

**INSPECTION REPORT**

**Sacred Heart R.C, Primary School, Central Drive, Westhoughton, Bolton BL5 3DU**

Inspection date 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2017

Reporting Inspector Mr J Graves  
 Miss S Molloy

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

Type of School Voluntary Aided Primary School

URN 105243

Age range of pupils 4-11

Number on roll 404

Appropriate authority Bolton

Chair of Governors Mrs Kath Morris

Headteacher Mr Martin Johnson

Religious Education Subject Leader Mrs Barbara Byrne

Mrs Diane Furlong

Mr Martin Johnson

Date of previous inspection 24<sup>th</sup> May 2012

<b>The Inspection judgements are:</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Explanation of the Grades</b>  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 of God	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**

Sacred Heart RC Primary School is an above average sized voluntary aided primary school serving the parish of Sacred Heart of Jesus, Westhoughton. There are currently 404 children on roll, of whom 88% are baptised Catholics. The school takes children from aged 4-11 years. There are 21 teachers of whom 9 are Catholics. They are supported by 9 teaching assistants and 7 teaching assistant apprentices. 9.7% of children attending the school are eligible for pupil premium funding. 1.3% of pupils have English as an additional language. The school is oversubscribed.

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

The dedicated headteacher, well supported by his leadership team, has brought the school on a journey and through self-evaluation and a clear vision based on gospel values, is aware of the next steps to go. The school's leadership demonstrates a deep commitment to the Church's mission in education. Prayer is at the heart of the school community. There is a track record of taking exciting opportunities and all the evidence shows that this will continue. Leadership is distributed throughout the school, including the children. The curriculum is a dynamic one that engages and challenges children. Governors are very supportive of the school's direction and provide challenge to ensure that the Catholic ethos remains at the centre of Sacred Heart School. Parents feel that Sacred Heart has strong values, supportive teachers and children who care for all people in God's society. Gospel values are abundant throughout the school, and these can be seen in classes, assemblies, playtimes and lunchtimes.

The school has fully met the improvements recommended by the previous Section 48 inspection.

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

- Leadership recognises the school is on a continuous journey and knows the next steps to take.
- Children are confident and empowered to help others in all margins of life.
- Prayer is at the heart of the school and is often spontaneous – led by children and is creative, inclusive and relevant.
- School seizes opportunities to be innovative in moving the school forward in all aspects of the Catholic life of the school.

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

The leadership of Sacred Heart has Jesus Christ at its centre. The headteacher is supported by the deputy headteacher and two assistant headteachers and governors who have a very clear understanding of their responsibilities in a Catholic school. RE is regularly monitored, as is worship and the Catholic life of the school. The mission statement says the school will 'encourage all to grow in the love of God and His creation,' and this was evident through the work that goes into making the learning environment a stimulating one, including a farm. The impact of this monitoring has recently been staff involvement in the creation of new assessment systems to continue to raise standards. The GIFT chaplaincy team and the Caritas Ambassadors are well led and are well known in the school.

Governors make a significant contribution to school life. They review the life of the school by visiting regularly to involve themselves in self-challenge, including observing lessons. There is rigorous monitoring and challenge of the school leadership. The impact of the school improvement priorities include mindfulness meditation. Policies clearly have gospel values at their heart. The commitment of the governors and leaders to Catholic education, in developing the pupils spiritually, morally, socially and culturally is clear. They describe the school as innovative, creative and vibrant with a Catholic culture that permeates throughout. The school gives priority to those in need and on the margins of society by outreach to places such as Cornerstones and The Lalley Centre. This has raised the profile of social justice in the school. There are good

relationships in the school that are very supportive. Governors are committed and show this by the amount of time they give to the school. Leadership evaluates the effectiveness of its work, and prioritises the next steps, such as staff regularly update their action plans using the 5Ws framework.

