

## INSPECTION REPORT

### St Patrick's Roman Catholic Primary School

Higher Walton Rd,  
Walton-le-Dale,  
Preston,  
Lancashire  
PR5 4HD

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Inspection date 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2013

Reporting Inspector Mr J Graves, Mrs M Cunningham

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

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|----------------------------------|--------------------|
| Type of School                   | Primary School     |
| URN                              | 119640             |
| Age range of pupils              | 4 -11              |
| Number on roll                   | 199                |
| Appropriate authority            | The governing body |
| Chair of Governors               | Fr Cribben         |
| Headteacher                      | Mrs Kath Gleave    |
| Religious Education Co-ordinator | Miss Maria Hall    |
| Date of previous inspection      | December 2007      |

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| The Inspection judgements are:                                  | Grade | Explanation of the Grades<br><br>1 = Outstanding<br>2 = Good<br>3=Requires Improvement<br>4 = Inadequate |
|---|-------|--|
| Overall effectiveness of the school                             | 1     |  |
| The quality of Catholic Leadership                              | 1     |  |
| The quality of the Word of God 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 OF THE SCHOOL**

- St Patrick's is a Voluntary Aided RC Primary school in the Diocese of Salford.
- It serves the parish of St Patrick's.
- Pupils are arranged in single aged classes.
- The admissions number is 30.
- The Headteacher was appointed in September 2009.
- The Assistant Headteachers were appointed in April 2010 and February 2012.
- The school is situated close to the parish church.
- The socio-economic make-up of the pupils is that 30% come from the top 5% of wards nationally in terms of being the least deprived, whilst 40% are in the average range.
- 94% of learners are baptised Catholics.
- Standards on entry to Reception are average to above average.
- 4.9% of pupils are eligible for Free School Meals.
- 7% of pupils have been identified as having Special Educational Needs.
- 1.5% of children have English as an Additional Language
- Attendance is at 96.5% for the period September 2012 to July 2013.

## **OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL**

St Patrick's is an OUTSTANDING Catholic School. The headteacher works very hard to drive the school forward and is very well supported by the Assistant Headteachers and the RE Co-ordinator. Policies reflect the Mission Statement being at the heart of everything that is done at St Patrick's. Parish links are strong for example, when the school and parish co-operate for the joint Advent Service, for children and parents alike. The RE Co-ordinator monitors the subject effectively and, as stated by the Collective Worship Policy, has written a collection of liturgies to help the children lead prayer and worship in Whole School Liturgies. Children know about the 5Ws and made very positive comments about the school. They said, "We are very proud of our school, it's got amazing teachers and a good reputation. No-one is ever left out, everyone is included, always." The governors of the school are well informed and are proactive in gathering evidence for themselves by visiting the school. They and the Headteacher are well aware of the next steps for the school's development. Parents say that the school is, "Caring, teaches how to share and look after others, and enjoy what is right. The school is welcoming to parents and offers a safe, stimulating environment to children. Children develop morally, social and spiritually." The school has fully met the improvements recommended by the previous Section 48 inspection.

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

- Pastoral care for the children by all staff
- Catholic Leadership and Management
- Scripture is well known by the children
- Behaviour excellent. Warm, safe and friendly atmosphere
- All staff and children work hard.

## **THE QUALITY OF CATHOLIC LEADERSHIP**

The quality of Catholic Leadership is OUTSTANDING. The leadership has overcome a traumatic loss of the headteacher and the Deputy Headteacher has taken over and continued the good work that the previous head began. The Mission Statement is alive in the school, and was put together after input from staff, governors and pupils. It is known by all. All members of the school community share in the mission, and are part of the vision that has Gospel Values at the heart of everything at St Patrick's. As a result, Christ is clearly present. The 3 Rs: Respect, Responsibility and Resilience, are understood by all pupils. All pupils asked could explain what they meant. One said of Resilience, "You never give up if something's hard." The Governors are dedicated and committed to moving the school forward. They come into school regularly to familiarise themselves with the life of the school. The Parish Priest feels that children should, "have the experience of God both inside and outside of Mass." The staff and children are encouraged to try new things and learn from mistakes, as Jesus said, "Live life to the full." One child explained that this means that you must make the most of the time you have on Earth. The very effective RE subject leader has been given the opportunity to develop further, giving the faith element a strong role in the leadership of

the school. Pupils feel safe and secure in school. One child said, "We have the trust of the teachers, and we know they will always sort things out." RE is rigorously monitored through lesson observations, work scrutiny and pupil interviews. The school has just introduced a new tracking system for RE. Spirituality is obvious around the school, with displays and symbols, as well as the headteacher regularly reporting on it to governors. The headteacher's school evaluation is both honest and accurate. The children have written their own self-evaluation document on the '5Ws' which states that 'We treat one another as Jesus told us to because in the Bible it says, "Love your neighbour."' There is a good level of in service training for staff.

