

INSPECTION REPORT

Holly Mount RC Primary School, Holly Mount Lane, Bury, BL8 4HS.

Inspection date 24th February 2016

Reporting Inspectors Brendan Hennessy
 Susan Molloy

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

Type of School Primary
 URN 105344
 Age range of pupils 5 -11
 Number on roll 312
 Appropriate authority The Governing Body
 Chair of Governors Morris Sidorczuk
 Headteacher David Golding
 Religious Education Subject Leader Catherine Patterson
 Date of previous inspection May 2012

The Inspection judgements are:	Grade	Explanation of the Grades 1 = Outstanding 2 = Good 3=Requires Improvement 4 = Inadequate
Overall effectiveness of the school	1	
The quality of Catholic Leadership	1	
The quality of the Word	1	
The quality of the Welcome	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 AND CONTEXT OF THE SCHOOL

Holly Mount Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary School serves the parish of St Hilda's Tottington. This is an above average sized primary school, situated in a semi-rural area, with an extensive catchment area. There are 312 pupils on roll: 82% of pupils are baptised Roman Catholic; 6% of pupils are entitled to Free School Meals; 8% have been identified with Special Educational Needs and 2.5% speak English as an additional language. On entry to the reception class the attainment of the majority of pupils is in line with the national average. Most pupils have made good or better progress in their learning by the time they leave at the end of KS2. There are 13 teachers in school all of whom are Catholic and 5 teachers have the Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies. School provides extended provision for children both before and after school. The school holds a number of national and local awards recognising excellence including: Eco School, Primary Arts Mark, Active Mark, Healthy Schools and the FA Charter Mark.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL IS OUTSTANDING

Holly Mount is an outstanding Catholic school, with a strong Catholic ethos. Making Jesus known and loved is at the centre of everything it does. The happy, confident children thrive as they learn, play and pray together. The inspirational and dedicated headteacher, supported by a talented leadership team, a committed RE subject leader and enthusiastic staff, do all they can to ensure that the spiritual and pastoral needs of all are met. The parish priest and governors are very supportive and absolutely committed to ensuring that Catholic education of the highest standard is provided for all. Everyone in school understands and lives out the school's mission in all aspects of school life, ensuring "all children are motivated and nurtured". Prayer and worship are very much at the heart of this school, enriching everyone's experience of God's presence and enhancing their individual faith journeys. The quality of teaching in Religious Education is outstanding, with creative and inspiring lessons observed across the school. The friendly and well-mannered children are very proud of their school. Their behaviour and attitude to learning is exemplary. School takes every opportunity to build on the excellent links with the parish and home. Parents feel very welcome, included and valued; they state that there is a great supportive community atmosphere throughout the school. Effective self-evaluation of religious education has ensured that the school has continued to develop since the last inspection.

KEY STRENGTHS OF THE SCHOOL INCLUDE:

- The outstanding spiritual leadership of the inspirational headteacher, who leads by example and is a role model for all within the school community. He is extremely well supported by a dedicated and enthusiastic leadership team, RE subject leader and governors.
- The commitment of the staff team to work together and live out the school's mission in all aspects of school life; ensuring all children are motivated and nurtured.
- The supportive relationships across the entire school community which are based on love and respect.
- The outstanding witness and confidence of the children in expressing their beliefs. Their enthusiasm, aspirations, exceptional behaviour and excellent attitude to learning.
- Prayer and worship that is at the heart of the school community. This is combined with a knowledge and understanding of sacred scripture that is made relevant throughout the school.

THE QUALITY OF CATHOLIC LEADERSHIP IS OUTSTANDING

Holly Mount is extremely well led by an inspirational headteacher, who has a strong, spiritual commitment with a clear vision and sense of purpose for the education of the whole child. He is committed to providing opportunities for every member of the school community to reflect upon and come to a deeper awareness of this vision. The headteacher is supported by a talented leadership team, a dedicated RE subject leader and an innovative and enthusiastic staff team. The governors are deeply committed to the success of the school. They

are actively involved in school and are very effective in providing support and challenge. It is evident that the staff team and governors value the individual worth of every member of the school family and do all they can to ensure that the development of the Catholic life of the school is at the heart of the school's thinking and practice. The supportive parish priest is a regular visitor to school and all in school value his contribution to and impact on the spiritual life of the school. Pupil leadership is well established through the school council and pupil voice is prioritised in so many areas of school life. It has been strengthened by the commissioning of the school chaplaincy team. Staff, children and governors all have a voice in planning for future development. Continuing professional development for staff, combined with rigorous, honest and accurate self-evaluation, has made a positive impact on the quality of provision in RE. It has also ensured that the leadership team is clear about the strengths of the school and what needs to be done to develop even further. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural education was found to be outstanding and permeates all aspects of school life.

