



Inspection carried out Under Canon 804 and 806  
and in accordance with Section 48 of the Education  
Acts 2005 and 2011

DIOCESE OF SALFORD

Name of School St. Mary's RC Primary School, Hemming Dr, Eccles, M30 0FJ  
Inspection date 25<sup>th</sup> November 2019  
Reporting Inspectors Jackie McNally, Jim Graves, Marie Kwiatkowski, Helen Sullivan

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Type of school	Primary
URN	105953
Age range of pupils	3-11 years
Number on roll	242
Appropriate authority	The Governing Board
Chair of Governors	Gerard Dale
Headteacher	Julie Forshaw
Religious Education Subject Leader	Peter Cavanagh
Date of previous inspection	19 <sup>th</sup> November 2014
Grade of previous inspection	Good

Explanation of the Grades - 1 = Outstanding, 2 = Good, 3=Requires Improvement, 4 = Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of St Mary's RC Primary School	Overall grade	2
The Catholic Life of the school (incorporating Welcome, Welfare and Witness)	Grade	2
Religious Education (incorporating Word)	Grade	2
Collective Worship	Grade	2

## CHARACTERISTICS AND CONTEXT OF THE SCHOOL

St. Mary's Roman Catholic Primary is an average sized school located in Eccles which serves the parish of St Paul II. The percentage of children who receive pupil premium is below the national average at 13.6%. There are 14.4% of pupils with Special Educational Needs and 2.1% of these pupils have an Educational Health and Care Plan. The percentage of ethnic minority pupils is 42.9% and 16% of the children have English as an additional language. The school is comprised of 99% Catholic pupils and 80% of the permanent staff are baptised Catholics. In addition, 80% of the staff have completed the Catholic Certificate of Religious Studies.

## OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

St Mary's Roman Catholic Primary is a good school which places the children's welfare at the heart of everything it does. The Gospel Values underpin all aspects of school life and are demonstrated through the relationships between staff, children and parents. The senior leadership team are supported by an enthusiastic and committed governing body but monitoring and evaluation activities need to be more rigorous in order to ensure that the school is making continuous progress particularly in the quality of teaching and learning. The GIFT team are passionate about their responsibilities are excellent role models for other children. Pupils participate in collective worship with respect and reverence but all children now need to be provided with opportunities to organise and lead class worship on a regular basis.

## THE KEY STRENGTHS OF THE SCHOOL INCLUDE:

- Relationships between staff and children are outstanding and as a result children have a secure understanding that they are valued and cared for.
- There is a strong sense of Christ being at the centre of the school.
- Children demonstrate love, justice, compassion, forgiveness and wisdom and their behaviour is exemplary.

## AGREED AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT

- Staff, governors and pupils need to adapt a more rigorous approach to self-evaluation in order to identify well-targeted and planned improvements.
- Teaching should be refined to ensure that there are clear learning objectives, good pace and challenge, and opportunities for children to engage actively in a variety of tasks.
- For staff to enable the children to plan and lead class and whole school worship regularly as part of the developmental prayer programme.
- To use the Diocesan assessment framework to ensure lessons consolidate and extend pupils' knowledge and understanding.

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

The Catholic Life of the school (incorporating Welcome, Welfare and Witness)	Overall grade	2
Outcomes - The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school		2
Provision - The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school		1
Leadership - How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school		2

Pupils at St Mary's demonstrate the highest levels of respect and compassion for all those they meet due

to the strong and tangible mission of the school. Many show a willingness to devote themselves to contributing to the faith life of others in their roles as Pupil Chaplains and Eco Council members, as they strive to live out the teachings of the Gospels. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the quality of the Catholic Life their children are immersed in at St Mary's, with one expressing that the school is centred upon 'Mission Values'. The oldest pupils demonstrate passionate understanding of Catholic Social Teaching and the ways in which they can serve those in need. This is seen in action through the charity work the school is regularly involved in. Pupils have a well-developed understanding and respect for those of other faiths and religions; this ensures they are tolerant, open-minded and considerate individuals. Pupils feel safe, protected, respected and known for who they are, and they thrive due to highly respectful and nurturing relationships with all staff who are 'never too busy to listen'. The school should ensure that the most recent safeguarding policy is on the school website. The mission statement encapsulates all that is experienced by the members of this Catholic school community. All stakeholders passionately express how the school 'Live, learn, play, work and pray' together and this is seen in practice at all levels: from interactions with the very youngest children in worship through to discussions with members of the supportive and active governing body. There is a tangible culture of inclusive welcome for all, with high quality pastoral care afforded to those who need it most. Staff respond to the community in times of need and provide care, love and practical support in authentic ways which are genuinely valued by all. Pupils flourish at St Mary's because they are cherished and celebrated as unique embodiments of the face of Christ. The strong and mutually supportive relationships between home and school create a culture of respect. Christ is at the heart of the school and the centrality of the Catholic faith is evident in the high-quality physical environment. Pupil Chaplaincy is valued so this needs to develop further to allow more opportunities for all pupils to actively lead the faith life of the school. The Leadership, including governance, are dedicated to the centrality of the Catholic Life of the school. They demonstrate this through significant commitment to the development and formation of staff. Staff well-being is given a high priority as leadership strives to support and nurture the whole team to passionately deliver the mission. Governors contribute to the school's Catholic character through regular visits, meetings and first-hand experiences. In order to improve further the school needs to adopt a rigorous approach to self-evaluation so that they can identify areas for development and plan effective improvements. The leadership team regularly engage with the local Catholic cluster to ensure there is a culture of collaboration, as well as accessing the expertise of the diocese to further the development of the Catholic Life of the school. Parents are valued as the first educators of their children and are given numerous opportunities to be fully involved in school life. This could be further enhanced by including additional information on the school website.

