

INSPECTION REPORT

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School Reddish

Inspection date	22 nd November 2012
Reporting Inspectors	Mr. A.J. Sowerby Lead Inspector Inspection carried out in accordance with Section 48 of the Education Act 2005
Type of School	Roman Catholic Primary
URN	105966
Age range of pupils	3-11 years
Number on roll	547
Appropriate authority	The Governing Body
Chair of Governors	Canon Maurice O'Connell
Headteacher	Mrs S. Rosindale
Religious Education Co-ordinator	Mrs H Montgomery
Date of previous inspection	May 2006 new school April 2011(amalgamation)

The Inspection judgements are:	Grade	Explanation of the Grades 1 = Outstanding 2 = Good 3=Requires Improvement 4 = Inadequate
Overall effectiveness of the school	2	
The quality of Catholic Leadership	1	
The quality of the Word of God community	2	
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 Joseph's Primary School is a larger than average primary school that serves the parish of St. Joseph's Reddish & Holy Family Denton. Currently there are 547 pupils on roll including 40 in the nursery of which 99% are Catholic. The school was formed following the amalgamation of the separate junior and infant schools in 2011. The school has 48 children who are eligible for free school meals and 49 pupils who are on the school's special needs register. 77% of the teachers are Roman Catholic of which 9 hold the Catholic Teachers Certificate or its equivalent. Most pupils are white British and there are few pupils for whom English is an additional language. The school has close links with the parish community. Canon O'Connell (parish priest and Chair of Governors) is a frequent and regular visitor to the school and provides support to all groups within the school. Levels of attendance are high and have been consistent for many years. No pupils have been excluded since the school was opened. The school holds a number of awards, including the Investors in People and Healthy Schools Status

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL is Outstanding

St Joseph's is a good Catholic Primary school with many outstanding features. There is a genuinely warm and caring welcome given to all. All children are offered a Catholic education in a friendly and supportive environment where differences are welcomed and celebrated. The word of God is central to the life of the school. There are outstanding parish links. St. Joseph's works collaboratively with the parish priest and the school is firmly at the heart of the parish. This ensures the pastoral and spiritual needs of the learners and their families are well met. The dedicated head teacher and her staff have high expectations of adults and children. Together with the hard working staff she has created an ethos where everyone recognises the need to work together as a "family", showing love and concern for all its members. Since the amalgamation she has worked hard to ensure that all members of staff share a sense of belonging to a community where everyone feels valued. The children enjoy coming to school and the school council expressed how very proud they are of all the opportunities given to them. Pupils are friendly, polite and welcoming and their behaviour at all times is exemplary. They work hard to achieve the high expectations of the adults who work with them. They enjoyed every opportunity to share with the inspector their work. The staff and pupils demonstrate a very high level of respect, care and service to others. The quality of relationships is a notable strength of the school."

THE KEY STRENGTHS OF THE SCHOOL INCLUDE

- The quality of leadership at all levels of the school
- The excellent relationships and sense of team work that pervade the school.
- The links the school has developed with St. Joseph's Parish community

THE QUALITY OF CATHOLIC LEADERSHIP is Outstanding

There is excellent leadership at all levels of the school community which contributes significantly to the good provision for Catholic Education that the school currently provides. The hard working and dedicated head teacher provides strong and decisive leadership by clearly living her vision for Catholic Education. She is an outstanding role model for the whole school community. She ensures that along with her senior staff that the development of the Catholic life of the school is at the forefront of the school's work. They are supported by a knowledgeable Governing Body, an outstanding R.E. Co-ordinator and a parish priest who is a regular visitor to the school. They together with the other senior leadership of the school ensure that the teaching of R.E and the development of the Catholic Life of the School have an extremely high priority in school. The school has a clear plan for developing R.E across the school and this is reflected in the priority it is given

Evidence for this can be found in the school's clear self evaluation plan, which is based on the 5Ws model. The school is aware of its next steps and has clear plans for implementing them. As a result the inspector can verify that this evaluation is both accurate and reflective.

