



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

St Patrick's RC Primary is a Voluntary Aided Roman Catholic primary school serving the needs of the parish community of St Patrick's, St Malachy's and St Edward's in Collyhurst; close to the city centre of Manchester. The school lies within a socio-economically disadvantaged area. Pupils come from a variety of social backgrounds with the proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups significantly higher than the national average. This results in 40% of children having English as a second language and a high percentage of children transferring into the school in Key Stage 2. There are 227 children on roll including 44 children in the nursery. 49% of the children are entitled to Free School Meals; although children entitled to Pupil Premium funding is over 60%. Attainment of children on entry to school is significantly below the national average. Standards in English and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2 have risen and are now in line or above those of other children nationally. The school currently has 11% of children on the Special Needs Register which is lower than the national average. 55% of pupils are baptized Catholics. All teachers are of the Catholic faith.

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

St Patrick's is a good Catholic primary school offering the children a rich faith experience in line with their mission statement. The Headteacher leads the school well and with an outstanding determination that has resulted in rapid improvements to the quality of Religious Education and the spiritual life of the school since the last inspection. Teaching of Religious Education is good and some is outstanding so pupils learn quickly. Scripture is recognised as being important in the school. There is clear evidence of the Word of God informing teaching and learning, but the children's religious literacy skills and vocabulary is not yet outstanding. The school's priority for those in the greatest need, raising achievement, inclusivity and personal development, ensures that all pupils receive a good education. Monitoring and assessment of the Religious Education curriculum has ensured that there has been significant development. Parents feel welcome and at ease in school and able to talk to staff about their child's progress. The governors are supportive, challenging, proactive and committed to their leadership role. The Parish Priest, who is the Chair of Governors, has made a significant contribution to the work and Catholic life of the school. Opportunities for the school and parish communities to celebrate together have been strengthened considerably under that current leadership. The whole community clearly demonstrates outstanding witness to the church's mission in education.

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

- The spiritual leadership of the Headteacher is outstanding. Alongside senior leaders and governors, he has led the school well and with an outstanding determination that has resulted in rapid improvements.
- The outreach to parents, families and the local community is outstanding.
- The pivotal role of the Parish Priest and the parish community in supporting the school's mission is outstanding.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is outstanding.
- The enthusiastic leadership from the dedicated Religious Education subject leaders has led to important improvements in religious education and worship.

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

The spiritual leadership of the Headteacher is outstanding. He has led the school well and with an outstanding determination that the school will continue to improve and demonstrate its commitment to Catholic education. He is supported by an effective and developing senior and middle leadership team who, with the governors, continue to strive for further improvement. 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 Senior Leadership team clearly prioritises those on the margins of the school and resources are targeted to those in greatest need within the school. A free breakfast club and food parcels are a small example of what the school does to support their families. The governing body is highly supportive of the school and effectively holds school leaders to account. Governors have received training on assessment data and are now skilled at analysing national assessment data to compare the school academic performance with other schools. The Chair of Governors works closely with the Headteacher to ensure all the governors are aware of current strengths and areas for development. Religious Education and the spiritual life of the school are prioritised in both the School Improvement Plan and the Headteacher Reports to governors. Self-evaluation of the school's work at all levels is a coherent and accurate reflection of rigorous monitoring, searching analysis and self- challenge. The enthusiastic leadership from the dedicated Religious Education subject leaders has led to important improvements in religious education and the spiritual life of the school. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is fully embedded across all areas of the curriculum.

### **THE QUALITY OF THE WORD OF GOD IS GOOD**

Overall, the quality of teaching in Religious Education was good, with some outstanding features, leading to good achievement. Pupils have good knowledge of scripture and a positive attitude to learning. Although there is evidence that pupils are using religious vocabulary when contributing to discussions, this is an area that could be further developed by displaying, explaining and emphasising vocabulary in lessons. Pupils work hard and the majority cooperate well with each other and are respectful. Relationships are good and pupils are confident when talking about God and their faith and they are keen to learn more and achieve well. Teachers share their faith with pupils and have good subject knowledge. They differentiate planning for different ability groups and adapt their plans skilfully when they recognise that pupils have understood the work and move the learning on rapidly. Activities observed were creative and technology was used to engage the children. This was seen in an outstanding Key Stage 2 lesson where pupils were writing and filming a blog using the quotes of Jesus to illustrate how the disciplines would have used it to tell others about Jesus. Teachers ask skilful questions to check what pupils can do and also prompt them to explain their thinking. Teaching Assistances were appropriately assertive in their highly effective interaction with pupils. Marking is having a positive impact on learning and pupils, but this should be further improved. Pupils Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural education was found to be outstanding and throughout all aspects of the school. 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 WELCOME IS OUTSTANDING**