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

<b>Religious Education (incorporating Word)</b>	<b>Overall grade</b>	<b>2</b>
Outcomes - How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education		<b>2</b>
Provision - The Quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education		<b>2</b>
Leadership - How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education		<b>2</b>

The pupils at St Mary's are developing secure knowledge, understanding and skills that reflect the learning required by the Religious Education Curriculum Directory. Children can speak about what they have learned in Religious Education, showing an awareness of key concepts and using some subject-specific vocabulary. In the best lessons observed, pupils showed they were able to work independently and take the initiative in their learning. In order to achieve the highest outcomes across the school each lesson needs to have a clear learning objective, a good pace needs to be maintained and learning activities should encourage independence. Behaviour in all lessons was excellent and children worked hard and were enthusiastic about their lessons. The children's books show that they take great pride in their work and that religious education is a special subject. The quality of the written work in pupil books is of a high standard but

consideration now needs to be given to including creative tasks which allow children to present their learning in a variety of ways. Teachers are confident in their subject knowledge and use effective questioning in their lessons. In the best lessons, this was done in a way that facilitated deeper pupil understanding, so that the teacher used questioning to guide the pupils in their thinking, rather than simply illicit a response. Teachers use praise to reward children's effort and as a result the children are motivated and keen to improve further. Good quality resources, including other adults, were used effectively to optimise learning for most pupils. Teachers recognise the impact Religious Education has on the moral and spiritual development of pupils and this was seen in some lessons where pupils were given the time and space to reflect in the lesson. The Senior Leader Team and governors hold Religious Education as a priority curriculum area in terms of resourcing, timetabling and staffing. Assessment informs the planning of what is to be taught, as teachers 'check-in' what children know at the start of a topic, and 'check-out' at the end with the knowledge that has been gained. This can be further enhanced by moving away from levels and adopting the Diocesan descriptors of age related expectations. During the inspection there was evidence of monitoring of teaching and learning but this needs to be more rigorous in order to accurately identify and improve teaching and learning further. Displays around school celebrate children's learning and achievement in Religious Education and are of a high standard with several examples of scripture.

## COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

<b>Collective Worship</b>	<b>Overall grade</b>	<b>2</b>
Outcomes - How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship		<b>2</b>
Provision - The quality of Collective Worship provided by the School		<b>2</b>
Leadership - How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship		<b>2</b>

Collective Worship is clearly an important part of the life of the school and praying together is a daily experience for pupils. Pupils benefit from living as part of a faithful, praying community and they are being helped to develop spiritually and morally. Pupils are reverent and respectful during acts of Collective Worship. During the assembly, the children sang joyfully and were keen to participate in the prayer. The GIFT Chaplains used a variety of approaches including scripture, poetry, prayer and drama along with traditional and contemporary music to engage the rest of the school. They are enthusiastic about their role and the children are keen to lead further acts of Worship. Around the school there was reference to the Church's liturgical year and the pupils were able to demonstrate an understanding of this. The GIFT Chaplains are enthusiastic in providing opportunities for prayer and worship at lunchtimes. Collective worship is central to the daily life of the school and prayer and scripture are at the heart of every celebration. Opportunities to celebrate Mass, receive the Sacraments and celebrate holy days of obligation are regularly offered and the Parish Priest visits the school for class Masses on a regular basis. The school is welcoming and parents and wider members of the community are invited to share in these celebrations. As part of the growing experience of worship in the school, staff need to provide the children with more opportunities to independently plan and lead class and whole school worship. In one class collective worship children were invited to prepare the worship area and they gathered to join the celebration; they were fully included and engaged. Leaders create time and space for prayer so that it is at the heart of school life. 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. Staff now need to be more skilled in helping pupils to plan and lead collective worship and would benefit from sharing best practice. GIFT Chaplains are increasingly confident in leading prayer and worship and are eager to be given more opportunities to plan for whole school and class worship. Leaders know the Church's liturgical year and use this in the cycle of prayer and reflection. Senior leaders and governors recognise the importance of worship when setting the budget, allocating resources and providing opportunities for staff development. Parents know that they are welcome at whole school celebrations.