

## INSPECTION REPORT St Patrick's RC Primary School Rochdale

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Inspection date 20<sup>th</sup> January 2014

Reporting Inspector Sister Judith Russi  
Mr Martin Johnson

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

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Type of School	Catholic Primary
URN	105827
Age range of pupils	4-11 years
Number on roll	309
Appropriate authority	The Governing Body
Chair of Governors	Mrs Pamela Kershaw
Head teacher	Mrs Monica Walczak
Date of previous inspection	December 2008

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The Inspection judgements are:	Grade	Explanation of the Grades  1 = Outstanding  2 = Good  3 = Requires improvement
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	
<i>The following pages provide reasons to support these judgements</i>		

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

St. Patrick's is a Voluntary Aided Roman Catholic school, which serves its own parish community. The school welcomes pupils from a varied socio-economic area with many coming from significantly disadvantaged backgrounds. On entry assessments indicate that attainment is well below the national expectation. The majority of the children are white British heritage. The EAL pupil population has doubled since the last inspection and now represents 27%. Applications to the school from other faith based families have increased and these now represent 12% of the school population. The school is very popular resulting in it being heavily oversubscribed. 84% of pupils are Roman Catholic. 50% of teaching staff have CCRS. 72% of adults working in the school are Catholic.

The Associate Head teacher was appointed substantive Head teacher in 2012. The school has developed significantly since the last inspection as a centre for leadership training and ITT in collaboration with a local network of schools who have been awarded the national Leading Aspect Status. St Patrick's welcomes students from Manchester University, Liverpool Hope University and Leeds Trinity and All Saints. St Patrick's also supports local High Schools as a partner for workplace experience for local high schools and colleges. In response to its changing intake profile, St Patrick's has appointed a Family Support Worker. The school has achieved the Investors in People (Silver) Award, Basic Skills Quality Mark, the Healthy Schools Award, DfES School Achievement Award and Eco Schools Silver Award and are currently working towards Enhanced Healthy Schools Award, Green Flag Status, and the Leading Parent Partnership Award.

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

St Patrick's is led by an inspirational and innovative team of Governors and Head teacher. The Governors and leadership team have recently led the review of the mission statement. *Together, through love and service, each person will come to know God and will grow to be the individual that they were created to be.* This is having a significant impact on the life of the school as a reference point for all Self Evaluation, Review and Development, formulation of policies and relationship. It is the point of reference challenging every person to be their very best. Pupils were clearly proud of their class mission statement books which contain pupil reflections on how they are living out the mission statement each day. The Head teacher and deputy head teacher engage all teachers and support staff in a structured programme of induction beginning with the mission of the Church in education and the specific mission of St Patrick's school. The rigorous and effective self-evaluation carried out by all members of the school community has resulted in standards of achievement being consistently above national standards for the past five years, despite the low baseline on entry. The structure and organisation of the School Improvement Plan and the Head teacher's report enables governors to evaluate the work of the school in relation to its mission and the framework, consequently they provide highly effective challenge and support for ongoing school improvement.

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

- The leadership of the school is inspirational, innovative and continually strives for excellence at all levels
- The overall care for those in the greatest need in the community is outstanding proving a highly effective pastoral care between home, school and parish.
- Teaching and learning was found to be outstanding across all key Stages

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

The governing body continually reviews the quality of their service which was clearly evidenced by the number of effective innovations and changes the community has undergone since the last inspection. Together governors and the head teacher provide outstanding leadership for the school community. The structure and organisation of the School Improvement Plan enables governors to evaluate the work of the school in relation to its mission. The openness to new thinking, risk taking and creativity whereby every member of the school community felt that they could make a difference was inspirational. Pupils are given direct access both informally and on a formal basis to the decision making process by attending meetings of the senior leadership team and governors meetings. Staff and pupils felt their ideas for development and change were taken seriously and where possible acted upon.

Learning beyond the classroom is a distinctive feature of St Patrick's and has resulted in an exciting enhancement of pupils learning at all levels. The head teacher actively seeks out emerging talent in staff, pupils and parents ensuring that gifts and talents are developed as much as possible. The call to *be the best we can be*, was clearly evidenced through rigorous target setting, effective systems of CPD and creative learning opportunities for parents. The rigorous and effective self-evaluation carried out by all members of the school community has resulted in standards of achievement being consistently above national standards for the past five years, despite the low baseline on entry to school. Leadership of St Patrick's is clearly one of service and empowerment of all its members.

