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**INSPECTION REPORT**

Inspection date 24th June 2014

Reporting Inspectors Mr Brendan Hennessy  
Mrs Donna Kiernan

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

Type of School Primary

URN 106355

Age range of pupils 3 -11

Number on roll 231

Appropriate authority The Governing Body

Chair of Governors Fr Patrick McMahon

Head teacher Mrs Anne Heard

Religious Education Co-ordinator Mrs Tara Loat

Date of previous inspection April 2009

<b>The Inspection judgements are:</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Explanation of the Grades</b>  1 = Outstanding 2 = Good 3=Requires Improvement 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 AND CONTEXT OF THE SCHOOL**

St Teresa's is a Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary School in the Diocese of Salford situated in Firswood, Trafford. The school serves the amalgamated parishes of St John's, Chorlton and St Teresa's, Firswood. This is a slightly smaller than average sized primary school with 231 pupils on roll including 27 children in the nursery; 93% are baptised Roman Catholic. The school is situated in an area of mixed housing, 8.2% of pupils entitled to Free School Meals. Historically there has been an average figure of around 18% of pupils eligible for FSM: this appears to be a changing picture but has not had a significant impact on the attainment of these pupils. On entry to nursery the attainment of the majority of pupils is broadly in line with the national average, although there are significant differences in some cohorts. The majority of pupils have made good or better progress in their learning by the time they leave at the end of KS2. The school currently has 5.6% of the pupils with Special Educational Needs. The school's Attendance rate is in line with the national average, 95.6%. There are 15 teachers in school, 12 of whom are Catholics; 4 have the Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies. A number of building projects have been undertaken since 2008 to improve the learning environment and school grounds.

## **OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL**

St Teresa's is an outstanding Catholic primary school. This warm and friendly school offers all children a rich faith experience and a true Catholic education in a caring and supportive environment where all are welcomed and differences celebrated. The strong, spiritual commitment of the Head Teacher who values every member of the school community; the talented and enthusiastic Leadership team; combined with the hard work and dedication of all of the staff, ensures that the spiritual and pastoral needs of all are very well met and that the Gospel values are clearly evident and lived out by all. The Parish Priest and Governing Body are very supportive, cohesive and committed to their leadership role in ensuring that Catholic education of the highest standard is provided for all in this compassionate, thoughtful, inclusive and happy school. The friendly, polite and well-mannered children are very proud of their school and have high expectations of themselves and others. Their behaviour and attitude to learning is exemplary, as noted by the recent OFSTED inspection. They enjoyed sharing with the inspectors their thoughts about the school and examples of their work. Parents are welcomed and feel that they can talk to the staff freely and that they are listened to, they comment that "this really is a family school". The quality of the prayer life and opportunities for worship, combined with effective teaching and learning, and, high quality displays clearly demonstrate the Word of God supports the individual faith journeys of all members of the school family. Monitoring, assessment and effective evaluation of Religious Education in school has ensured that the school has continued to develop since the last inspection.

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

- **The dedication and commitment of all the staff to the Catholic life of the school**
- **The quality of the relationships across the school and the outstanding behaviour and respect for others shown by the children**
- **Parents value the commitment of the school to support and develop their children's and their own faith.**
- **The inspirational leadership of the Head Teacher and the dedication of the leadership team and Governors.**

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

St Teresa's is very well led by a dedicated and inspirational Head Teacher who has a clear vision, a sense of purpose for the education of the whole child and values the individual worth of every member of the school community. The Head Teacher is aided by a very effective and experienced RE subject leader, a creative and enthusiastic leadership team and supported by a very willing staff. They all share and live their vision for Catholic education ensuring that the development of the Catholic life of the school is at the forefront of their thinking and practice. The governors are committed, supportive and proactive they see RE as the "core of the core" in school. They have worked with school to help shape the vision of the school especially in self-evaluation through the 5W's and the delivery of Religious Education. In addition to his role as Chair of Governors the very supportive Parish Priest is a regular visitor to school and is fully involved in the religious life of the school. All of the school leaders set the example for others in the school to follow. Through effective monitoring, assessment and evaluation the leadership team is fully aware of the strengths of the school and what needs to be done to develop even further. Pupil leadership has been established through the School Council and the school plans to improve this through the training and establishment of a Pupil Chaplaincy Team. The quality of leadership at all levels of the school community makes a significant contribution to the outstanding provision for Catholic education at St Teresa's.