THE QUALITY OF THE WORD IS OUTSTANDING

The mission statement is at the heart of the school; it is understood, lived and witnessed by all in school. Scripture is a real strength of the school it is made relevant and meaningful to the children. It is known and understood by pupils and shared in many vibrant, joyful ways. Teachers model religious language and use a developing vocabulary of religious terms. The significance of the Word of God was clearly demonstrated throughout the school in many creative, enriching and thoughtful displays. The quality of teaching in RE is outstanding, with creative and inspiring lessons that engaged and challenged the children's learning. All these lessons included common attributes; thorough teacher knowledge and understanding of RE, clear evidence of consistently high expectations, challenge, good pace, engaging learning and practical concepts, which helped the children's understanding of RE. Thoughtful and effective questioning challenged the children and moved the learning on, including the effective use of 'big questions'. This ensured that the learning was productive and the children were secure in expressing their thoughts. High standards are consistently achieved across the school, as evidenced in the children's books, in their contributions to lessons and work displayed around school. The children are rightly very proud of their RE books as they strive to make them "the best books in the basket". Constructive marking and feedback was evident and consistent across the school, which ensured that children knew how to improve their work and enabled them to reflect on their learning and understanding of RE. Teaching Assistants have a very good understanding of the teaching of RE. They effectively interacted with pupils to support their learning and pastoral needs. Parents state that school provides the children with many wide ranging opportunities to excel in RE and that children are very happy and enthusiastic about all that they do in school. The children have an excellent attitude to learning and were happy and confident to share their understanding of their faith. They learn about other faiths through religious education and assemblies. This helps them to understand and respect the beliefs and cultures of others.

THE QUALITY OF WELCOME IS OUTSTANDING

Holly Mount is an exceptionally welcoming community, where everyone feels valued and respected. A distinctive faith ethos underpins the life and work of the school. School policies, procedures and practice ensure that all feel fully included in every aspect of school life. There is an open door policy where parents and stakeholders feel a strong sense of belonging. Parents stated "teachers are very approachable and genuinely care for the pupils as if they were their own". All new members of the school community are welcomed in person. Families recognise that their children will be cared for in a safe and emotionally supportive environment. Children love coming to school and readily support and help each other. High quality displays are evident throughout and offer a welcoming environment. Clear communication with parents is provided through newsletters, home learning journals and the school website so that everyone feels very well informed about the life of the school. The pupils are happy and secure in their surroundings and are proud ambassadors of their school. They take a pivotal role in showing visitors around and in supporting younger peers as special friends and playtime buddies. Pupil buddying of younger children is exemplary. Many pupils take on the responsibilities of school councillors and eco leaders. The pupils' sense of ownership and responsibility for what happens in their school is outstanding. Parents and friends play a highly significant part in school life and their contributions are greatly valued. They are very supportive of school events and the PTA is very successful in raising funds for both the school and selected charities.

THE QUALITY OF WELFARE IS OUTSTANDING

The strong ethos based around love and encouragement is central to all aspects of school life and clearly reflects the deeply embedded mission of the school. The school is concerned for the well-being and health of all who work and learn within the community. Gospel values are at the heart of Holly Mount. Pupils try to 'live like Jesus every day' they know his values and beliefs. They show compassion towards others and view the world with care, courtesy and concern. Relationships between adults and children are based on respect and dignity. All within the community genuinely care for each other. They build on the gifts, talents and goodness of each individual child. Behaviour is exemplary in the classrooms and around the school and positive behaviour is celebrated. Teachers challenge children to improve, to be secure making errors and to learn from their mistakes. Year 6 pupils have a personal staff mentor who takes an interest in them and discusses their learning needs and goals. Pupil voice is seen as a strength of the school and this helps to develop emotional intelligence. There is a co-operative spirit within the school. Pupil Premium funding allocation ensures equality of provision for all and vulnerable pupils are recognised as a priority. Learning support plans are child centred. The classrooms are inclusive environments. The school works closely with external agencies to support individuals who need extra support. The children in the school have a sense of outreach to the community and undertake local and international charity work supporting Wood Street Mission, Bury Hospice, Caritas, Breakthrough Breast Cancer, Bury Food Bank and many other charities selected by individual classes.