### **THE QUALITY OF WORD IS OUTSTANDING**

Teaching and learning was found to at least good and in the majority of lessons outstanding. Pupils were highly motivated, enjoying their learning and able to work independently often at a rapid pace. A significant contribution to pupil learning and progress was made by the support staff who demonstrated a high level of skill in assisting children needing considerable support in many classes. The use of religious language through a systematic emphasis on using correct terminology resulted in children being challenged to engage with difficult religious concepts and vocabulary. RE clearly unpins the whole curriculum and the more recent emphasis on planned SMSC interventions across all areas of learning is significantly raising pupil's ability to make connections and see all learning as part of a sacred journey into understanding the mysteries of God's world and their unique place in it. The teaching of scripture is extensive, creative and well planned with pupils clearly able to make links and connections with their own lives. Displays around the school were of the highest quality celebrating pupil's reflections on inspirational role models from a variety of backgrounds. Pupils were clearly being taught to recognise good, challenge injustice and respond to those in need. Monitoring, tracking and assessment of RE is highly developed and ensures assessment for learning is informing teachers planning and delivery. In most classes diagnostic marking clearly engaged pupils in how to improve and celebrated achievement. The inclusion of the RECD into the whole school curriculum tracking system ensures that the half termly monitoring of progress for all children identifies any early intervention needs. Standards in RE are at least as good as literacy and numeracy. The school is striving to ensure that RE is the lead learning area in all classes. RE is well funded and resourced in line with other core subjects and receives the required 10% of curriculum time.

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

St Patrick's is a school which radiates happiness, enthusiasm and the joy of learning. Children and adults actively reach out to one another through an extensive set of procedures that ensure everyone feels at home and welcome. Pupils were found to be confident and at ease with visitors, ready and keen to tell the story of their school and were clearly very proud to be at St Patrick's. Year 5 pupils write welcome cards to new pupils and actively welcome them and their parents on their

first day at school. There are strong supports systems in place for the increasing numbers of newly arrive to the country, often with little or no English. Pats' Pals play an important role in insuring all children have friends and are happy. The pupils were clearly proud to able to look after their new friends who were making rapid progress in learning English and coming to terms with their new environment. Parents are made to feel safe and secure and spoke of the fact that they were valued and cared for, never having to wait long and shown great respect. Mature students spoke of the very warm welcome they had received and how quickly they had been made to feel at home. Parents are invited into the school on numerous occasions as well as the school operating an open door policy. A significant number of parents help in the school and are then encouraged to train, join adult learning groups and classes to help with the ongoing education of their children.

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

St Patrick's demonstrates a high level of respect and care for each other which extend far beyond the classroom. The appointment of a Family Support Worker has had a major impact on the welfare of pupils and families. A wide variety of parent support and wellbeing classes have been developed to assist families in need. The positive impact of these services is clearly seen in the children's happiness and well being. The growing number of pupils coming into the school with complex needs is responded to with the positive recognition that these pupils are a top priority in line with the mission of the school. Children are confident that teachers will treat their concerns seriously and felt able to talk to any adult about their concerns. When asked about bullying, pupils stated that it was not an issue as everyone knew exactly what to do if there were any problems. The school's provision for safe-guarding and keeping children safe is outstanding. The provision for SRE is through the Diocesan Guidelines for EPR. Governors are currently reviewing their provision and in partnership with their local Catholic High Schools and have recognised the need for a programme of study for Sex and Relationships Education from 3-16years. This is an area for ongoing development. Respect for the environment and fabric of the school is given great importance. Pupils, Eco Committee and staff have created a place of beauty, order and calm. The beautifully designed grounds, vegetable and flower beds, sacred spaces and prayer garden all testify to a deep respect and care for creation. Quality before and after school care is provide for families needing extra support. The school actively reaches out to those in need at home and abroad through a wide variety of charity work. Respect for one another, behaviour and movement of pupils around the school was found to be outstanding.