### **THE QUALITY OF THE WORD OF GOD**

The quality of Word in the school is OUTSTANDING. The Mission Statement is alive in the school. For example, when there is an RE Award given for living out the school's Mission Statement. Children are very tolerant of each other, and in lessons all answers were valued, all children treated each other equally. This clearly fostered "respect for the beliefs and values of others." The school has a lovely atmosphere, and this can be summarised throughout the school's adoption of Jesus's commandment, "Love one another as I have loved you." This was seen when children write prayers as gifts to Jesus. God is at the centre of school, not just RE lessons. For example, one class has an Advent display where children have made their own Advent wreaths in Art. Children are encouraged to ask and answer the 'big' questions, such as in a lesson, a child asked the teacher several questions about Heaven, and in another class how we know about how things were in Biblical times. Standards in RE are very high. The books closely reflect the approach in class. Subject knowledge of the staff in RE is very sound. This could be seen in lessons when a teacher was asked some challenging questions by one of the older children. In another lesson, the teacher used her own knowledge to compare and contrast Bethlehem from 2000 years ago to the present day. The school gives the children the opportunity to share in the word by taking part in celebrations in school, such as the Advent Celebration, and in Church at Mass on Sunday and as part of the Sacramental Programme. The school is very inclusive and teaches to everyone, regardless of background or religion. The RE Policy of the school aims "to encourage an atmosphere of Christian understanding, care, friendliness and devotion throughout the school in every aspect of school life." This policy was evident when in one lesson there were varied tasks and activities that were managed well. Scripture was used effectively to convey a message in a lesson observed about making a Christmas Story through Art. Scripture was well known in all lessons – one lesson where children were using laptops, iPads and other research tools, children listed many scripture stories with confidence. Therefore, children across the school are able to recognise the importance of Scripture. They are able to verbalise it well.

### **THE QUALITY OF THE WELCOME COMMUNITY**

The quality of Welcome in the school is OUTSTANDING. Inspectors were made very welcome at the school, starting at the entrance by the administration staff, by children, teaching staff, parents and governors. Even by the lollipop lady! Children entered school in a calm manner and were welcomed by the headteacher staff. Children were very polite, holding doors open for other children and saying "Good morning." It is important to St Patrick's that every child feels that they belong to the school. One child said, "We treat everyone equally. God is in everyone." Children's safety is paramount, and the school has a 'nurturing' system where older children care for the younger ones through a buddy system. They are involved in regular fund raising for CAFOD, St Joseph's Penny, Breast Cancer, Mission Together and several others. Lessons in RE and PSHE reinforce respect that pupils have for others. For example, children were able to comment appropriately on ways in which Advent could impact on their own lives. Parents have shown that they are keen to be involved in the development of their religious knowledge. The Parent's Faith Group, led by St Patrick's staff members, have met several times. Their next step is to involve new parents. The school's Personal, Social and Health Education Policy encourages "pupils to play a positive role in contributing to the life of the school and the wider community." This was evident when at playtime with children freely playing with each other and helping to keep the playground tidy. The children are very welcoming. A Year 6 boy asked an inspector, "Have you felt very welcomed today?" The answer was an emphatic, "Yes." This was repeated by a Year 3 child. A parent commented that the school includes everyone, that all are valued and made to feel welcome.

### **THE QUALITY OF THE WELFARE COMMUNITY**

The quality of Welfare is OUTSTANDING. Adults modelled Gospel Values whenever they were observed in dealing with others. Staff feel that they have a responsibility to nurture the children, and this example was repeated in various ways throughout the inspection. The children were seen to share in the ethos of nurture by modelling the attitude of "Respect, Resilience and Responsibility" in all their dealing with their peers. St Patrick's Behaviour and Discipline Policy aims "to promote good choices which lead to effective relationships so that everyone can support

each other, work together and learn well.” This was seen in section on many occasions during the inspection, for example at playtime where children were clearly safe in a small play area. Effective positive behaviour management was observed in all lessons. The Year 6 children support a ‘buddy’ in Reception, giving responsibility and a chance for positive relationships to grow. This was observed when older children escorted children back to their class, and warmth was clearly evident between them. There is a valuable link with St Anthony’s School in Zambia that gives children further opportunities to show respect for all. The Parent Voice is strong. There is a Parent Faith Group and the new Prayer Room will be open to all parents. The PTA hold regular fund raising activities to help the children in school, and the parents and teachers work hard to make it successful, and have raised a great deal of money for a new library in the school for the children. The Sex and Relationship Policy is in place, and is being constantly reviewed. The children say that they feel safe. One said that as far as they were knew, bullying has not happened. Another said that if you are bullied, tell a teacher because, “They always sort things out. We can trust them.” Parents felt that the staff always listened and responded to any concerns they had.

