

**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. Patrick's R. C. Primary School, Foxholes Road, Rochdale, OL12 0ET**

Inspection date                      13<sup>th</sup> February 2019

Reporting Inspectors                Jackie McNally and Marie Kwiatkowski

|                                    |                               |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Type of school                     | Voluntary Aided               |
| URN                                | 144934                        |
| Age range of pupils                | 4-11 years                    |
| Number on roll                     | 317                           |
| Appropriate authority              | The Governing Board           |
| Chair of Governors                 | Phillipa Mulgrew              |
| Headteacher                        | Monica Walczak                |
| Religious Education Subject Leader | Katie McCreavy                |
| Date of previous inspection        | 20 <sup>th</sup> January 2014 |

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

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

St Patrick's Roman Catholic Primary School is an Independent Catholic Academy in the parish of St Patrick's, Rochdale. The 2019 CES Census indicates that 73% of the pupils in school are baptised Roman Catholics. The majority of pupils are white British (57.2%) with the remaining school population being made up of 14 out of the possible 17 ethnic groups. The proportion of children with a Statement of Special Educational Needs or an Education and Health Care Plan is above average (3.8%) and 18% of pupils are identified as requiring special educational needs support. The percentage of disadvantaged pupils (26%) is above the national average. The 2018 performance data indicates that children's attainment in Key Stage 2 in reading, writing and mathematics was above the national data for age related expectations, after a significant fall in 2017. The headteacher was appointed in 2012.

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

- **There is a strong sense of family community where every person is valued as a child of God.**
- **The welcome extended to all within the community, particularly those with additional needs.**
- **There are high levels of care, support and guidance, with all people being treated with love, dignity and respect.**
- **The children's behaviour is exemplary and they bear witness to the Gospel values.**
- **The staff and children bear witness to their faith through their relationships with each other.**

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

St Patrick's is a good school where relationships bear witness to the Gospel values. The school's mission statement places Christ at the centre of its work and provides a clear vision for all within the school community. The headteacher is well supported by a committed and enthusiastic staff and governing board who strive to provide the best education for the children. The headteacher, governors and staff place a high priority on nurturing and supporting the children within their care and there is a strong culture of welcome within the school. The whole school community reaches out to support those in need through prayer and actions and this is a strength of the school. The children are happy and confident and they clearly articulate their love of the school and their enthusiasm for learning. In Religious Education lessons children are provided with a range of activities which promote their understanding of Sacred Scripture. However more rigorous monitoring and evaluation of the Religious Education curriculum and outcomes is required to bring about further improvements. Parents are supportive of the school and speak highly of the opportunities provided for their children. There are strong links with the parish and there are many examples of where children are contributing to the local and wider community. Prayer and worship are central to the life of the school and staff have the skills to lead high quality acts of collective worship. Children throughout the school now need to be provided with the opportunity to plan and lead acts of worship independently. Children consistently demonstrate the 5Ws through their relationships and everyday lives but they now need to be able to articulate what each of the words means more deeply.

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

St Patrick's reaches out to support schools in the Diocese and this is a significant strength of the school. The headteacher, supported by the governors, is also leading Alice Ingham RC Primary School and she has taken a lead role in the formation and development of the St Teresa of Calcutta Catholic Academy Trust. The headteacher demonstrates a commitment to providing a nurturing, caring environment which allows children to develop socially, emotionally and academically. The newly appointed Religious Education subject leader has embraced the role with enthusiasm and is keen to develop the subject further. She has concentrated on developing the Caritas and GIFT teams since her appointment and has recently undertaken some monitoring and provided feedback to staff. The subject leader role needs to be developed further so that all aspects of the Religious Education curriculum, Catholic life of the school and Worship are regularly monitored and evaluated. The governors are fully supportive of the school and demonstrate an excellent understanding of the 5Ws; they

are justifiably proud of how these are demonstrated by the children and staff in their everyday lives. The governors are passionate and committed and they are proactive in the school, regularly visiting classes, participating in liturgical events and through their involvement with the sacramental programme. Governors receive reports from the headteacher and Religious Education subject leader and they have discussed the Religious Education action plan. In order to develop further the school needs to carry out more formalised monitoring and evaluation activities and share these with the governors so that they can provide appropriate levels of support and challenge. The governors also need to be more involved in the writing of the Religious Education self- evaluation form. Pupil leadership is good and members of the GIFT team, Caritas team and PATS PALS embrace their roles with enthusiasm. In order to develop their leadership skills further children throughout the school now need to be provided with opportunities to organise independently acts of collective worship and other liturgical events.

