

**INSPECTION REPORT**

**Sacred Heart Primary School, Colne, BB8 7JR.**

Inspection date 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2015  
 Reporting Inspectors Brendan Hennessy  
 Julie Frazer

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

Type of School Primary  
 URN 119653  
 Age range of pupils 5 - 11  
 Number on roll 213  
 Appropriate authority The Governing Body  
 Chair of Governors Clare Hands  
 Headteacher John Robertshaw  
 Religious Education Subject Leader Anne Baldwin  
 Date of previous inspection June 2010

<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	<b>1</b>	
The quality of Catholic Leadership	<b>1</b>	
The quality of the Word of God community	<b>1</b>	
The quality of the Welcome community	<b>1</b>	
The quality of Welfare	<b>1</b>	
The quality of Worship	<b>1</b>	
The quality of Witness	<b>1</b>	
The following pages provide reasons to support these judgements		

## **CHARACTERISTICS AND CONTEXT OF THE SCHOOL**

Sacred Heart Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary School serves the parish of The Good Shepherd, Pendle. This is an average sized primary school with 213 pupils on roll, 75% are baptized Roman Catholic. The school is situated in an area of mixed housing. Inward mobility is high at KS2, and 20% of pupils are currently entitled to Free School Meals. On entry to the Reception class the attainment of the majority of pupils is below the national average. Most pupils have made good or better progress in their learning by the time they leave at the end of KS2. The school currently has 15% of the pupils with Special Educational Needs and 3% with English as an additional language. There are 9 teachers in school, all of whom are Catholic: 3 have the Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies and 2 have completed the Catholic leadership course. School provides extended provision for those children who need it both before and after school. The school holds the Race Equality Mark.

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

Sacred Heart is an outstanding Catholic primary school that offers a deep faith experience, with Jesus clearly at the centre of all aspects of school life. This warm, friendly school strives to be a place “where love can grow and flourish” in a caring environment where all are welcomed and differences celebrated. Prayer is very much at the heart of this school enriching everyone’s experience of God’s presence. The Mission Statement is visible, understood and lived by all in the school community. The inspirational headteacher, supported by the dedicated and talented RE subject leader, leadership team and staff, do all they can to ensure that the spiritual and pastoral needs of all are met and that gospel values are clearly evident and lived out by all. The parish priest and governors are very supportive, cohesive and committed to ensuring that Catholic education of the highest standard is provided for all. The quality of teaching in Religious Education is always good and more often better, which ensures high standards are achieved across the school, as evidenced in the children’s books and work around school. The friendly and well-mannered children are very proud of their school, their behaviour and attitude to learning are excellent. School takes every opportunity to build on the excellent links with the parish and home. Parents feel very welcome in school and state that it does “everything it can to understand the children and their needs”. Effective monitoring, assessment and evaluation of Religious Education has ensured that the school has continued to develop since the last inspection.

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

- The Mission Statement is visible, understood and lived by the whole school community.
- The quality of the relationships across the school, the care for all from the dedicated staff and the outstanding behaviour and respect for others demonstrated by the children.
- The inspirational leadership of the headteacher supported by a committed, talented and enthusiastic RE subject leader, senior leadership team and governors.
- The positive partnership with the parish and the pivotal role of the parish priest in the spiritual life of the school.
- Prayer and worship is at the heart of the school community. Uplifting acts of worship inspire all and the children demonstrate a high level of confidence in leading prayer and worship.

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

The Sacred Heart School is extremely well led by an inspirational headteacher who has a strong, spiritual commitment and values the individual worth of every member of the school community. He has a clear

vision and sense of purpose for the education of the whole child. The headteacher is aided by a dedicated RE leader, an effective leadership team and an enthusiastic and talented staff team. The governors have a clear strategic vision for the school, they are very committed and proactive in providing support and challenge. Together with all of the staff, they do all that they can to ensure that RE and the development of the Catholic life of the school is at the core of the school's thinking and practice. The very supportive parish priest is a regular visitor to school; staff, governors, parents and children really value his contribution to and impact on the spiritual life of the school. Pupil leadership has been established through the school council and strengthened by the commissioning of the school chaplains. Effective and accurate monitoring, assessment and self-evaluation allied to relevant professional development for staff all contribute to the positive impact on the quality of provision in RE. This 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 school clearly demonstrates outstanding witness to the church's mission in education. All school leaders set the example, as role models, and make a significant contribution to the outstanding provision for Catholic education in Sacred Heart.