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

The Mission Statement is known, lived and witnessed throughout the school, the children were pleased that their suggestion about using the school prayer as the Mission Statement was taken up by the staff and Governors. The school meets the requirements of the Religious Education Curriculum Directory and has been creative in developing its own RE scheme based around The Way, The Truth and The Life to meet the needs of the pupils at St Teresa's and enhance the RE curriculum. Teaching and learning was found to be outstanding overall with excellent practice observed in EYFS, KS1 and KS2. Inspirational teaching and engaging learning was observed in the nursery: in other lessons the children were encouraged to think differently through challenging questions for example in Y2 lesson where Jesus helped the man who could not walk, "Is it always easy to believe or trust?": in a Y6 lesson on Hidden Talents the children were continually challenged to reflect on and refine their responses to open questions. Teachers place high priority on the teaching of RE as demonstrated in their knowledge and understanding, their thoughtful planning and this is evident in the quality of the children's work and their contributions to lessons. Pupils show a real interest and enthusiasm in RE, they have a very good attitude to learning and were happy and confident to share their understanding of their faith. They knew how to improve their work and where constructive marking was used it provided challenge and enabled them to reflect on and improve their learning. Detailed planning and the effective use of challenging questioning was observed in lessons, this coupled with many appropriate opportunities for partner talk where children were challenged to think about the bigger picture and continual assessment ensured that lessons were engaging, well-pitched and moved along with pace. Parents commented on how much the children "love learning" in RE and how they are taught "in an age appropriate and nice way that makes the children feel really proud". Teaching Assistants have a good knowledge and understanding of the teaching of RE, they effectively interacted with pupils to support their learning and they contribute significantly to the high standard achieved in RE. The staff and pupils demonstrate and can articulate the centrality and importance of the Word of God. This can be seen all around the school on the wonderful, uplifting, high quality displays. The school makes excellent use of the Marist Centre for a variety of staff and child related learning experiences. The Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural education was found to be outstanding and permeates all aspects of school life. Pupils learn about other faiths through religious education and assemblies and this helps the children to understand and respect the beliefs and cultures of others. 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 and it has a high priority on the School Improvement Plan.

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

St Teresa'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 warm and friendly welcome in the true spirit of hospitality 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. This deep-seated welcoming tradition helps the school to reach out and support all in the community, recognizing and respecting diversity at all levels. There are many thoughtful and informative displays, clearly demonstrating the Catholic life of the school, throughout the school which the children and staff are rightly proud of. All members of staff demonstrate a caring nature for the children, parents and each other; thus ensuring a great sense of belonging and an affirming ethos throughout the school, where these supportive relationships thrive. Staff set the example for children to follow; they are indeed role models of the love of Christ, respecting the dignity of all. The children are polite and very well-mannered with a cheerful outlook and smiling faces in this happy, caring and compassionate school. The parish priest is a welcome visitor and the children and staff look forward to his regular visits. St Teresa's school welcomes parents and encourages their contribution to the life of the school; they feel appreciated and involved in all that their children do. 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 class assembly attended by over 30 parents. 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 Teresa's is a very inclusive school, where parents recognise the caring atmosphere created by all in the school community and as a consequence the school has provided a quality learning experience for a number of children with significant learning difficulties. Parents comment "there are not enough words to describe the support school gives – a really special school". Respect for the dignity of all is clearly evident across the school. Nurturing this caring ethos and the development of pupils' personal qualities are a very high priority for staff and Governors. Relationships within the school are excellent and children work well to support each other in their learning. Staff are models of care and respect. The behaviour of pupils in and out of school is exemplary. The school's procedures for keeping pupils safe are excellent. Children report that incidences of bullying are rare and if they occur are dealt with immediately. They speak about their teachers with fondness and appreciate all the help they are given to understand their faith. The children also enjoy raising funds for more vulnerable groups around the world. Links with the Parish are very positive and the influence of the Parish Priest on the lives of the children is a key element. The school ensures that children's achievements are celebrated and that the most vulnerable are well cared for and listened to. As a result children develop care and respect for each other and God's creation. The School Council ensures that pupil voice is heard at St. Teresa's and the children are encouraged in their efforts to take more of a leadership role in the prayer life of the school and outreach to the wider community. This Christ-centred community ensures that each person has 'life to the full'.

