

INSPECTION REPORT

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St Richard's Roman Catholic Primary School
 Wilpshire Avenue,
 Longsight,
 Manchester. M12 5TL

Inspection date **13 November 2012**

Reporting Inspector **Mr J Graves, Mrs D Kiernan**

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

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|----------------------------------|--------------------|
| Type of School | Primary School |
| URN | 105544 |
| Age range of pupils | 3-11 |
| Number on roll | 412 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair of Governors | Fr. Michael Dever |
| Headteacher | Sharon Sesnan |
| Religious Education Co-ordinator | Kathryn Broadbent |
| Date of previous inspection | January 2007 |

| The Inspection judgements are: | Grade | Explanation of the Grades 1 = Outstanding 2 = Good 3 = Satisfactory 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 Richard's is a Voluntary Aided RC Primary school in the diocese of Salford.
- It serves the parish of St Richard's in Longsight, Manchester.
- Pupils are 3-11 years arranged in single and mixed aged classes.
- The admissions number is 60
- The headteacher was appointed in 2006.
- The school is situated close by the parish church.
- The socio-economic make up of the pupils is made from a diverse, inner-city community
- 65% of learners are baptised Catholics.
- Standards on entry to Nursery and Reception are below average
- 33% of pupils are eligible for Free School Meals.
- 19% of pupils have been identified as having Special Educational Needs, with 0.24% of these children having a statement of Special Educational Need.
- 41% of children have English as an Additional Language

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL IS OUTSTANDING

St Richard's is an Outstanding Catholic School, where all are loved and welcome regardless of their background. It is well thought of by parents who view the school as 'one big happy family'. They are pleased that their children hold true Christian values and that they carry these outside the school. They also feel that the school caters well for pupils of all faiths and that it leads children to be 'very close to God'.

It became very clear to inspectors that children, parents, staff and governors are very proud of their school. The Religious Education is carefully planned and resourced by the Leadership team. Teaching is made relevant to the situation of the children. Children are very confident at leading prayer and worship, and quality opportunities for reflection were provided. The school reaches out to the community that it serves, and this and all it does are underpinned by the Gospel values set out in the school's Mission Statement.

The school has fully met the improvements recommended by the previous Section 48 inspection.

KEY STRENGTHS OF THE SCHOOL INCLUDE

- There are high expectations of the children in learning and behaviour
- There is a culture of welcome that is across the school
- The standard of care is very high
- Opportunities for collective worship are rich
- Children reflect the beliefs and values of a Christian community

THE QUALITY OF CATHOLIC LEADERSHIP IS OUTSTANDING

The quality of Catholic Leadership is Outstanding. Governors of the school are well informed on the Catholic life of the school through the Headteacher's reports and through regular visits into school. For example, they have evidence that the children can freely discuss the Five Ws. They have also been involved in training that has led to an impact on policies and procedures. For example, link governors attending meetings. The Headteacher is well supported by the Deputy and the Senior Leadership Team. As a result, the Headteacher's self-evaluation is an accurate one. The school is aware of its strengths and its next steps through rigorous monitoring and evaluation. This includes a particular focus on the well-being and progress of vulnerable children. The leadership of the school clearly recognises that Christ is the foundation and is central to all aspects of school life. They fulfil their mission of developing the potential of each individual. The mission of the Catholic Church in school is a priority and is clearly evident.

THE QUALITY OF THE WORD OF GOD IS OUTSTANDING

The quality of Word in the school is Outstanding. The standard of children's learning is high and is comparable to those in Literacy. There is rigorous monitoring of the children's standards in Religious Education through children's work and observations of children in lessons. Children's attainment in RE is regularly assessed. The School Improvement Plan contains a detailed section on Religious Education, ensuring that the subject area continues to develop. Staff have good subject knowledge of the Catholic Faith and are well trained to deliver RE. Teaching is very effective. This was demonstrated in lessons when the principles of Catholic social teaching were used by children to personalise their own learning by saying how the principles applied in their own lives. Children are able to apply the principles of the 5Ws to their work, for example when looking at why Mary said, "Yes" to God. The best lessons observed were driven by tight learning objectives that drove all aspects of learning, such as drama and writing to explain why God gave us the Ten Commandments, and with the younger children where all aspects of the Early Years curriculum were linked to RE.

Displays in the school show that scripture and the Word of God is known. Even with the youngest children, a beautiful display on Creation shows that children have grasped the thrust of the story.

Resources in lessons are of a very high quality. Children learn in different ways and there was evidence around the school that teachers appreciate this, teaching with various strategies so that the needs of all were met, including use of ICT, maps, music, artefacts, letters, video, powerpoint and photographs. This is in line with the school's Religious Education Policy which states, 'A variety of teaching methods and styles are used to impart the RE curriculum and reference is made to other subjects as appropriate.'

THE QUALITY OF THE WELCOME IS OUTSTANDING

The quality of Welcome in the school is Outstanding. Children and visitors alike are shown a warm welcome. Displays show how everyone is welcome in the school, particularly one called, "Let the Little Children Come To Me." The school serves a diverse community, and the diversity is recognised as an asset of the school. All pupils have committed themselves to this, and this is shown in their behaviour towards each other. In a Prayer and Worship session, a child said, "We search for justice and peace, no matter what colour we are." This shows that the Mission Statement is alive in the school as it states that the school community follow the 'Gospel values of love, peace, truth and justice in partnership.' The school was extended to take in extra children from the community, many are not Catholic, and evidence shows that all children get on well and all are viewed as assets to the school. All are valued, baptised or not, and all take part in Masses and services by reading, singing and other aspects. This adheres to the Mission Statement which says, 'Spirituality is at the heart of our school community... through the welcoming of all in God's name as God's children.' Children are proud of their school and felt that there was little to change, other than the size of the hall! Together with all staff, children accept responsibility in maintaining the welcoming culture in the school. The welcome of the school is extended to all members of the community, and this welcome is evident in the way that the children value each other's contributions to school life.

