

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 **Holy Family RC Primary School, Lime Green Road, Oldham, OL8 3NG**

Inspection date Thursday 23rd May 2019

Reporting Inspectors Anne Heard, Sue Molloy

Type of school	Primary
URN	105724
Age range of pupils	3-11
Number on roll	220
Appropriate authority	The Governing Board
Chair of Governors	Anne Ostmeir
Headteacher	Alison Booth
Religious Education Subject Leader	Maggie Johnson
Date of previous inspection	18 th June 2014

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

CHARACTERISTICS AND CONTEXT OF THE SCHOOL

Holy Family is a voluntary-aided Roman Catholic primary school serving the needs of the parish of The Nativity, Oldham. 68.5% of pupils live in the bottom 10% of the most deprived areas in the country. 46.3% of children are eligible for pupil premium funding. The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds but there are also other ethnicities within the school, which are above the national average, such as Black African and White Other. Attainment of children on entry to the nursery is significantly below the national average. There are 51 children on the SEND register, 7 children have an EHC plan with another child undergoing statutory assessment. In the last few years the school has witnessed a time of turbulence and change. In 2015 both the headteacher and deputy headteacher left the school and an executive headteacher was put in place. In September 2016 a new headteacher and deputy headteacher took up their posts. During this time of uncertainty results plummeted to well below national standards. Following the hard work of leaders at the school results are improving, particularly in EYFS and Key Stage 1, but are still below the national average at Key Stage 2. 39% of children are baptised Catholic. 62% of teaching staff are Catholic and 42% of support staff are Catholic. Three members of staff hold the Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies and the headteacher is currently undertaking the Catholic Leadership Programme.

THE KEY STRENGTHS OF THE SCHOOL INCLUDE:

- **The Mission statement embeds the hopes and dreams of this living faith community on their journey to seeking excellence.**
- **The welcome offered to all within the school community ensures the dignity and respect of each individual is celebrated. A strong sense of belonging is experienced by all.**
- **The dedication and hard work of all staff, led by the committed senior leaders and governors, in striving to provide children with opportunities to be the best they can be.**
- **Every individual is loved and cared for and made to feel special as a child of God.**

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL IS GOOD

Leaders at all levels, including children, governors and the parish priest, share a vision for this school. In the past two and a half years, the determination of all stakeholders has brought about positive change at Holy Family. The sense of community and belonging is evident in every aspect of school life. Attainment is improving and with this is a growing confidence and belief in the children that they can strive to be the best they can be. Children know and truly believe that God loves them. Staff act as role models dedicating their God-given vocations to support and nurture the children and their families. During the inspection parents, children and staff talked about how all the individuals within the school share the same mission and there is a strong sense of teamwork and commitment to the school. Daily challenges are met with care and support for each child and their family, who are unique and a creation of God. This is truly a school which looks out for the marginalized and vulnerable, providing a safe and caring environment for all. Whilst deprivation is high, children and their families seek to support others through fundraising and charitable acts. The teaching of Religious Education provides stimulating and creative opportunities for children to grow in their knowledge of the teachings of Christ and his followers, as well as learning about the traditions and practices of the Catholic faith. Children are respectful of each other and accept each other's needs and abilities. They are confident learners who have a desire to take on roles and responsibilities to bring about change. They are taught to care for their environment and expressed ideas about how this could be done. Holy Family school, under the direction of the hard working and dedicated senior leaders, is on an aspirational journey to success with Jesus very firmly at their side.

THE QUALITY OF CATHOLIC LEADERSHIP IS GOOD

Leadership at all levels at Holy Family is good, with some elements having the potential to be outstanding in the near future. The highly dedicated leadership team have refocused the school after a period of turbulence and uncertainty. It is their dedication, hard work and vision, supported by governors, which is driving positive change in the school. Leadership has Gospel values at its core where all within the community are valued, supported and shown respect. The Mission statement 'We live learn and love in his way' truly reflects life at Holy Family and encompasses all that is happening in day-to-day school life. Governance at the school is very strong: the governing board have undertaken a review of governance

and roles and responsibilities are clearly defined. Governors are well-informed and undertake regular visits to the school. Inspectors were impressed with the knowledge and dedication of the governors they interviewed. The senior leadership team alongside the governing board have a clear vision and mission for the school family founded in the teachings of Christ. The needs of the vulnerable and marginalized are given priority status and leaders at all levels act as role models in their care and devotion to the families of Holy Family. They are confident in providing challenge and ensuring Religious Education and the Catholic life of the school are the core purpose of their mission. The GIFT chaplaincy team are enthusiastic and committed to their roles, they are confident in expressing their views and opinions and are sure that they have a positive role to play in the further development of, and support for, the Catholic life of the school. Rigorous monitoring by leaders is having a considerable effect on raising standards across the school to ensure all pupils reach their true potential. The school now needs to provide relevant CPD opportunities for all staff to further develop their knowledge and understanding of Religious Education.