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

The school has been exemplary in its efforts to create a new Mission Statement that is visible, understood, lived and witnessed by all in the school community. Parents comment that the children enjoyed the process of creating a new Mission Statement which was "driven by pupils", so that they all had "ownership". The importance of the Word of God was clearly demonstrated throughout the school in many wonderful, creative and thoughtful displays. Scripture is clearly known, understood and made relevant throughout the school. All staff place a high priority on the teaching of Religious Education which was evident in their knowledge and understanding and the high standards of children's work. RE is at the core of the school's curriculum with some outstanding examples of inspirational teaching and engaging learning. In an EYFS lesson, consistent high expectations and very child centred learning were clearly evident in a very purposeful learning environment where the children talked about the presence of Jesus in the tabernacle. In KS1 the children were presented with the opportunity to write their own prayers, reflect on them and "release" them, attached to balloons, up to God in the Prayer Garden. In a KS2 lesson the children were challenged by effective questioning, including the Big Questions and they engaged in thoughtful discussion about the gifts of the Holy Spirit. A very well structured and creative lesson was observed involving role play, reflection and discussion about how to use our gifts and talents in the service of God and others. In this lesson high expectations and challenge were set by the teacher and the children were confident and secure in expressing their thoughts and their spirituality. Constructive marking and feedback was evident across the school which ensured that pupils knew how to improve their work and enabled them to reflect on their learning and understanding of RE. The children show a real interest and enthusiasm in RE, they were happy and confident to share their understanding of their faith. They learn about other faiths through religious education and assemblies, and this helps them to understand and respect the beliefs and cultures of others. Teaching Assistants have a good understanding of the teaching of RE, they effectively interacted with pupils to support their learning in RE.

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

As visitors and members of the school community enter Sacred Heart School, they are welcomed by the striking display, which was designed by the children and painted professionally onto the school walls. This display relates to the 5Ws being at the very heart of school life. All around the school the words of the school's Mission Statement are similarly painted onto the walls and the children are happy to talk about this as they were clearly involved in its inception and therefore have a real sense that this belongs to them and reflects the ethos of the school. Sacred Heart provides a very warm,

welcoming and inclusive environment where all staff have high expectations of themselves as well as the children. Those children with additional needs are wholly accepted and cherished as valued members of the school community. As visitors go into classrooms, the children welcome them by name and are eager to discuss their work and their faith commitment. Parents spoke very warmly about the welcome that their children are given when they come into Sacred Heart School. They said that the headteacher and members of staff 'bent over backwards' to ensure that the needs of all the children were understood and fully met. Parents clearly feel supported in their mission to bring up their children in being the primary educators and having a faith commitment. Children and staff are happy in school and it is evident that they place a sense of dignity for all at the heart of everything they do. The school chaplains clearly evidenced their role in school as being there for others; to help them pray and to be a role model for their faith. Children and staff who are new to the school are quickly made to feel welcome and valued members of the school community. The parish priest is a regular and very welcomed visitor to the school and his presence and work with the children is a significant strength of the school.

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

The commitment of the headteacher, senior leaders and governors to the welfare of all within the school is excellent. Pupils were keen to demonstrate the ways in which they care for others, especially those children with additional needs. At lunchtime the children played together very happily and the lunchtime supervisor explained that this was always the case and the children would come to her if they needed help. She spoke very warmly about the children as cherished individuals who she evidently knew and cared for. The overriding atmosphere within the school is one of calm, safety and dignity for all. Parents said that problems in school are extremely rare but when they do occur they are dealt with swiftly, sensitively and effectively. The children demonstrated very effectively their commitment to a happy school environment and they spoke about how they readily forgave one another on the rare occasion when it was needed. The school chaplains spoke about the need to care for other people beyond their school community and how the whole school had raised money, through a range of activities, for CAFOD. They also spoke about how they felt obligated to take care of the other children at playtimes and to make sure that everyone is included. The Christ-centred ethos provides a very caring and supportive atmosphere for everyone associated with the school. There is clear evidence of excellent relationships between staff, parents and children. Children are safe and secure; appropriate policies and procedures are in place to ensure care and protection of each individual. An effective Sex and Relationship Education scheme of work is in place and there are plans to develop this even more in the future. All pupils and staff know that they are valued members of the school community of Sacred Heart and as such understand that they each have a voice and they are always listened and responded to.

