

INSPECTION REPORT

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**Inspection carried out Under Canon 806
and in accordance with Section 48 of the Education Act 2005**

Name of School **St. Mary's RC Primary School, Milner Street, Swinton M27 4AS**

Inspection date **8th May 2018**

Reporting Inspectors **Jackie McNally and Jim Graves**

Type of school	Voluntary Aided
URN	105957
Age range of pupils	3-11 years
Number on roll	265
Appropriate authority	The Governing Board
Chair of Governors	Jane Leader
Headteacher	Dee Raynor
Religious Education Co-ordinator	Stuart Loynd
Date of previous inspection	21 st June 2013

The Inspection judgements are:	Grade	Explanation of the Grades
Overall effectiveness of the school	1	1 = Outstanding 2 = Good 3=Requires Improvement 4 = Inadequate
The quality of Catholic Leadership	1	
The Catholic life of the school (incorporating Welcome, Welfare and Witness)	1	
The quality of Religious Education (incorporating Word)	1	
The quality of Worship	1	
The following pages provide reasons to support these judgements		

CHARACTERISTICS AND CONTEXT OF THE SCHOOL

St Mary's RC Primary is an average sized school serving the parish of St Mary's in Swinton. A large majority of pupils are white British but the proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups with English as an additional language is well above national average. The proportion of children with a Statement of Special Educational Needs or an Education Health and Care Plan is above average and 19% of pupils are identified as requiring Special Educational Needs support. The percentage of pupils eligible for additional pupil premium funding is in line with national averages. The 2017 performance data indicates that children make better than expected progress as they move through the school and the end of Key Stage 2 data are well above national averages in all subjects. The progress measures from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2 and the average scaled scores are also well above national averages. 75% of the staff are Catholics and 88% of the children are baptised Catholics.

THE KEY STRENGTHS OF THE SCHOOL INCLUDE:

- **The headteacher's vision and leadership that inspires all within the school community.**
- **The mission statement is at the heart of the school and is clearly understood and lived by all members of the school community.**
- **The children's behaviour is exemplary and they bear witness to the Gospel Values.**
- **The guidance, care and support provided by all staff ensures that pupils feel valued and loved.**
- **Teaching and learning allows pupils to develop to their full potential and Religious Literacy is a strength of the school.**

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL IS OUTSTANDING

St Mary's has continued to grow and develop since the last Section 48 inspection and is now an outstanding school. The headteacher is supported by a skilled and dedicated board of governors and staff who share her passion and determination to ensure that all children receive the highest quality education. Distributed leadership is a strength of the school and the staff have the skills to effectively monitor and evaluate the Catholic life of the school and they are constantly seeking ways to improve further. The children's behaviour is outstanding and they are justifiably proud of their school. They are confident, articulate children who strive to do their best. The missionary disciples and school council members provide an excellent role model for other children. The mission statement is a living statement and manifests itself in the secure and loving relationships between children, parents and staff. The safety and welfare of children is given a high priority and through this example the children reach out to others in the community and the wider world to demonstrate the same support through their fund raising activities. Teachers plan engaging and interesting activities for the children which encourages them to ask big questions and reflect upon the Word of God. As a result of high quality teaching children demonstrate a secure Religious Literacy. There is a genuine commitment by all members of the school to providing rich learning experiences for children in a safe, secure environment. Worship is an intrinsic part of the school day and children participate with respect and reverence. The missionary disciples have the skills to lead beautiful acts of worship and they now need to help other children throughout the school to develop these skills.

THE QUALITY OF CATHOLIC LEADERSHIP IS OUTSTANDING

The headteacher provides inspirational leadership and it is clear that she has developed a wonderful cohesive team who share her passion and vision for Catholic education. The parents, staff and governors hold the headteacher in high regard and they praised her dedication and her continuous pursuit of excellence. This desire to constantly improve is a vision shared by the whole school community. The headteacher aims to nurture and support the leadership skills of all staff by giving them the freedom to try new ideas and this means that staff can confidently embrace leadership roles within the school. The governors are highly committed and demonstrate an excellent understanding of the school and it is clear that they

provide appropriate levels of challenge and support. The governors have been fully involved in writing the self-evaluation document and they take an active role in evaluating the Catholic life of the school through regular visits to their link class and through the focused religious education visit which is held annually. The senior leadership team and Religious Education subject leader effectively monitor the Religious Education curriculum and the Catholic life of the school through book scrutinies, lesson observations and pupil interviews and this means they have an accurate understanding of the strengths and areas for development. There is a genuine commitment to school improvement and the Religious Education action plan is a comprehensive document which is regularly reviewed. Pupil leadership is outstanding and children embrace their responsibilities with enthusiasm. The pupil missionary disciples confidently bear witness to the Gospel values and they have the skills to confidently lead worship. The school works in partnership with other local schools, effectively sharing ideas in order to further develop good practice.

THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL (incorporating Welcome, Welfare and Witness) IS OUTSTANDING

St. Mary's endeavours to reach out to parents, children and visitors so that they feel welcome and supported. The parents appreciate the opportunity to attend assemblies and share the Wednesday Word and they praised the high levels of communication they receive about the Catholic life of the school. Relationships between staff, pupils, parents and the wider community are very well established and this has created a strong, loving ethos built upon the gospel values. The children are caring and compassionate towards each other and this was summarised by a child who said, "We all love each other and we put a smile on someone's face every day." The staff are excellent role models and many children spoke about how the staff are always happy; it is this positivity that makes St Mary's a wonderful learning environment for the children. The children spoke with enthusiasm about their role as St Mary's Guardian Angels where they have the opportunity to demonstrate their care for others and take an active role in resolving problems on the playground. Safeguarding is given a high priority in the school and children feel safe and secure. The 'Time to Talk' sessions are valued by the children because it provides an opportunity for them to repair friendships and solve disagreements. Similarly, the nurture area, the 'Pyramid Club' and the worry hands all provide opportunities for children to express their worries and seek support. The welfare of all is paramount to everyone at St Mary's and the school fosters high levels of empathy, forgiveness and respect for others. The school supports many charitable organisation including CAFOD, Caritas and St Joseph's Penny and it reaches out to the community through the Christmas Carol concert and through visits to the local old people's home. All members of the community are encouraged to join together to witness to their faith and throughout Advent and Lent there are additional celebrations where the parents and the wider community are invited to join the school on their faith journey. The school council make a positive contribution to the school environment and ethos. The welfare of the children extends beyond the primary school and the school is pleased to welcome former 'St Mary's Mates' back as visitors. The staff and children follow in the footsteps of Jesus by demonstrating justice, compassion and love for others. The staff act as role models in witnessing their faith and they are active in promoting the gospel values.

THE QUALITY OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (incorporating Word) IS OUTSTANDING

At St Mary's Religious Education is at the core of the core of the curriculum. During the lessons observed the teachers used a range of different strategies and ideas to engage the interest of the children. Teachers are skilled in planning and delivering lessons which promote creative and deeper thinking. A good pace is maintained throughout lessons, learning objectives are clear and there is effective use made of good quality resources. In all lessons observed, the teachers were enthusiastic and motivating and this positive approach to the delivery of lessons served to engage the interest of the children. Throughout the inspection many wonderful ideas were observed; a sparkly friends mixing bowl, making a model person filled with love and walking a path of life. The standard of work in pupil books is outstanding and reflects the high standards also observed in the literacy books. It is clear that teachers have high expectations because the books are beautifully presented and show an interesting and varied range of activities. The school places a great deal of emphasis on Religious Literacy and this was evident both in the pupil books, during lessons and when speaking with the children. The school has adopted good systems for assessing children and the children are tracked as they move through the school. Behaviour for learning in lessons is outstanding and the children talk positively about their lessons. The children engaged in independent tasks confidently and showed high levels of sustained concentration. The school places a high priority on professional development and most of the teachers have completed the CCRS programme. The staff also have the opportunity to attend Diocesan training and

opportunities are sought to work with other schools to improve good practice. The children have a good understanding of other faiths and their world faith books show a good depth of understanding.

THE QUALITY OF WORSHIP IS OUTSTANDING

Worship is an integral part of daily life at St Mary's and the Word of God is central to acts of worship. During the acts of worship observed children participated with respect and reverence. The assembly observed was creative and imaginative, successfully calling upon children to think about how they can serve God during the reflection time. Collective worship incorporates opportunities for children to respond and pray through music, prayer, painting, reflection and scripture. These opportunities enrich children's spiritual understanding and bring them closer to God. The school has recently introduced 'Painting with Prayer' which allows the children to reflect and respond to a Psalm or prayer through painting and art work; the children spoke with enthusiasm about this activity. The school mission statement is central to prayer and worship and is known and understood by all members of the school community. The beautiful outdoor chapel provides a calm and tranquil place in which the whole school community can worship and this area is valued by all. Throughout the liturgical year there are many opportunities for the school community to pray together including a whole school Stations of the Cross day and gathering together to say the Rosary at the start of each school day in October. Holiday homework with a Religious focus strengthens links between home and school and parents spoke about how much they valued these activities. The sacramental programme is delivered by the school with the staff acting as catechists for the parish. The staff are excellent spiritual role models and support the children throughout their sacramental journey by attending the Sunday Mass. The school's missionary disciples are passionate and enthusiastic about how they share the Word of God with other children and they take a role in leading acts of worship in their link classes. These children prepare events such as the Pentecost party to engage all children in the religious life of the school in a fun and interactive way. In order for the school to develop further the excellent practice demonstrated by the missionary disciples needs to be extended so that all children throughout the school have the skills and confidence to lead acts of worship. Parents praised the efforts of the school in creating a successful worshipping community; the efforts of the headteacher and the staff are truly appreciated.

AGREED AREA FOR DEVELOPMENT

- **To develop further pupil leadership so that all pupils can confidently organise and lead worship.**