of our Catholic faith and that you all really try your best in all of your lessons.

It was lovely to see so many happy, smiling faces. You are clearly very proud of your school and all that you have achieved together. We were also very impressed by the way you all want to succeed in school and how well you look out for each other. You were so well behaved; your politeness and manners were simply superb.

It was so pleasing to see how attentive and confident you were in the acts of worship and the wonderful assembly we saw. Everyone showed great respect and reverence; your behaviour was excellent, your singing and prayers were uplifting. The chaplaincy team is a great asset to the school as they set such a wonderful example for you all to follow.

The staff, school governors and your parents are extremely proud of you and of what you have achieved over the years, well done and keep it up!

Your teachers are keen to work with you to build the Catholic life of your school even further so that you can continue to grow as leaders of prayer and worship in school.

God bless you all and enjoy the rest of the school year.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Brendan Hennessy and Mr John Thorpe
(Section 48 Inspectors)