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

Prayer is very much at the heart of this school and the many and varied opportunities for prayer and worship have enhanced the individual faith journeys of all in Sacred Heart. The school has been effective in its efforts to create time "to become reflective, experience the presence of God and develop a mature spiritual life". The importance of prayer and worship is expressed and witnessed through classroom acts of reflection and meditation, assemblies, Mass and liturgies. Each classroom has an age appropriate and relevant focal point for prayer and these are clearly valued by the children. Additional focal points for prayer, display and reflection are situated at key areas in the school, not least the Prayer Garden that can be accessed by all. The prayer group, meditation group, whole school assembly and two classroom acts of worship observed were without exception uplifting, inclusive, creative and thoughtful spiritual experiences for all present. Children took a leading role in all the acts

of prayer and worship observed and these special moments of prayer and reflection were beautifully respected by the children and enhanced their relationship with God and one another. The recent introduction of pupil chaplains has already had a significant, positive impact on prayer and worship across the school. The chaplains stated with conviction that the school prayer and Mission Statement sum up their work “to be inspired by Jesus”. 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. The parish priest regularly visits the school to celebrate Holy Mass and help the staff and children deepen their faith and understanding. Parents were extremely positive about the range of opportunities the school offers for prayer and worship and really appreciate the input from the pupil chaplains and the impact this has on the prayer lives of all the children.

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

The Mission Statement is at the heart of the school, it is a powerful declaration of how all in the school give witness to the beliefs and values of the Catholic faith in their daily lives. All staff and children make every effort to live it and everyone at Sacred Heart is “inspired to be the very best we can be” and recognises that “Jesus is with us in every place and situation in school”. Observations and discussions confirmed that children treat each other with care, respect, compassion and dignity. Relationships are excellent between all members of the school community and all are able to talk openly and confidently about their faith. There is a great sense of teamwork among the staff, children and parents which gives the school a true family feel and helps the children to become well rounded individuals. There are strong home, school and parish links which are comprehensive and enhanced by the regular visits of the parish priest. An atmosphere of calm and a sense of belonging permeates the whole school and this helps to create a pleasant working environment for everyone in school. All staff are positive role models for the children, promoting the ethos and values of the school and helping them to recognise that Jesus is with them in all aspects of school life. The school fosters a spirit of awe and wonder through religious education and the broader curriculum, where the children are encouraged to be good guardians of God’s world. They know that they have a vital role to play in looking after God’s world. The children are encouraged to reach out to those in need by their wonderful support for local, national and world charities, including CAFOD, Caritas, Derian House and The Friends of Serenity. This work is reinforced by the appointment of a CAFOD gap year project worker, which the school hopes to expand on in the future. It is clear that all members of Sacred Heart school family look for God in their own lives and the lives of others every day and do all they can to meet the challenges involved in this witness.

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

- Continue to develop pupil leadership and embed the work of the recently established pupil chaplains in their role as “protectors and carriers of the faith”.
- Continue with the whole school approach to school improvement in RE by developing the staff coaching model, so that outstanding practice can continue to flourish throughout the school.

**Department for Formation, Office for Education**

**Summary Report to Parents**

On 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2015 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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23<sup>rd</sup> June 2015

Dear Children,

Thank you for the very warm welcome you gave us and for making our visit to the Sacred Heart RC Primary School such a joyful occasion, we really enjoyed our time with you. You and all the adults in school are indeed “inspired by Jesus to be the very best we can be” 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 the Sacred Heart. We saw as many of you as we could and we are sorry if we didn't see you in your class. Thank you for sharing your work with us, we were very impressed with the standard of work in your RE books and in your wonderful displays around school. It was clear to us that you have a very good 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 a privilege for us to come into your school.

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

Mr Robertshaw, all the staff, Fr Chris, 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!

Your teachers are keen to work with you to build the Catholic life of your school even further and to do this they are going to continue to help you develop as leaders of prayer and acts of worship in the Sacred Heart.

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

Yours sincerely,

Mr Brendan Hennessy  
Mrs Julie Frazer  
(Section 48 Inspectors)