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

Worship is undoubtedly a strength of the school and is at the heart of this community. There were wonderful examples of the opportunities for worship throughout the year displayed around school. The importance of prayer and worship is expressed and witnessed through classroom acts of reflection and meditation, assemblies, Mass and liturgies. Each classroom has an age appropriate and relevant focal point for prayer and these are clearly valued by the children. Additional focal points for prayer, display and reflection are situated at key areas in the school that can be accessed by children, staff and parents. The children are happy to write their own prayers and to share their joy in praising God with others. The staff and children are confident in preparing and delivering acts of collective worship in different formats. The acts of prayer and worship observed were child centered, creative, inclusive, thoughtful and relevant ensuring that

children and adults were given the opportunity to pray together as a community. At the engaging, creative and reflective whole school assembly the Y5 children led the school community in reflection and prayer on the importance of the lives of St Peter and St Paul. In this act of worship all pupils showed reverence and respect, were encouraged to speak to God in their own way, and led the school community in wonderful and joyful singing praising God. In RE lessons that included acts of worship, these special moments of quiet prayer and reflection were beautifully respected by the children and enhanced their personal relationship with God and one another. Scripture is clearly known, understood and made relevant throughout the school. Parents were extremely positive about the range of opportunities the school offers for prayer and worship, stating that their children: “love assemblies and Mass”; “find them stimulating and uplifting”; and “really enjoy being chosen as class prayer leaders”. The introduction of pupil chaplains will give even greater opportunities for children to take a leading role and make an even more significant impact on prayer and worship throughout the school.

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

All staff and children give witness to the beliefs and values of the Catholic faith, they clearly accept responsibility to bear witness to Christ’s teaching in their daily lives. The Mission Statement is at the heart of the school which makes every effort to ensure that it really does “seeks to prepare our pupils to become part of the wider community and to take on the challenges they may face tomorrow”. Pupils’ demonstrate quite clearly that peace, love, justice, truth, reconciliation and respect for all are promoted and were evidenced throughout the entire school community. Children are encouraged to reach out to those in need not just by their wonderful support for local, national and world charities but also in how they show respect, care, compassion and consideration of others that values the unique worth of each other. Relationships are excellent between all members of the school community. Staff are positive role models for the children promoting the ethos and values of the school and helping them to recognise that Jesus is with them in all aspects of school life. The school fosters a spirit of awe and wonder through religious education and the broader curriculum where children are encouraged to be good stewards of creation. The home, school and parish links are inclusive, creative and effective. Close links with the parish are enhanced with the regular visits of the Parish Priest and the work of the catechists for the Sacramental Programme. A strong sense of belonging to the school community exists based on the teachings of Jesus and an explicit Catholic values-based culture permeates the whole of school which is clearly identifiable through the relationships, decision-making and actions. It is clear that all members of this school family meet God each day and do all they can to meet the challenges involved in this witness.

### **AGREED AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT**

- To introduce pupil chaplaincy in order to further develop the pupil leadership role in all aspects of RE
- To extend the opportunities to develop best practice in marking by ensuring improvement comments in children’s work impact on learning
- To continue to maintain and develop the high standard of reflective and meditative prayer life across the school

25<sup>th</sup> June 2014

Dear Children,

Thank you for the very warm welcome you gave us and for making our visit to St Teresa's RC Primary School such a joyful occasion, we really enjoyed our time with you. You and all the adults in school 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 at St Teresa's. We saw as many of you as we could, and we were sorry if we didn't see you in your class. Thank you for sharing your work with us, we were very impressed with the standard of work in your RE books 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. You were wonderful – your behaviour was excellent, and your politeness and manners were simply superb. It was a privilege for us to come into your school.

It was so pleasing to see how you all took part in the school assembly, how well you said the prayers and your wonderful singing. Everyone showed great respect, your behaviour was exemplary and your prayers were uplifting.

Mrs Heard, all the staff, Fr McMahon and the school Governors are also extremely proud of all of you and of what you have achieved over the years, well done and keep it up!

Your teachers are keen to help you develop the Catholic life of your school even further and to do this they are going to invite you to consider how you can develop Chaplaincy in your school through training some of you to be Pupil Chaplains. They are also going to help you find more time for silent prayer where you talk to God using your own words or thoughts.

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

Yours sincerely,

Mr Brendan Hennessy  
Mrs Donna Kiernan  
(Section 48 Inspectors)

### **Summary report for parents**

On 24<sup>th</sup> June 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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- Parents value the commitment of the school to support and develop their children's and their own faith.
- The inspirational leadership of the Head Teacher and the dedication of the leadership team and Governors.

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- To extend the opportunities to develop best practice in marking by ensuring improvement comments in children's work impact on learning
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