### **THE QUALITY OF WORD IS OUTSTANDING**

The outcomes of the children in RE are at least as high as those in English. Expectations are high across the school and this was observed when children asked challenging (big) questions in Key Stage 2 and also teachers in most lessons facilitated learning with pace and skilful questioning. Where underperformance has been identified, there is evidence that swift action is taken to address this. Children's learning in their work showed that most teaching is of a high quality. The school has recently developed its assessment system and the impact of this has been a clear guide to children's performance measured against English. Children have a developing level of understanding of religious literacy. The mission statement is well known in the school, for instance it is sung in the school and on display around the school, it is clearly witnessed to and lived. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural education (SMSC) is evidenced on whole school display, for example Upper Key Stage 2 children were using the 3D printer and video equipment to further enhance learning on morals. Sacred Scripture is evident in lessons across Sacred Heart. The school places an emphasis on working alongside home and parish for evangelising, for example sharing Masses in church together and holding regular 'Youth Masses.' The RE & Worship Policy states that the RE programme will, 'be informed by a wide range of teaching styles and take into account the needs of different learners.' This was observed in encouragement for teachers to have their own styles and formats that prove to be effective. The policy also says that there will be opportunities 'for children to recognise, appreciate and develop their talents and skills.' This was observed when displays on Lent in Upper Key Stage 2 show fine artwork, as well as writing on the 'Journey to Sanctuary'. The Values Policy states that 'word' makes Sacred Heart a democratic school. This was seen with the powerful involvement of the pupils' voice, as well as the staff's involvement in the direction of their own development.

### **THE QUALITY OF WELCOME IS OUTSTANDING**

The school works closely with families, for example the 'refugee stations of the cross' was very well attended and with the parish, such as when they visit school for celebrations, Masses and Christmas Fairs. The diversity in the school is valued and celebrated and this is evidenced with displays on 'Celebrating Differences', Islam, Judaism and Hinduism. Safeguarding of parents, parishioners and local community members includes strict procedures when visitors enter the building. Children are kept safe online. Behaviour around school is excellent, for example in Upper Key Stage 2 the children's behaviour during a lesson observation was excellent. Pupils enjoy several responsibilities, such as the GIFT chaplaincy team, Caritas Ambassadors and the pupil forum. The structures in place to ensure that visitors are treated with love and respectful care were evident when a child in Key Stage 1 who had support was made by the teacher to feel valued with his responses. Dignity of the individual through relationships was evident when children gave the wrong answers, but these answers were still valued. There is a sense of belonging to the school which was confirmed when children were spoken to throughout the inspection. The Values Policy states that 'welcome' makes Sacred Heart an inclusive school. This was seen with the celebration of other cultures and religions, evidenced by the displays on 'Celebrating Difference', Islam, Judaism and Hinduism.

### **THE QUALITY OF WELFARE IS OUTSTANDING**

There are very high levels of care and service to others. Mutual respect is evident at Sacred Heart, and was observed when one child in Key Stage 2 went to the wrong task and was gently corrected, and when a child brought a chair unprompted to another who had a leg injury. Service to other is epitomised by the pupil leadership roles. Pupils feel safe, with the treatment of all with respect and dignity and they understand how they can make a difference with their outreach projects. Pupils receive relationship and sex education through the scheme, 'A Journey in Love.' The Relationship and Sex Education Policy aims to 'engender growth in self-respect and self-worth.' This was observed with the confidence that they deliver in addressing morality. There is a Christ centred ethos in the school, that children and adults create. Children have a voice in the school, and are ambassadors of change – they are filling a shopping trolley with food to donate to the

homeless. The Leading Parent Partnership Award is part of the school ethos to help parents as primary educators of the children. Significant resourcing of the faith life of the school means parents feel that the school creates strong moral values that the children bring home and that there is a sense of justice and fairness among the children. The Values Policy states that 'welfare' makes Sacred Heart a school that serves the common good. The school has stakeholders who feel that they are listened to, from the staff to the parents.