THE QUALITY OF WORSHIP IS OUTSTANDING

Prayer is very much at the heart of the school as it strives "to build up a community based on the teachings of Jesus". There are many and varied opportunities for prayer and worship evident across the school. The importance of prayer and worship is expressed and witnessed through: classroom acts of reflection and meditation, spontaneous prayer, assemblies, Mass and liturgies. The children pray together as a school, in classes, small groups and individually, with great reverence and respect. They are comfortable with their feelings and confident to write and share their own prayers, many examples were seen all around school. Each classroom has an age appropriate and relevant focal point for prayer; these are clearly valued by the children. Additional focal points for prayer are situated at key areas in the school that can be accessed by the children. During the inspection, the Key Stage 2 assembly, class Mass, classroom acts of worship and the reflections within the lessons observed, provided opportunities for full participation, joyful singing and reflection. They were without exception uplifting, inclusive, creative and thoughtful spiritual experiences for all present. Children took a leading role in acts of prayer and worship observed. These special moments of prayer and reflection were well respected by the children and enhanced their relationship with God and one another. The chaplaincy team, prayer partners, are making a significant contribution to the enhancement of prayer and worship. The parish priest regularly visits the school and is actively involved in supporting the staff and children to deepen their own faith and understanding. Parents were very positive about the range of opportunities the school offers for prayer and worship. They praised the support given during the sacramental programme.

THE QUALITY OF WITNESS IS OUTSTANDING

The school clearly demonstrates outstanding witness to the church's mission in education and does all it can to meet the challenges involved in this witness. The mission statement is at the heart of the school, it is a powerful declaration of how all in the school family give witness to the beliefs and values of the Catholic faith in their daily lives. RE is at the core of the school curriculum. It is the foundation block that allows the children to develop their sense of identity and how they can have a positive impact for good on the local, national and global community. Observations and discussions confirmed that children treat each other with care, respect, compassion and dignity. All staff are positive role models for the children. They promote the ethos and values of the school and helping them to recognise that Jesus is with them in all aspects of school life. There is a great sense of teamwork, enthusiasm and celebration of success at all levels among the staff, children and parents. This gives the school a true family feel and helps the children to become well rounded individuals. An atmosphere of calm and a sense of belonging permeates the whole school creating a pleasant working

environment for everyone in school. Relationships are excellent between all members of the school community and all are able to talk openly and confidently about their faith. There are strong home, school and parish links which are enriched by the regular visits of the parish priest. The school fosters a spirit of awe and wonder through RE and the broader curriculum. The children know that they have a vital role to play in looking after God's world. They are encouraged to reach out to those in need through their wonderful support for local, national and world charities. It is clear that the children put the welfare of others at the heart of what they do.

AGREED AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT:

- Continue to develop pupil leadership of prayer and worship in order to enhance the work of the pupil prayer partners.
- To embed the school's new system of recording RE assessments to support the continuation of outstanding practice across the school.

24th February 2016

Dear Children,

Thank you for the very warm welcome you gave us and for making our visit to Holly Mount RC Primary School such a joyful occasion. We really enjoyed our time with you. You and all the adults in school are indeed living your school's mission and doing your very best in all aspects of school life, and because of this your school is an outstanding Catholic school.

We really enjoyed seeing your lessons and learning about all the wonderful things you do in Holly Mount. Thank you for sharing your work with us. We were very impressed with the standard of work in your RE books, your contributions in all the lessons we saw and in your wonderful displays around school. It was clear to us that you have an excellent knowledge and understanding of our Catholic faith and that you all really try your best in all of your lessons.

It was lovely to see so many happy, smiling faces. You are clearly very proud of your school and all that you have achieved together. We were also very impressed by the way you all really want to succeed in school and how well you look out for each other. You were so well behaved, and your politeness and manners were simply superb.

It was so pleasing to see how attentive and confident you were in the Mass, acts of worship and the wonderful assembly we saw. Everyone showed great respect and reverence, your behaviour was excellent, your singing and prayers were uplifting.

The staff, the school governors and your parents are extremely proud of all of you and of what you have achieved over the years, well done and keep it up!

All the adults in school want to work with you to build the Catholic life of your school even further so that you can continue to grow as leaders of prayer and worship in school.

God bless you all, enjoy the rest of the school year.

Yours sincerely,

Brendan Hennessy and Susan Molloy
(RE Inspectors)

Summary Report to Parents

On 24th February 2016 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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