### **THE QUALITY OF WORSHIP IS OUTSTANDING**

The planning and provision for prayer throughout the school is of the upmost importance and offers pupils and staff a wide variety of prayer and worship opportunities and experiences. The pupil chaplains play a key role in helping staff to prepare and lead pupil prayer and worship in all classes. The teaching of prayer is systematic, age related, child centred and highly creative. Teachers and pupils are experimenting with new methods of prayer and in particular learning the prayer of silence and contemplation. Staff and pupils are confident in leading prayer and worship. All year groups have a clear understanding of the liturgical life of the school. The active involvement and leadership of the parish priest is a significant asset for the school and greatly appreciated by all. The relationships between the school and the parish are excellent with parents, pupils and staff speaking of their appreciation of each other. There is a high level of commitment to the delivery of the sacramental programme by staff and governors. Advent and Lent are times when the whole community of home, school and parish come together for regular prayer, creative liturgies and celebrations of the season. The school has recently invested in the creation of a beautiful outdoor prayer area which has been designed by the children. Prayer and worship are well resourced and training and support is ongoing for both pupils and staff.

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

Witnessing to Christ and the values of the Gospel are central to the life of St Patrick's which is clearly having an impact on the local community. Pupils play an active part in challenging community and Council leaders on issues which pertain to the dignity of all and the common good. Their actions have led to local councillors seeking their advice and informing decisions at Local Authority level concerning the nearby Falinge Park. Gospel values are to the fore in displays and children's work throughout the school. Children were found to be very confident and willing to speak about their faith and able to apply it to modern day issues. The provision for Chaplaincy is outstanding. Governors pointed out that they have at the request of the pupils, dedicated considerable amounts of resources to the development of the Chaplaincy area as a direct result of *'a very professional presentation and argument put forward by the pupil chaplains at a governors meeting'*. The strength of the relationship between school and parish is exceptional. The parish priest spoke of the importance of the school as a witness to what the Church needs to be *'if you want to know what the Catholic Church is like go and visit the school.'* The values of the school have a very definite impact which extends beyond the school into the community. It is clear that the school stands as a witness to Christ's love, justice, forgiveness and compassion. An outstanding feature was seen in a discussion with pupils about their newly revised mission statement and its importance and place in their lives. Pupils spoke of the way it *'tells us what we are about'* and *this is why we are at St Patrick's*. Pupil's sense of identity and purpose was outstanding. The work in supporting CAFOD, CARITAS (St Joseph's Penny), Petrus and Trussell Trust Foodbank are just a few of the many projects the school have undertaken in response to their understanding of the individuals responsibility for caring for those in need.

### **AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT:**

- Continue to develop the excellent partnership between home, school and parish through the ongoing development and training of the school Chaplaincy team so that it extends and impacts further on the life of the parish.
- Further embed the provision for SMSC across the curriculum in order to extend higher order questioning and critical thinking skills of all pupils.
- Continue the development of creative, innovative and challenging teaching and learning strategies so that the most able pupils are continually challenged to be the very best they can be.

January 20th 2014

Dear Pupils

Thank you so much for the wonderful welcome you gave us when we came to visit you. We had a wonderful day and were only sorry that it was over so quickly. Thank you so much to everyone who helped us feel so welcome and at home.

You are an outstanding school which is striving to be the very best you can be. This is because you are all working so well to help one another grow into the people God has created you to become. We loved your outside areas and thought your prayer garden was beautiful.

A very special word of thanks to all the pupils who looked after us so well at lunch time and showed us your work on the Mission Statement.

Chaplains, everyone is so proud of what you have achieved in a very short time. We hope you are too. In order to help you develop further your teachers, governors and Father Joe are going to explore more ideas of how you might be able to help Father in the parish.

We were very impressed with your behaviour, respect for each other and the way you clearly are so proud of your school. To help you to improve your teachers are going to develop your critical thinking skills so that you can go even further in your learning.

To all St Patrick's pupil's we would like to say 'Thank you' and keep up your very high standards of behaviour, respect and love for one another.

Yours sincerely

Sr Judith Russi

(Section 48 Inspector)

### **Summary Report to Parents**

On the 20<sup>th</sup> January 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.

### **OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL**

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