

**INSPECTION REPORT**

**Our Lady of Perpetual Succour, Holmbrook Close, Blackburn, BB2 3UG**

Inspection date 25<sup>th</sup> January 2017

Reporting Inspector Mrs. J. Frazer  
 Mrs. M. Kwiatkowski

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

Type of School Roman Catholic Primary  
 URN 119512  
 Age range of pupils 4 – 11 Years  
 Number on roll 171  
 Appropriate authority The Governing Body  
 Chair of Governors Mrs. A. Mitchell  
 Headteacher Mrs. M. Staffa  
 Religious Education Subject Leader Mrs. N. Dixon  
 Date of previous inspection March 2012

<b>The Inspection judgements are:</b>	<b>Grade</b>	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**

Our Lady of Perpetual Succour is a Roman Catholic School supported by the Diocese of Salford, serving the parish of The Holy Family, Blackburn. The school is located in an area of high unemployment and in an area of high social need. Learners come from an area where there is some deprivation and there are high levels of mobility within the school. 119 (70%) of the children are baptised Catholics and 25.6% of pupils are eligible for free school meals; 30% of pupils are eligible for pupil premium. 36% of pupils have been identified as having special educational needs or disability (SEND) which is significantly above national average and 5.8% of pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Needs or an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP). 34% of the pupils have English as an additional language. 7 of the 10 teachers (70%) are Roman Catholics. Over the last few years, the school has undergone a significant period of change. A new head teacher and deputy head teacher have been appointed and took up post in September 2014 and January 2015 respectively. Since their appointment the culture and ethos of the school has changed dramatically and this is evidenced by the significant improvements in pupils' behaviour for learning and improved levels of attainment.

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

Our Lady of Perpetual Succour is an outstanding Catholic Primary School. Upon entry to the school one is struck by the wonderfully warm and friendly welcome given to all and by the exceptionally calm atmosphere that has been created throughout. All children are provided with an outstanding Catholic education in an extremely caring and supportive environment where individual needs are exceptionally well catered for. The behaviour of the pupils is exemplary; this has significantly improved since the appointment of the new headteacher and deputy headteacher. The children understand that their behaviour is important so that they can learn together effectively. The pupils take a great pride in their school, which is fully inclusive. The Word of God is central to the life of the school and the children know and understand scripture very well and they are able to relate this to their daily lives. This ensures that the pastoral and spiritual needs of all families and children are very well met. The dedicated and passionate head teacher, supported by a very strong leadership team has very high expectations of all adults and children. Together, with the hard working staff, they have created an ethos where everyone recognises the need to work together in order to ensure that the needs of everyone are catered for. This work is further enhanced by the support of the parish priest and a very effective governing body.

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

- The Catholic leadership and management of the school which have led to the positive developments in the school's Catholic ethos. The headteacher's clear vision for this catholic school is very well supported by the deputy headteacher, RE subject leader, parish priest and governing body.
- The accelerated progress that has been made over the last two years in RE curriculum and the Catholic life of the school.
- The effective promotion of the many positive strategies which ensure that children's behaviour for learning is outstanding.
- The school provides an exceptionally inclusive environment which meets the extensive and diverse needs of all the children.

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

The quality of leadership is outstanding. The dedicated and passionate head teacher, supported extremely well by the deputy headteacher, enthusiastic RE subject leader along with a knowledgeable and supportive parish priest and governing body, provides strong and decisive leadership by clearly living their vision for Catholic Education. The headteacher's clear vision is that its Catholic ethos is at the heart of everything that happens throughout the school. Pupils are treated with dignity and respect regardless of their individual

needs and challenges; they are embraced and cherished. Exceptional spiritual and moral guidance is provided for all the children. There is excellent leadership at all levels of the community, which contributes significantly to the outstanding provision for Catholic Education that the school currently provides. This ensures that the development of the Catholic life of the school is at the forefront of its work. Together with all other staff, they ensure that the teaching of RE and the development of the Catholic life of the school have an extremely high priority. The school has a clear plan for developing RE across the school and this is reflected in the priority that it is given. Evidence for this can be found in the school's self-evaluation, which is based on the 5Ws model. The school is aware of its next steps and has comprehensive plans for implementing them.

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

The school's mission statement has been comprehensively reviewed and rewritten following a carefully planned process including all members of the school community; the children were eager to tell inspectors that as they were part of this process it is meaningful to them and they are able to live it. The children know and have ownership of their school motto 'Let no one ever come to us without leaving feeling better and happier'. Children clearly enjoy RE and were very enthusiastic about the inspection; they wanted the inspectors to see how well they were doing and the quality of their work; following lesson observations some classes brought their completed work to the inspectors to show how well they had learned during the lesson. The written work in the children's RE books is consistently of at least the same or of a higher standard than other areas of the curriculum. Scripture is exceptionally well known, understood and made relevant throughout the school. The children's behaviour for learning is exemplary and there is a culture of calmness in every classroom where teachers and children speak quietly and respectfully towards one another. This provides a secure learning environment where everyone can safely express their views and ask questions to develop their understanding. The links between the school, home and parish are effective and the parish priest is working exceptionally hard in further developing them. This, along with the exceptionally inclusive school environment ensures that the children receive a high quality education.

