

CHARACTERISTICS AND CONTEXT OF THE SCHOOL

St Anne's and St Joseph's is a voluntary aided Roman Catholic primary school in the Diocese of Salford serving the parishes of St Anne's and St Joseph's in Accrington. Pupils come from a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds. The school is larger than average with an admission number of 45. Currently there are 292 pupils on roll of whom 63% are baptised Roman Catholics, which represents a decline in the Catholic population and increasing numbers of pupils from other faiths. 17.1% of pupils are eligible for free school meals and pupil premium grant, which is below the national average. 13.1% of pupils have been identified as having a special educational need of some kind, 4 of these pupils have Education, Health Care Plans. The majority of pupils are of white British heritage. Significant staff changes have taken place in the school in the last two years including the appointment of a new headteacher. There are 12 teachers including the headteacher, of whom 9 are Catholic; 6 of these hold the CCRS.

Following the last Section 48 inspection in 2011, the school has no significant issues from that inspection to address.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL IS GOOD

St Anne's and St Joseph's is a good Catholic school. The school has a strong Catholic ethos and successfully offers its pupils a traditional Catholic education in which diversity is welcomed and celebrated. It is a happy school. Children enjoy learning and parents recognise that the school is improving the quality of its provision and they are very supportive of what is being done for their children. Pupils are very friendly, polite and well mannered. Throughout the day of the inspection pupils behaviour was exceptional. The school places the pupils at the very centre of all aspects of school life. Lessons observed were good and most groups of pupils were seen to be making good progress, including those with special educational needs and disabilities. In some classes accelerated progress was evident, but more could be done to accelerate progress.

The leadership team is committed to continuous school improvement and the raising of standards for all pupils. The governing body is supportive of the headteacher, the leadership team and all the hardworking staff. There is a sense of purpose in the management of RE due to the enthusiasm of the recently appointed subject leader. Teachers and support staff have worked hard to create an ethos where everyone recognises the need to work together as a team. Teachers are well supported by the effective deployment of teaching assistants and administrative staff.

The current headteacher was appointed in 2015. A number of long serving teachers have recently retired from the school. The school is now benefitting from a period of stability and accelerated improvement.

KEY STRENGTHS OF THE SCHOOL INCLUDE:

- The quality of the relationships and partnership between school, parish and home greatly enhances the Catholic life of the school.
- Pupil's behaviour and politeness are excellent.
- The commitment of all staff to providing a caring and nurturing environment plays a significant role in the school being a happy place.
- The positive links with the parishes of St Anne's and St Joseph's. The crucial role of the parish priest make significant contribution to the quality of the school's spiritual life.
- Enthusiastic leadership from a dedicated subject leader has led to important improvements in religious education and the spiritual life of the school.

THE QUALITY OF CATHOLIC LEADERSHIP IS GOOD

The quality of the Catholic leadership of the school is good. The leadership team is totally committed to providing strong Catholic leadership for the school. Priority has been given to the effective delivery of the 'Come and See' scheme of work and more engaging acts of collective worship. Non-Catholic teachers, who have attended the Kerygma programme, and NQT's are well supported in school by the RE subject leader. RE

enjoys at least 10% of available teaching time, is well resourced and is prioritised on the school improvement plan. The re-written mission statement places emphasis on the relationships between individuals and God. The teaching of RE is carefully planned. The RE subject leader has produced a detailed action plan that involves regular book scrutinies, the selection of age appropriate 'big questions' and the future monitoring of teaching and learning. The subject leader regularly presents a range of reports to the headteacher and the governing body that keeps them well informed regarding the religious life of the school. The leadership team and the governing body are aware of their school's strengths and areas for development. They have a shared vision for the future development of the school. The governing body fulfils its role well in respect of its Catholic foundation; it has a good knowledge of the school. Pupils across the school are eager to develop their leadership roles as chaplains, school councillors or 'Mini Vinnies', which the school intends to develop even further. The school promotes cohesion by helping pupils to appreciate the diversity of people's religious beliefs, backgrounds and cultures. The parish priest is a regular and highly valued visitor to the school, knows exactly where the school is on its journey of faith and is committed to the religious welfare of all pupils and their families.