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

Holy Family is an oasis of tranquillity, love and respect, where all within the school community feel welcomed and supported. Parents spoke highly about how they are welcomed at school and praised many staff for their kindness and thoughtfulness. They talked about how staff build solid relationships with children and parents, often going above and beyond what is expected of them in order to ensure that Gospel values underpin all that happens at Holy Family. There is a true feeling of community and belonging established. Children are proud of their school; they feel valued and show a growing confidence in expressing their ideas and values. The diversity and difference of others is respected and celebrated. Pupils are taught to question and feel confident to challenge others through carefully planned and managed classroom activities. Pupils know that they are unique and as such are truly aware that they are creations of God. They show a genuine care and concern for each other and accept that some pupils have issues of which they need to be tolerant of. Safeguarding at Holy Family is outstanding. Procedures and policies are closely adhered to. Parents spoke openly about their own personal difficulties and provided several examples of how their own welfare and that of the children was dealt with in a supportive and non-judgmental way. The positive work of the learning mentor and SENDco are an example of the successful initiatives put in place by senior leaders which are underpinned by Gospel values and show a staff truly walking in Christ's footsteps. All staff in whatever role they undertake have a shared vision of what an authentic Christ-centred school should look like and they fully embrace this mission. From an early age, children are taught about responsibility to care for themselves, others and their environment and this develops with the child as they progress through school. The excellent use of the polytunnel to engage individuals and groups of children in growing and caring for plants and vegetables provides outstanding opportunities to witness to Christ's message. Throughout the Inspection, inspectors witnessed many examples of this. The children are knowledgeable about schemes to support others less fortunate than themselves and are keen to be active participants in charitable events and fundraising opportunities. Parent voice is welcomed and recently two events were organised to raise funds for autism and Down's syndrome causes, initiated by parents. Inclusion, respect and tolerance are at the heart of Holy Family.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (incorporating Word) IS GOOD

Since taking up their posts in September 2016, senior leaders have made Religious Education a priority in what had been an extremely difficult and challenging situation, where the school had faced a period of uncertainty and turbulence. The Religious Education subject leader has been pivotal in ensuring the teaching of Religious Education is at the core of everything that happens at the school. Whilst other curriculum priorities needed to be addressed, it is clear that the pupils at Holy Family are receiving a good standard of Religious Education. Lessons observed demonstrated good subject knowledge, with some elements of outstanding teaching witnessed. Pupil's books are well presented and show a variety of teaching methods. Children are confident in their knowledge of Bible stories and speak easily about Gospel values and following in Jesus's footsteps. They use 'Big Questions' to develop their thinking and there is an established culture which provides opportunities for pupils to question and build on each other's ideas and perceptions. The Mission statement is known and witnessed to each day. All documentation and school jumpers carry the message 'We live learn and love in his way'. All pupils are given the opportunity to develop spirituality - morally, socially and culturally. There is

a deep respect shown for the Catholic faith by all in the community of Holy Family but also a respect for other faiths, no faith and the culture of other children and families attending the school. The staff and pupils act as role models and the strong sense of belonging and witnessing is evident in all aspects of school life. Children enjoy Religious Education lessons that are stimulating and engaging. Children have a developing knowledge of Religious Literacy and a growing understanding of the Catholic faith. Teachers are creative in the opportunities they provide for pupils to learn about and deepen their relationship with God. Whilst still on the journey to improve standards, particularly at Key Stage 2, there is clear evidence that children are receiving a good standard of Religious Education across all three key stages. This is down to detailed planning, engaging lessons differentiated appropriately to challenge and an enthusiasm for learning about Catholic traditions and values. Inspectors observed many learning opportunities across the school where children were fully participating in their learning.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP IS GOOD

Opportunities for daily Worship are provided across the school in both small group and whole school gatherings. Prayer tables and focus areas are evident in each classroom and children are given opportunities to write their own prayers and intentions in these areas. During the whole school Assembly, children demonstrated opportunities to sing and sign to some hymns. The GIFT chaplaincy team had planned and organised the Assembly and regularly are given opportunities to plan these with support from a member of staff. The children appeared very confident and were keen to have further impact across the school. They spoke enthusiastically about their roles and inspectors were impressed at the knowledge, enthusiasm and commitment they showed to their roles. In all acts of Worship observed there was a strong sense of respect - pupils listened attentively and fully engaged in the sessions. Holy Mass is celebrated each week at school and parents are welcome to attend, as are all members of the parish community. Staff are invited to come together on a Friday morning for a prayer and reflection session before the start of the school day. The school has purchased many resources and artefacts to support children on their prayer journey, appropriately matched to meet their needs and abilities. Sacred Scripture is used to bring to life Christ's message. Children are taught to reflect and to engage in a conversation with God. Newsletters to parents always include a quote from Sacred Scripture, so that parents are also encouraged to listen and respond to the word of God. Parents are also encouraged to witness to their faith. One example was the Holy Week representation which took place during Lent, where the whole community came together to reflect on the events of Holy Week with each class playing a particular role in remembering Christ's journey from Palm Sunday to Easter Sunday. Governors were very complimentary about how the staff engage pupils and their families in developing a prayerful relationship with God. The Sacramental programme and various liturgical events throughout the year are celebrated within the school and parish community, further enhancing relationships within the locality. Holy Family school is a prayerful place where children learn to pray, listen and worship through creative and reflective acts. The school is now in a place to develop this even further by providing more training opportunities for staff and children. This will allow the school to achieve a consistent approach of high-quality worship and enable the GIFT chaplaincy team to become more independent in supporting younger pupils in developing their relationship with God.

AGREED AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT

- **To further develop the roles of pupil leadership across the school, in particular the GIFT chaplaincy team.**
- **To ensure consistency of the teaching of Religious Education across the school.**
- **To provide relevant CPD opportunities for all staff to further develop their knowledge and understanding of Religious Education.**
- **To develop opportunities for different forms of worship in order to enhance the spirituality of all, being respectful of individual's backgrounds and faith experiences.**