### **THE QUALITY OF THE WORSHIP COMMUNITY**

The quality of Worship in the school is OUTSTANDING. There are several opportunities for prayer offered at St Patrick’s thus placing Worship at the heart of the school. The older children are given the opportunity to lead worship each week, enabling the Liturgy of the Word to be heard and celebrated through story, song and reflection. This was observed when children read scripture to the whole school in assembly and sang in sections – all were smiling. Children find the liturgies meaningful. One child said, “Liturgies mean a lot to us because we take a lot of pride in them. They give us time with God. Time to pray.” Liturgies can be driven by events or from the Liturgical calendar. This includes children attend Mass in the neighbouring Parish Church, Class Liturgies and Key Stage assemblies where children pray, reflect, explore their Faith and research themes beforehand. At the time of the inspection the school was close to completing extensive building work which included a prayer room: plans for this room mean that it will be an attractive, eye-catching resource that will be shared with parents. St Patrick’s Collective Worship Policy states that the school wishes “every child to discover their own sense of spirituality and be equipped and able to express it personally and as part of our faith community.” This was evident during the inspection when there was a variety of evidence to show that worship is embedded in the school. In one lesson, the plenary of the session was in the school’s Prayer Garden. In another, the very youngest children made a natural, worthwhile contribution to their own class liturgy. The role of the Collective Worship Co-ordinator is clearly defined and accessible in the school’s policy. The school feels that the next step in Worship is to develop meditation, which older children have expressed a wish to explore through St Patrick’s School Self Evaluation. This would extend the creativity in the provision for Prayer and Worship.

### **THE QUALITY OF THE WITNESS COMMUNITY**

The quality of Witness in the school is OUTSTANDING. All adults in the school are very good role models for the children. Children follow this example, making St Patrick’s a place where love is in abundance for all the members of its community. Staff make valuable contributions to the ethos of the school, for example by their confidence and ability to lead worship. Staff members are seen at Mass sharing celebration with the parish, or as catechists or Eucharistic ministers. The Mission Statement, as a result, is alive in the school, as it aims to “encourage the faith development of everyone in our school, parish and wider community.” Faith development extends beyond the school to parents, and this will move further forward with the opening of the prayer room in early 2014. The school tries to empower everyone in the school community “to fulfil their potential and God given talents.” This was evidenced when the children could clearly explain the school’s 3Rs. The RE Policy aims “to give to the children a sense of moral value by personal example, teaching and discussion.” This policy has an impact on the pupils and this was seen when children in a lesson on gifts helped each other when discussing the task of which present they could give to baby Jesus. Lessons observed showed teaching regarding evangelisation from the very youngest children to the very oldest ones. Children across the school have ownership of the Faith, and other faiths are given a special focus for Multi-Faith Week to show that they are valued. Parents said that they felt that the school was an extension of family, “like a second home.” They felt that everyone in the school cares for each other.

### **AGREED AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT**

- To further embed the new Mission Statement to all stakeholders.
- To further the consistency of the focus on learning rather than the activity.
- To extend the creativity in the provision for Prayer and Worship.

3<sup>rd</sup> December 2013

Dear Pupils,

Thank you for making our visit to St Patrick's RC Primary School so enjoyable when we came to inspect your school for the Bishop. Thank you for the very warm welcome we received. We really enjoyed the time that we spent with you. Your school is an outstanding Catholic school.

Thank you for letting us share in your lessons. We are sorry if we didn't see you in your class, we tried to see as many as possible. The behaviour that we saw was excellent, as were your manners. It was a privilege for us to come into your school.

You work very hard in school. We were very impressed by your politeness, your caring and considerate behaviour and your fantastic singing in assembly!

Your staff work very hard to help you. Your headteacher, Mrs Gleave, works hard to give you the best, and she gets lots of support from the two Assistant Headteachers and the RE Co-ordinator. They all think a great deal about you.

The Governors are very good at helping Mrs Gleave and the school team in giving you the best. The governors and staff are all very proud of you.

Finally, we could easily see how much work that you do, and how well you treat and care for each other. You have all done so well!

God bless all in your school,

Mr J Graves and Mrs M Cunningham

(Section 48 Inspectors)

## **St Patrick's RC Primary School, Walton-le-Dale**

### **Summary Report to Parents**

On Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> December 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.

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