THE QUALITY OF THE WORD IS GOOD

The importance of the Word of God was clearly demonstrated around the school in the many thoughtful and enriching displays of pupil's work. The mission statement can be seen in classrooms and on corridors. It is the focus for encouraging all to achieve their very best. The school is developing a clear vision for religious education. In the best lessons considerable thought, detail and research was evident in teachers planning which also included spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. Differentiation was present in delivery, tasks and outcomes. Speaking and listening was encouraged. Religious literacy is developed to a good standard, particularly in upper key stage 2 classes. Good subject knowledge enabled teachers to deliver lessons imaginatively, thus maximising and sustaining the interest of pupils. Appropriate vocabulary was used by teachers and they praised pupils who used of appropriate vocabulary. Pupils are accustomed to working collaboratively and individually. They shared ideas, tasks and were happy to volunteer answers to a range of carefully chosen questions. Bible stories and scripture readings were referred to regularly. 'Big questions' relating to the faith were dealt with in many classes. Older pupils discussed the effect of vocation, commitment and mission on people in the past and today. One pupil identified that appropriate behaviour should enable us to 'be the best person that God wants us to be.' Key stage one pupils discussed the idea of welcome and the benefits of being a member of a family at school, home and church. In an enjoyable EYFS collective worship the pupils sat quietly, listened carefully, responded appropriately to adult prompts and sang beautifully and enthusiastically. In a minority of lessons, the pace of learning was hindered by the insufficient subject knowledge of the teacher, pupils spending too long sat on the carpet and therefore not enough time for learning. Across the school pupil's attitude to learning is good. They show genuine interest in and an enthusiasm for RE. Standards of work in pupil's RE books are in line with standards in literacy books. Constructive marking in books establishes a supportive dialogue between pupils and teachers that is conducive to further learning.

THE QUALITY OF WELCOME IS OUTSTANDING

St Anne's and St Joseph's provides a warm, welcoming, inclusive environment where committed staff clearly demonstrate respect and care for all pupils and colleagues. The welcoming tradition of the school has been maintained through a period of considerable change. A commitment to safeguarding in no way compromises the genuinely warm welcome. All staff, pupils and governors have a deep commitment to the school and all contribute to the supportive ethos. Pupils and staff were very confident with and welcoming towards the inspectors. Visitors to the school are immediately aware of the school's mission. Everyone is valued, their strengths, weaknesses and vulnerabilities celebrated, which contributes to the creation of a loving and respectful ethos that permeates all activity. Strong, caring relationships exist between all pupil and staff. Anybody new to the school is quickly made to feel welcome and comfortable. A parent of a child starting school on the day of the inspection said that the school was chosen because on a visit to the school she noticed that so many pupils looked and sounded so happy. Each morning as pupils enter school they receive a warm welcome from adults. A parent of two key stage 1 pupils spoke at length about how much they enjoy school

and how safe and secure they feel. During the inspection, parents attended a whole school assembly to celebrate the close of the Year of Mercy led by the headteacher and involved pupils from all age groups. The pupils sang joyfully, recited traditional prayers and all sat respectfully. Many families have been associated with the school for more than one generation and have a strong sense of belonging.

THE QUALITY OF WELFARE IS GOOD

The whole school community demonstrates respect and care for one another and service to all. Across the school there is good practice to be seen that enables pupils and staff to feel safe and well cared for. Procedures to safeguard and protect are fully embedded. Pupils and staff are encouraged to make the right choices and to adopt safe practices. Pupils are happy to be in school. The school council, GIFT pupil chaplaincy team and Mini Vinnies are beginning to develop their leadership skills and speak confidently and enthusiastically about their role in school. Older pupils show a maturing understanding of the free availability of God's love and forgiveness. Older pupils show younger pupils how to become more prayerful. They understand that it is important to help others and have compassion for the less fortunate: raising money for Caritas and CAFOD each year. Pupils have a keen sense of right and wrong, fair and unfair, and know what to do should they experience discrimination of any kind. They feel happy to talk about their worries and are confident that adults will listen to them and help them. There is a positive ethos in school at the centre of which is Jesus Christ as an example for the whole community to aspire to. Staff are happy to be in school. Relationships are of high quality and based on respect for the individual. Governors and senior leaders ensure that careful consideration is given to supporting the needs of all pupils when making budget, staffing and resourcing decisions.

Parents appreciate the 'open door' policy, which means that, almost always, parental concerns are dealt with speedily and effectively.