THE QUALITY OF THE WORD OF GOD COMMUNITY is good

- The Mission Statement is clearly displayed throughout the school. It is known, lived and witnessed to and is evident at every level of the school. A child friendly version is visible in every classroom and in other appropriate places around the school. The policies and procedures have a significant impact on learning and the life of the school.
- The Religious Education of the pupils is the core of the Core Curriculum. The staffing and resources devoted to RE are of the highest standard, reflecting its significance and importance in the school.
- Teaching is consistently good across the school with some outstanding practice. Pupils are challenged to engage with the Big Questions of the purpose and meaning of life throughout the curriculum. This could be seen particularly in those lessons where children were challenged to implement the gospel message in their own lives. Examples of this were seen in reception where children asked to reflect upon the need to help others who are poor, in Year 2 where the children's ideas of heaven were on display for all to see and in Year 6 where the children were asked to consider how famous people had made a stand against injustice in the world.
- Scripture is clearly known, understood and made relevant throughout the school. The staff and pupils demonstrate and can articulate the centrality and importance of the Word of God. There is evidence on the displays in the classroom and halls of the importance of this.
- The home, school and parish links are inclusive, creative and effective. Pupils are actively trained in outreach to the local community. This can be seen in the number of charities that the school supports. These are not just the Catholic charities such as CAFOD and St Joseph's Penny but also the support the school gives to other local charities such as Cornerstones and the Stockport Soup Kitchen to name but a few.

The Inspectors cite the following evidence to confirm their judgement:

- Overall the standards of attainment, progress and hence achievement are good. As the curriculum is based on the mission it is challenging, interesting and fulfilling. The children are developing the age appropriate knowledge and skills.
- The school has begun to incorporate "The Way, The Truth and the Life" scheme. This is well supplemented by other R.E. resources so that as a result standards of teaching are good. Staff share ideas and coach each other to increase their expertise and create challenge in the RE curriculum. This was witnessed in one of the two outstanding lessons seen where the Year 6 children were challenged to extend their thinking about Catholic social teaching and how it is relevant in their daily lives.
- Experienced teachers act as mentors and good role models for new staff coming into school irrespective of their faith background.
- Work in R.E is clearly as good as work in other subjects due to the high priority given to it in school. This was seen by inspector in during the scrutiny of both the R.E and Literacy books. Marking was consistently good in R.E.
- Standards in RE are good. The children are encouraged to take the initiative and lead their own learning thereby developing their independence. This is particularly evident in Year 6. The children use ICT confidently and other resources well and enjoy learning set prayers and special aspects of their faith. There are regular visits into and out of school to enrich the RE curriculum such as participating in joint Diocesan masses and celebrations such as singing at the Junior Carol Festival
- The school has worked collaboratively to gather evidence so that the school has a clear strategy that includes all members of the school community in implementing the 5Ws across the school.

THE QUALITY OF THE WELCOME COMMUNITY is Outstanding

- There is a culture of welcome and all the pupils and staff demonstrate a very high level of confidence and outreach to all within the school community.
- Visitors are welcomed with love and respectful care. The importance of the dignity of the individual is clearly evident at all levels. Clear structures and procedures are followed by all staff and pupils who consistently witness to Christ being at the heart of the community through excellent

communication, relationships and a joyful, holistic approach to daily life.

- All members of the school community demonstrate a very high level of belonging and ownership of the school. Pupils are given a high level of responsibility in creating and sustaining the schools sense of welcome.
- Parents are very welcome into school and are encouraged to engage in their child's learning. This could clearly be seen in the way that staff from the nursery and reception classes met parents at the start of the school day and discussed with them any concerns that they had.

The inspector cites the following evidence to confirm his judgement:

- New families are welcomed into the school with warmth by the opportunities which are created to visit the school and meet the whole team. Parents voiced to the inspector how wonderful and special this made them feel. As one parent said "I brought my youngest child here because of the welcome my older children received. This is in spite of the fact he has some complex needs. The school has always made me feel welcome" The Head Teacher and senior staff are always available at the start of the day to discuss any concerns I may have"
- In the first few weeks of the school year parents and carers of children in the nursery and reception classes are invited to bring their child into school in the morning and stay until the children settle down.
- Parents are kept informed and up to date about the curriculum and events in school through the use of the school newsletter and school website. The school also ensures that the voice of the children is heard and respected. The School Council were keen to express their opinion about the changes they had brought about in school such as the provision of improved play facilities.
- Children of other faiths who attend St. Joseph's are welcomed with dignity and respect. Currently the school has only a small number of children from other faiths who attend the school. These are made to feel welcome and respected and as a result play a full role in the life of the school. As a result of the strong Catholic ethos all children are taught to respect each other so that everyone at the school feels part of the St. Joseph's family.
- Within school relationships are of the highest quality. Older children care for the younger ones, play leaders and buddies work to ensure playtimes are fun and peaceful.