Jesus Christ is at the heart of this welcoming and caring school. The school reaches out to vulnerable members of the school community and they work extremely hard to ensure all pupils are guided and care for. The Social and Curriculum Inclusion Team lead the inclusion agenda with outstanding determination so every child is heard, valued and included fully in all aspects of school life. The school clearly understood the importance of welcoming others into their community and caring for each other. Staff and pupils demonstrated their understanding in a variety of contexts and they are living examples of the school's Mission Statement. The school actively seeks to engage with and support all members of the wider community. A partnership with the Pathways Department of Loreto College has enabled the school to welcome young adults with severe learning differences into the school as apprentice for a fixed period. One of these young people is now a member of staff and he is delighted that he has been given this opportunity. Parents were extremely appreciative of all the things the school does to support families. They are particularly appreciative of the way the school communicates with parents, the before and after school club, the welcome they receive when visiting the school and the links with the parish. 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 QUALITY OF WELFARE IS OUTSTANDING**

The staff and pupils demonstrate a very high level of respect for, care of and service to others, as people made in the image and likeness of God. 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. The outreach to vulnerable families is outstanding, including financial support for uniforms, school visits and a free breakfast club for all children. The school is open from 7am until 6pm to cater for the need of families. Pupils are given the opportunity to do homework with an adult before or after school. The school is one of only ten schools in Greater Manchester who are pioneering and delivering two of the new Change4life clubs in partnership with Manchester Healthy Schools Association. St Patrick's is a leading school for sports in the area. The behaviour of pupils is good and they are rewarded for positive attitudes and kindness. Those children needing extra support with behaviour, welfare and learning are very well supported. Provision for SEND pupils has improved considerably over the last two years and is exemplary. The school promotes high attendance and punctuality. The provision for sex and relationship education is through the extended curriculum. 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. Pupils 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 pupils quickly feel part of the school community, particularly those children who arrive at the school from abroad.

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

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. The Headteacher has been instrumental in developing the prayer life of the school and fostering stronger links with the parish community. There are weekly celebrations of the mass to which parents and parishioners are invited and these are well attended. Classes are paired for weekly liturgy; one class prepares the Mass and the other attends. In preparation for the Mass pupils study the meaning of the Word and create drama/art to demonstrate their understanding. During the inspection, pupils creatively dramatized the gospel reading during a whole school Mass and used British Sign Language to accompany the hymns. The Parish Priest is particularly gifted in his ability to engage pupils during the Mass and during his visits. The school has recently introduced mindfulness and meditation into their weekly and daily acts of worship. As a consequence, pupils are developing reflective practices and the new prayer room/chapel will enhance this practice. The pupils have developed a good knowledge of traditional prayers. Teachers are confident at leading collect worship. The organisation and implementation of these activities was excellent and resulted in a deeply spiritual experience for all those present. The new School Chaplaincy Team is leading new initiatives to enhance the spiritual life of the school. Prayer areas in classrooms, display materials and artefacts demonstrate creativity and relevance to the children. Key Stage 2 pupils have been on special days of reflection organised by Katherine House to deepen their understanding of prayer. St Patrick day celebrations and the Crowning of Our Lady are organised with the parish and participation amongst parishioners is strong. The school also participates in the Italian Witness Walks through Manchester. The sacramental programme is effectively led by the parish and supported by the school.

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

The staff and pupils feel confident and secure in witnessing to the beliefs and values of a Christian community and are extremely active in sharing their faith with others. Strong links have been developed with the parish and wider community; including Our Lady's High school and other Catholic Primary schools in the area. Links with the parish are enhanced with the regular visits of the Presentation Sisters, especially Sister Anne, and the work of the catechists for the sacramental programme. The number of children undertaking the sacramental

programme has increased considerably. The school gives generously to those in need within school and beyond; the support for families in difficulty is exceptional. The staff 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, Christmas Hamper Appeal and CARITAS are fully supported. Staff and 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. Relationships are excellent between all members of the community and pupils are not afraid to talk about their faith. Gospel values are clearly evidenced throughout all policies and procedures and have a significant impact on school life. A strong sense of belonging to the school community exists and all members of the school feel valued and cared for. The school have recently been awarded Gold status by the Woodland Trust of England in recognition of the work they do to look after God world.

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

- Continue to improve the quality of teaching and learning by raising expectations and developing children's religious vocabulary.
- Make sure that systems for marking pupils' RE work is consistent in all classes so pupils gain a clear understanding of what they need to improve and give pupils time to respond to teacher's comments.
- Greater opportunities for children to be involved in child led prayer and worship.

Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> July 2014

Dear Pupils

Thank you so much for the wonderful welcome you gave us when we came to visit you. We really enjoyed learning about all the wonderful things you do at St Patrick's, your sporting achievements and the school's proud history. You and your teachers are working so hard to always do your very best and as a result your RE work is good. We were impressed with the videos one class made during our visit. However, we were especially impressed by the way you look after each other and your look after your classrooms. The prayers corners and RE displays are beautiful.

It was wonderful to see how you participated in the Mass. Your behaviour was exemplary, readers read really well, your singing was beautiful and the role play during Mass was very special. Mr Hennessy thought collective worship in the Reception and Year 5 classes was also very special. We are really please that you have a special place for prayer and the school chaplaincy team. We would like to ask them to continue working with you on prayer and worship in the future, with some opportunities for them to lead prayer activities in school.

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 9<sup>th</sup> July 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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