THE QUALITY OF WORSHIP IS GOOD

Prayer is at the heart of the school; it is a very important part of school life. Across the school there are good examples of the opportunities for prayer and worship throughout the liturgical year. Worship opportunities are appropriate to pupils' background and faith experience. Prayer and worship is expressed and witnessed through classroom acts of reflection, assemblies, masses and liturgies. Each classroom has a prayer focus area that is age appropriate and relevant. Additional focal points for prayer are to be found around the school. There is a plan to construct a prayer garden in the near future. As the school has identified it needs to develop more opportunities for pupils to reflect and meditate, the prayer garden should prove most appropriate. Staff and pupils work together to prepare and deliver acts of collective worship in different formats. The acts of prayer and worship observed during the inspection were child centred, thoughtful and relevant, ensuring that children and adults were given the opportunity to pray together as a community. Whilst there is clear evidence of creativity and involvement of pupils in worship, liturgies and celebrations, pupils are not given enough opportunities to independently plan and lead prayer and worship. The introduction of a GIFT pupil chaplaincy team and Mini Vinnie's has given greater opportunities for pupils to take a leading role and they are beginning to make a contribution to and have an impact on prayer and worship across the school. Inspectors agreed that there is good practice in most classrooms and that further progress can be achieved by giving pupils even greater responsibility to compose and present their own prayers and reflections in their classes and in other classes.

In addition to regular Masses and assemblies, the school also celebrate non-eucharistic services, such as the exposition of the Blessed Sacrament led by Father Stamp on the day of the inspection and attended by many staff and pupils.

THE QUALITY OF WITNESS IS OUTSTANDING

The recently reviewed mission statement is at the heart of the school. Everyone tries to live it daily as they bear witness to the beliefs and values of their faith and the teachings of Jesus Christ. This is particularly evident around the school in displays that celebrate pupils work and achievements. The school is fully inclusive, adults and pupils treat each other with respect, care, compassion and dignity demonstrating that Gospel values are

fostered throughout the entire community. Relationships are excellent between all members of the school community. Members of the GIFT pupil chaplaincy team and Mini Vinnies were happy to talk openly and confidently about their role in developing the Catholic life of the school. There is a tangible sense of teamwork among the staff, pupils and parents, which has produced a sense of family. Staff provide positive role models for the pupils. They help the pupils to recognise that Jesus is with them in all aspects of school life. As an example of this in an upper key stage 2 where pupils studied and discussed a reflection of Blessed John Henry Newman and readily accepted that 'God has created me to do Him some definite service.' Pupils are actively encouraged and supported in becoming proactive citizens who participate in the strategic direction of the school by their involvement in a range of activities that support local, national and international charities. Close links with both parishes are enhanced by regular visits to school by the parish priests, pupil visits to the church during the year and the school is involved in the delivery of the sacramental programme.

AGREED AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT:

- To further develop teaching in the school in order to give the pupils greater and sustained independence and ownership of their learning.
- To continue to develop pupil leadership in prayer and worship by embedding the work of the recently established GIFT pupil chaplaincy team.
- To improve the reflective and meditative prayer across the school.

16th November 2016

Dear Pupils,

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us and for making our visit to St Anne's and St Joseph's such a joyful occasion; we really enjoyed our time with you. Everybody in your school is inspired by the teachings of Jesus Christ and work very hard to always do their best, because of this your school is a good Catholic school.

We really enjoyed seeing your lessons and listening to you telling us about the wonderful things you do in St Anne's and St Joseph's. We saw as many of you as possible and we are sorry if we didn't come into your classroom. Thank you for sharing your work with us. We enjoyed reading your RE books and were very impressed with your work displayed in classrooms and on the corridors. It was clear to us that you have a good knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith.

It was good to see so many happy faces. You are clearly very proud of your school. We felt very comfortable to be with so many polite and well-mannered pupils wanting to succeed, looking out for each other and behaving so outstandingly well.

All the adults at St Anne's and St Joseph's are very proud of you and what you achieve, keep it up! Your teachers are keen to continue to build the Catholic life of your school even further. To do this they are going to increase the opportunities you have to become independent learners and to lead prayer and worship in your school.

Enjoy the rest of the school year.

Yours Sincerely,
Mr John Thorpe and Mr Damian Harrison
(Section 48 Inspectors)

Summary Report to Parents

On 16th November 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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