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

The welfare of all is paramount to everyone at St Patrick's and the school fosters high levels of empathy, forgiveness, care and respect for others. The school celebrates successes and it is clear to see that children feel valued and respected; they particularly enjoy achieving the learning power awards. During difficult times the whole community encircles families with love, support and compassion; providing them with the strength to take the next steps in their lives. The headteacher spoke about how in times of great sorrow the school has joined together as a praying community which demonstrates the importance of faith in their lives. The school has employed highly skilled staff to support families. These members of staff are passionate about their roles and clearly bear witness to their faith through the support and compassion they provide for children and their families. The school is committed to meeting everyone's needs and allocates additional funds to support children with SEND and EAL and this enables the children to thrive educationally and socially. Relationships between staff, pupils, parents and the wider community are well established and this has created a strong, loving ethos built upon gospel values. The children are caring and compassionate and spoke about how they welcomed new children into their school. They spoke with enthusiasm about their role as 'PATS PALS' and how they demonstrate care for others. This was reinforced by the younger children in EYFS who spoke animatedly about the PAL who supported them. Safeguarding is given a high priority in the school and children know who they can talk to because the staff details are prominently displayed in corridor areas. The school, led by the Caritas team, supports many charitable organisations including local food banks, St Joseph's Penny and by providing gifts for Caritas at Christmas. The GIFT team particularly enjoyed their visits to Springhill Hospice where they worked with the elderly for four weeks on art projects. The parents praised the school highly and spoke about how they always feel welcome and are encouraged to join together to witness to their faith. The staff and children follow in the footsteps of Jesus by demonstrating justice, compassion and love for others.

### **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (incorporating Word) IS GOOD**

The school mission statement is known and understood by all children and is given a high priority in the school. The children demonstrate through their actions, relationships with others and their learning that the mission statement is at the heart of everything they do. During all lessons observed the children were engaged and they participated in lessons with enthusiasm. Teachers used open ended questions to challenge and probe pupil knowledge, skills and understanding. In some lessons there was reference to Sacred Scripture. To improve the quality of teaching even further the lesson objective needs to be clearly matched to the lesson activities and good pace needs to be maintained to ensure that learning is maximised. Pupils' response to feedback needs a consistent approach across the school. A scrutiny of books shows there is a variety of work in the pupil's books but the quality and quantity of work could be improved further. In some year groups the teacher needs to provide more challenge to ensure that children attain the highest possible standards in their written work and standards of presentation need to be improved further. The Religious Education action plan correctly identifies the need to continue to improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better in order to accelerate progress and raise standards in Religious Education. The school assesses children's work regularly and moderates standards across the Catholic Federation. Parents know what is being taught in the Religious Education curriculum through information letters and by looking at the children's books.

### **COLLECTIVE WORSHIP IS GOOD**

The school is a worshipping community where prayer and worship are central to the life of the school. Collective worship incorporates opportunities for children to respond and pray through music, prayer, reflection and scripture. These opportunities enrich children's spiritual understanding and bring them closer to God. When participating in acts of worship

the children participate in prayer and reflection with reverence and their singing is beautiful. At present the acts of worship are mainly prepared and led by adults and in order to develop the quality of worship further the children need to be provided with the skills and ideas to plan and lead high quality and creative acts of worship independently. The GIFT team are enthusiastic about their role in spreading the word of God. They talked about how they film the Wednesday Word and share it with other classes. When discussing Worship they said they were keen to develop their role further by undertaking an increased role in the preparation of Worship. The school recognises the importance of professional development for staff and has organised training to develop their knowledge and understanding of prayer in the church. The governors and staff are excellent spiritual role models and support the children throughout their sacramental journey both in school and in the parish. Parents are regularly invited to attend the masses and assemblies and they feel an intrinsic part of the spiritual life of the school. The parents and parish priest praised the Christmas Nativity which was performed entirely in Spanish and the Advent Posada. The school has always had high levels of support from the parish priest and it values this support.

#### **AGREED AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT**

- **To develop the children's role in planning and leading high quality prayer and worship.**
- **To ensure that teaching and learning is characterised by consistently high expectations across the school.**
- **To ensure that all levels of leadership are involved in rigorous monitoring and evaluation procedures in order to bring about further improvements in curriculum Religious Education and worship.**