THE QUALITY OF THE WELFARE COMMUNITY IS OUTSTANDING

The quality of Welfare in the school is Outstanding. The PSHE Policy states that St Richard's will "continue to use the values of the Kingdom of God to inspire their work in the community." This is shown as the children raise money for charities to help the homeless and other local charities. They visit elderly people in a local care home and provide shoeboxes for the Missions. The staff are allowed to grow: All senior leaders have taken part in the Catholic Leadership Programme of Salford Diocese, the RE subject leader has led training for the staff on planning and worship. Governors take their responsibilities seriously and have also undergone training in Religious Education, the Mission Statement, SRE and Safeguarding. Governors visit the school and impact on the self-evaluation of the school, via lessons and interviewing children to gather their views. There are active parents groups who support the school.

Rules in place in the school and the classrooms allowed an orderly, polite safe environment. Support staff are well employed throughout, ensuring that children are safe, happy and that they were learning.

The PSHE Policy states that children will “develop positive relationships with all members of society” and this was evident in all observed aspects of the inspection. Children have high aspirations and take responsibility for their own actions. Behaviour is excellent, and in lessons children move from one activity to another without disrupting the pace of learning. Older children observed worked in groups and pairs purposefully and cohesively. Work is differentiated when appropriate, and vulnerable pupils are well supported by teachers and teaching assistants. Care for children starts half an hour before school starts. Children come into school in an orderly fashion, and are able to read or write prayers in a supervised, safe environment. At lunchtime, care continues with a peer learning group.

THE QUALITY OF THE WORSHIP COMMUNITY IS OUTSTANDING

The quality of Worship in the school is Outstanding. Assemblies are confidently led by pupils. This was shown when the theme of justice was presented to the Upper Key Stage Two children by Year 6. Children presented classroom learning in a way which was effective and engaged their peers. Children’s grasp of the Five W’s was at such a level that they were able to reflect these in their worship through prayer. The assembly was very well attended by parents. In Classroom worship, pupils are encouraged to make a contribution. This was shown when children wrote prayers and reflections giving their peers the opportunity to consider choices they make in their lives. All Worship observed was in keeping with the Children’s Mission Statement which states, ‘We pray for each other, our families, our parish and the wider community’. Each classroom allows the opportunity for children to offer their own prayers of intention which is well valued by the children. 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 Prayer and Worship Policy states ‘We endorse the belief that Collective Worship takes into account the religious and educational needs of all who share in it.’ This was evident in the two sessions observed. Visits to the local church and to the Marist Centre have given children the opportunity to grow closer to God through prayer. There is a weekly extra-curricular prayer group before school which is extremely well attended. The Parish Priest holds services in school and parents attend these. Classes also go over to church to celebrate Mass. There is a strong voluntary take up of children and their families going to Mass at Christmas and Easter.

THE QUALITY OF THE WITNESS COMMUNITY IS OUTSTANDING

The quality of Witness in the school is Outstanding. Children live out what they have learnt about Jesus in their lessons. They are proud of their Catholic school and are committed to fairness and justice. This was observed in lessons with respect, acceptance and tolerance for others. In one lesson, children taking part in drama were watched by their peers who had to identify which of the Commandments inspired them and this was done sensibly and in a way that upheld the esteem of the whole class. Children were able to apply commandments to modern day situations and discuss the consequences of particular actions. One child in another class chose an artefact because it reminded her of her teacher. The Catholic culture of the school was clearly observed in all aspects such as entry to school, playtime, lessons and assemblies.

The staff and pupils feel confident and secure in their witness to Christ, the Gospel and the teachings of the Church. Pupils are actively encouraged to be pro-active as witnesses of Christ, and they do so through fund raising and through their actions. Evidence throughout the inspection showed that children were respectful to other members of the school community. Gospel values were at the core of all interactions observed with a Catholic culture clearly being expressed by all. In lessons, children allowed others the opportunity to speak and each child was afforded dignity by their peers. The school is well valued by parents. They talk of the family atmosphere they and their children have experienced. They feel that the school has high expectations and teaches their children values.

AGREED AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT

- For written feedback to be more child-friendly for younger children
- For Learning Objective teaching to be consistent across the school

13th November 2012

Dear Pupils,

Thank you for making our visit to St Richard's school so enjoyable when we came to inspect your school for the Bishop. We really enjoyed being with you. Thank you for making us feel so welcome. Your school is an outstanding Catholic school.

We really enjoyed seeing your lessons and were sorry we didn't see everyone. We really enjoyed seeing your work, your times of prayer and worship and your activities. Thank you. It is clear that you are all very proud of your school. It was a pleasure to see your attitude to life, which was summed up by a child who said, "We search for Justice and peace no matter what colour we are."

You made us very welcome and your behaviour was super. It was lovely to see the great relationships you have formed with each other and with the staff who show their care for you in many ways. Being at St Richard's School is a true reflection of a Catholic community – everyone is welcome and everyone matters.

Your teachers know that you can do great things – and you do not let them down. You work well, but you also show that things like justice, peace and truth are important to you. It was a privilege for us to come into your school.

Your teachers help you all the time. You will see that help for the younger children by new types of comments that the teachers put in your books. You will also see that help with the learning Objective (it's sometimes called a WALT) always being the focus of what you need to know at the end of the lesson. You have great teachers and staff and they work very, very hard. You are a lovely set of children and we will always remember your community.

God bless all in your school,

Mr J Graves and Mrs D Kiernan

(Section 48 Inspectors)

St Richard's RC Primary School, Manchester

Summary Report to Parents

On 13th 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.

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