### **THE QUALITY OF WORSHIP IS OUTSTANDING**

Sacred Heart School promotes prayer with families with 'prayer sacks' which go home with children. This, together with the chapel, the sanctuary bells signifying lunchtime prayer, retreat days for all pupils and a range of other measures, place prayer at the heart of the school community, including on the residential trip. Worship in class follows the theme set up in a whole school assembly. Children attend Mass with their classes in church which has led to children taking more part in the church services and thus becoming more familiar with the parts of the Mass. Children who are members of the GIFT chaplaincy team are confident in leading prayer through services in the classes, distributing ashes on Ash Wednesday and engaging in retreat days with other schools. Other children who are not members of these teams are also given opportunities to lead the community in prayer and worship. There are weekly led class assemblies which parents and the community share in. The school celebrates prayer with others, such as at Diocesan services with Bishop John, and with other Christian denominations such as Church of England and Methodist. The parish is involved in school life by donating rosary beads, nominating families to pray for and supporting school charity projects. The children join with the community to sing and pray, with the residents of Thurston's home for the elderly in Westhoughton, at the Mercy afternoon in Autumn and on social media. Resources allow prayer and worship to develop in the school. Creativity in school was evident when children in Upper Key Stage 2 took part in a prayer and worship session involving wooden crosses that they had decorated. It was also shown with all classes attending 'rolling worship' themed around the 'Caritas Mercy Cloth' through the day of the inspection. There is a systematic prayer development programme in school and this was evident when children led the Refugee Stations of the Cross. The RE & Worship Policy aims to promote a 'growing awareness of God, and a deeper understanding of His love for each and every one of us.' This was observed when one child decorated his cross to say what he was thankful for. The Values Policy states that 'worship' makes Sacred Heart a reverent school. This was seen during all sessions of prayer, and in the spaces provided for quiet time with God. The GIFT Chaplaincy Policy aims for the chaplains to 'encourage all to grow in faith.' This was seen with their confident and prayerful worship session that they provided for other children.

### **THE QUALITY OF WITNESS IS OUTSTANDING**

The children connect the Gospel teaching with everyday areas of life, and this was seen during the inspection when children reflected on how Jesus would have felt during the events of Holy Week, and how they feel about this now. The community are secure in Catholic beliefs and this is evident in the school, such as the dignity that all members of the school were observed affording to each other. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is central to the curriculum, for example at the basis of the use of technology and organising 'twiddlemuffs' for Woodlands Dementia Care Home. The SMSC Policy aims to give opportunities for pupils to 'develop an ability to distinguish right from wrong, based on a knowledge of the moral codes of their own and other cultures.' The behaviour codes applied reinforce that behaviour is a choice and that children are responsible for their actions. The policy states that pupils should have a high standard of personal behaviour and the behaviour observed was excellent. Care of the earth and stewardship is a priority of the school and this can be seen where the facilities for the children allowed them to grow plants and care for animals. Pupils are pro-active in building the community and one example of this was in the Early Years, where a child tripped and two members of staff were beaten to him by another child who gave him the object he had dropped and asked him if he was alright. The GIFT chaplaincy team is relevant by leading prayer and worship for other children appropriate for the age of the audience. The PSHE & Citizenship Policy states that, 'Our mission is to enable our children to develop a secure sense of identity and are able to form positive relationships.' This was evident throughout the inspection with strong, supportive relationship across the school. The Values Policy states that 'witness' makes Sacred Heart a just school. Parents remark on how children who have transferred from other schools have settled well.

**AGREED AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT:**

- To continue the journey for learning in RE to have consistent features across the school, whilst still allowing staff to teach in their own, bespoke, effective way.
- For self-evaluation summaries that are provided to governors by the headteacher to replace the school's current self-evaluation form.
- To continue to develop children's Religious Literacy.

Date 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2017

Dear Pupils

Thank you so much for making us so welcome when we came to inspect your school on behalf of the Bishop. You made us feel very welcome with your smiles, friendliness and lovely manners. We really enjoyed finding out about all the exciting things that you learn about at Sacred Heart.

We know from talking to you and watching you that you are very proud of your school and take great care of it and each other. You look after each other and that makes your school very special.

You will be happy to know that we think your school is an outstanding Catholic school. You work really hard to be the best you can be. Your teachers and staff work really hard for you. Their next step is to make the work you do in RE to be done in a way like you work in your English books, with your teachers marking it in a similar way.

Your headteacher, with the support of his team, has worked very hard to continually improve your school. Mr Johnson is a very dedicated headteacher, and along with all the staff they make your school a very safe, peaceful place. They work tirelessly so that you are learning, safe and happy.

Thank you once again for what we found to be a very special day.

God bless you all.

Yours sincerely

Mr. Graves  
Miss Molloy  
(Section 48 Inspectors)

## Summary Report to Parents

### SACRED HEART, BOLTON

On 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2017 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.

### OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL IS OUTSTANDING

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