THE QUALITY OF THE WELFARE COMMUNITY is Outstanding because.

- The staff and pupils demonstrate a very high level of respect, care and service to others. This was witnessed in all classes where children feel confident and secure enough to tend to their personal needs without interrupting the learning or having the dignity abused.
- The structures and procedures ensure that all pupils and staff feel safe and are treated with respect and dignity. The Christ-centred ethos is loving, creative, highly positive and fosters understanding, empathy and forgiveness.
- All pupils and staff feel safe and free to express their opinions and know that these will be valued. Importance and recognition is given equally to all.
- The budget, staffing and resourcing decisions demonstrate a consistent commitment to Catholic stewardship throughout the school.
- The parents and friends play a highly significant part in school life and their contributions are valued throughout the school.

The Inspector cites the following evidence to confirm his judgement:

- The physical, spiritual and mental well being of each person is central to the school's mission. The school council discussed with the inspectors the need to reach out with kindness to others for example those less fortunate in the world. Children are caring and have a true sense of right and wrong.
- The school is a very caring community where everyone is valued! Children during lessons listened respectfully to other pupils' ideas. Play partners and buddies look after and care for younger children. Children told the inspector that they have to look after the younger children because when they were once little and the older children were there to look after them and they must follow Jesus' command to treat others as you want to be treated.
- Calm support is offered by sensitive adults when children have difficulty remaining on task. Such role models ensure learning and loving friendships develop.
- Maturity and self responsibility are strongly encouraged. This is evident in the work of the School Council

- The school stresses the importance of reaching out beyond its own community so that children feel part of God's world. The charity work is a living example of this as children support CAFOD, St Joseph's Penny and many chosen by the children in special circumstances, on their own initiative.
- The children of the school council confirmed they feel very safe! The school goes to great lengths to ensure as far as possible children are free from worry and a happy, calm atmosphere is the norm. The school provides a variety of activities in order to ensure that this occurs. The mission is continued after school with a host of excellent clubs that are extremely varied hence meeting the needs and interests of all the children.

THE QUALITY OF THE WORSHIP COMMUNITY is Outstanding because.

- The school provides a variety of worship opportunities for pupils throughout the school (prayer, reflection, liturgies) including small and large groups – which are appropriate to their backgrounds and faith experiences.
- The development of opportunities for pupils to worship according to their intellectual and life experience needs and stages of faith development is clearly evident.
- Worshipping opportunities promote a strong community sense of service for each other.
- Inclusive worship helps pupils to grow in confidence in prayer and develop a relationship with God. This could be seen in the Key Stage 1 assembly where all the children were engaged in the signing of one of the hymns as well as being provided with the opportunity to reflect quietly upon the meaning of the gospel message. Further evidence was provided in a Year 3 prayer service where the children were provided with the opportunity to reflect through the use of drama the meaning of the term reconciliation and how it applies to their life.
- Most staff are trained and supported in the formation and education of the prayer life of the school.

The inspector cites the following evidence to confirm his judgement:

- The parish priest regularly celebrates the Mass which the children attend on a rota, in church. The school shares the celebration of mass with the parish. Key events are celebrated with special masses: the beginning of each school year, the parish and school feast day, Holy Days and at the end of the year.
- There are strong links between the parish and the school particular with regard to the preparation of the children for the Sacraments of Initiation. Here the enthusiastic parish co-ordinator is a regular visitor to the school and provides outstanding leadership of the scheme with the Head Teacher.
- During Advent, Lent and the Easter season the school holds assemblies, liturgies and times of reflection/reconciliation that are all shared by the whole school community. The children are encouraged to voluntarily say the rosary during the month of October and the Stations of the Cross during Lent
- There is a daily act of collective worship. These take place in a variety of formats. Children pray in classes, small groups and individually with great reverence, respect and thought. Those children who are not Catholic either join in or show great reverence to the worship taking place.
- Pupils are comfortable with their feelings and have a good and knowledgeable vocabulary. Each class has a special area of focus. The children know many school prayers and compose powerful prayers for themselves. In many classes there were examples of displays of the children's own prayers. The school has developed its own prayer book which contains a variety of traditional and personal prayers.
- Attractive displays which were seen around school are used to show and stimulate prayer opportunities. Hymns, music and singing enhanced the quality and enjoyment of prayer in school
- The Gospel values are clearly evidenced throughout all the policies and procedures and have a significant impact on learning and the life of the school.