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

Our Lady of Perpetual Succour provides an exceptionally warm welcome for all who attend the school; the children came in to school enthusiastically at the start of the day as they were greeted by staff. Inspectors were warmly greeted by staff and the children when they entered individual classrooms. Parents were keen to express how all the children feel included; especially those with additional needs. They were overwhelmingly positive about the school; they know that their children are loved and supported by all staff and they feel that the new head teacher has transformed it. The children clearly enjoy coming to school and parents say that there is much support for their children from all adults in school and that Our Lady of Perpetual Succour feels like a family unit. There is a holistic approach by everyone within Our Lady of Perpetual Succour and this ensures that children's emotional, social and cultural needs are very well cared for. Respect for the dignity of the individual is clearly evident across the all year groups. The calm and caring ethos created within the school ensures that the children's personal qualities are valued by everyone. Children who are new to the school are given a 'buddy' for a short time to help them settle in. The children say that they all soon settled even those who have arrived speaking little English.

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

The staff and pupils demonstrate a very high level of care and respect for others. This was witnessed throughout the day in the manner that the staff supported the children and their colleagues. The structures and procedures in school ensure that everyone feels safe and that they are treated with respect and dignity. Relationships at Our Lady of Perpetual Succour are of a high quality. The school's chaplaincy team said that they choose to do what the school's mission statement says because they don't want anyone to feel lonely and they want them to feel welcomed. They say that their hearts tell them to do it and that they promised to follow the mission statement. They encourage everyone in school to be 'a buddy not a bully'. They said that all the children get along with each other and that if things ever go wrong they are sorted out fairly. The school clearly demonstrates an explicitly Christ centred ethos, which is highly positive, loving, understanding and empathetic. All members of the school

community go out of their way to ensure that the many, diverse needs of individual pupils are met and frequently exceeded within the caring and respectful environment which has been carefully nurtured in recent years. The governing body demonstrates a consistently strong commitment to Christian stewardship and service throughout the school. The Catholic life of the school is its priority above everything else.

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

The school provides a variety of worship opportunities for children throughout the day and these are appropriate for their backgrounds and faith experiences. The church is situated close to the school and the children attend Mass on a regular basis; the parish priest is a regular visitor to the school. Special celebrations are held throughout the Church's Liturgical Year. Prayer is at the heart of the school community and pupils are becoming increasingly confident in planning and leading prayer and worship which is wholly relevant to their lives. Throughout the school there are formal, traditional prayers and every child who attends prayer group is given their own prayer booklet. In addition to this, the children are highly skilled in writing their own prayers. During the inspection some children brought their prayer books to the inspectors to show them the prayers that they had written themselves alongside the formal prayers which they have translated in to their first language. The acts of worship that was observed throughout the day of the inspection were highly engaging and were entirely relevant to the children's lives; having a high level of impact on their spiritual development. Parents say that they are encouraged to come in to school on a regular basis to attend acts of worship. The school's chaplaincy team have a real impact on the development of the prayer life of the school, and they are now effective at planning and leading prayer services. The RE subject leader provides outstanding support to the parish in helping to guide the children through the Sacramental Programme each year.

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

All staff act as excellent role models for the children and help them in recognising that God is with them in every aspect of school life. Adults and pupils bear witness to the recently reviewed mission statement of the school, which informs the lived experience of the whole community. Adults act as key promoters of the ethos of the school and its values for the pupils and the whole school community's witness to the wider community. The staff and pupils feel confident and secure to their witness to Christ, the Gospel, and the teachings of the Church. Pupils are confident in witnessing to the beliefs and values of a Catholic community and are actively encouraged and supported in being proactive citizens who participate in decision making processes. This is seen in the way the school promotes support for various charities for the Common Good. Examples of fund raising activities include coffee afternoons, chocolate bingo, raffles and non-uniform days to support CAFOD, Mission Together, St Joseph's Penny and MacMillan.

An explicit Catholic culture permeates the whole school and is clearly identifiable through relationships, decision making and actions. Relationships are outstanding at Our Lady of Perpetual Succour and a strong sense of acceptance and inclusiveness exists. The inspectors noted a sense of calmness and at all times behaviour was outstanding. Children are respectful of each other and of adults in school who work together as a committed team having high expectations of the children and in this atmosphere the children thrive.

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

- To further support all children so that they are increasingly confident in planning for and leading of prayer and worship.
- To further develop moderation procedures for RE to ensure that all staff have an increasingly clear and accurate knowledge and understanding of year group expectations.

Date 25<sup>th</sup> January 2017

Dear Pupils

Thank you for making our visit to Our Lady of Perpetual Succour so enjoyable when we came to inspect your school for the Bishop. Thank you for making us feel so welcome. We really enjoyed our time with you. Your school is an outstanding Catholic school.

We really enjoyed seeing your lessons and we were sorry we didn't see all the classes. It was lovely to see your activities; your work, your prayer and worship sessions and your very polite manners. Thank you. You have a very sensible attitude to life and to school, and we could see very strongly that you are proud of your school. We could see that you all believe that every child is special and is valued as part of your school community.

We were made to feel very welcome by all the children that we met. You treat each other with dignity and respect – you treat each other the way you wish to be treated, and it was great to see. Every child has a part to play at Our Lady of Perpetual Succour.

Your teachers and head teacher work very hard and they make sure that you all enjoy coming to school and are eager to learn. They have a high opinion of you and they care a great deal for every child in the school. It was a privilege for us to come into your school.

It is good to see that you are going to church to hear Mass with Fr. Barry regularly. I have asked your teachers to help you to become even more confident in planning and leading your acts of worship. Your teachers help you to be the best you can be. From class to class, the teachers try to help you to learn about and learn from the Catholic faith so that you can grow in the love of Jesus Christ. You are super children who made us smile with the love you show for all in your school. Your teachers go far beyond what they are asked to do, because they believe in you so much.

God bless all in your school,

Yours sincerely

Mrs. J. Frazer and Mrs. M. Kwiatkowski.

(Section 48 Inspectors)

## **Summary Report to Parents**

On 25<sup>th</sup> January 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.

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