THE QUALITY OF THE WITNESS COMMUNITY is Outstanding

- All staff act as excellent role models for the children and help them in recognising that God is with them in every aspect of school life.
- Adults and pupils witness to the Mission Statement of the school, which informs everything and is explicit in policies and the lived experience of the whole community.
- Adults act as role models of the school's mission and values and as key promoters of the ethos of the school for the pupils and the school community's witness to the wider community.

- The staff and pupils feel confident and secure in their witness to Christ, the Gospel and the teachings of the Church.
- Pupils are confident in witnessing to the beliefs and values of a Christian community and are actively encouraged and supported in being pro-active citizens who participate in the decision-making processes at a local and national level. This is seen in the way the school promotes support for various charities so as to promote support for the Common Good.
- An explicit Catholic culture permeates the whole of school and is clearly identifiable through relationships, decision-making and actions.

The Inspector cites the following evidence to confirm his judgement:

- The entire school community recognises that God is at the heart of the school in their actions and their relationships. All live the word of God. The mission statement, is the powerful tool which is used to demonstrate how the school bears witness to a loving God. All members of the school family meet God each day and strive to meet all the challenges involved in this witness.
- The school mission is known and understood by all at appropriate levels. It is in 'child and adult speak', but is powerful in its ambition. It is discussed and shared in assemblies, in class and in RE lessons. The statement can be seen displayed in school.
- Relationships are outstanding at St Joseph's and a strong sense of teamwork and belonging exist. The school and parish were described by parents as "a big family", where relationships are built on love and trust.
- The children feel a part of a long and rich history. Indeed, many parents attended St. Joseph's, and grandparents also have a long association with the school. Friendships are an additional strength to the school.
- Children showed a clear understanding of the beauty and mystery of God's world.
- The children have a highly defined sense of fairness and justice. They know their responsibilities in terms of equal opportunities, stewardship and reconciliation.
- The inspector noted at all times behaviour was outstanding. Children are respectful of each other. Adults working as a committed team have high expectations of the children and in this atmosphere the children thrive.

AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT:

- To further develop assessment procedures in order to ensure that there is clear progression throughout the school in the development of R.E. skills
- To explore opportunities for children to be involved in chaplaincy.

23rd November 2012

Dear Pupils

Thank you for making our visit to St Joseph's so enjoyable when we came to inspect your school for the Bishop. We really enjoyed being with you. Thank you for looking after me so well and helping me to feel very welcome. St Joseph's is a good Catholic school.

I enjoyed being part of your lessons and was sorry not to see everyone. Thank you for showing me so much of your work and activities. I could see that you are very proud of your school and all that you have achieved together. I was particularly impressed with your own child friendly Mission Statement, which shows how you are all part of God's great family. I know the Bishop will be delighted to hear this.

Your teachers are really helping you to learn very well and we were very impressed by your excellent relationships and behaviour. It was good to see so much of your Mission Statement coming through everything you are learning; your relationships and the special way you make everyone feel valued. It is wonderful to see a school made up of pupils and adults who get on so well together and so that everyone is cared for as a member of God's family. This is a true reflection of being part of a Catholic community where everyone is welcome and has a place.

You have started using your new RE programme and are doing well. You are a very creative school and I was most impressed by the way you work together so co-operatively in your lessons. The prayer services I saw were very good and uplifting experiences. I have asked your teachers to help you to do even better by working with you so that some of you can become school chaplains. Many of you have a very good knowledge and understanding of your faith so this should help you to do even better.

God bless you all and have a really happy term.

Yours sincerely

Mr A.J Sowerby

(Section 48 Inspector)



Summary Report to Parents

On 22nd November 2012 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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