

**INSPECTION REPORT**

**St Edmund's RC Primary School, Queen Street, Little Hulton, Salford M38 0WH**

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Inspection date 11<sup>th</sup> July 2016  
 Reporting Inspectors Brendan Hennessy  
 Pam Macro

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

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Type of School Primary  
 URN 135307  
 Age range of pupils 3 - 11  
 Number on roll 370  
 Appropriate authority The Governing Body  
 Chair of Governors Grahame Walker  
 Headteacher Claire Harrison  
 Religious Education Subject Leaders Kathryn Brookes  
 Date of previous inspection March 2010

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<b>The Inspection judgements are:</b>	<b>Grade</b>	
Overall effectiveness of the school	<b>1</b>	Explanation of the Grades  1 = Outstanding 2 = Good 3=Requires Improvement 4 = Inadequate
The quality of Catholic Leadership	<b>1</b>	
The quality of the Word	<b>1</b>	
The quality of Welcome	<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**

St Edmund's Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary School serves the parish of St Edmund, Salford. This is a larger than average sized primary school with 370 pupils on roll, 68% are baptised Roman Catholic. The school is situated in an area of mixed housing, 53% of pupils are currently entitled to free school meals. On entry to nursery the children's starting points are historically generally 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 14% of the pupils with Special Educational Needs and 13% with English as an additional language. There are 17 teachers in the school, 9 of whom are Catholic, 9 hold or have started the Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies. School provides extended provision for those children who need it both before and after school. The school holds national awards for: Communication Friendly Status, Healthy Schools, International Schools and the Sports Gold Award.

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

St Edmund's is an outstanding Catholic primary school, "Where God is at the heart of everything we do". The mission statement is clearly understood and lived out by children, staff and governors. It underpins all actions and activities in the school. A strong Catholic ethos is evident throughout the school creating a community where happy and confident children thrive as they learn, play and pray together. Prayer and worship is at the core of this school, enriching everyone's experience of God's presence and enhancing their individual faith journeys. The dedicated headteacher is supported by a committed RE subject leader, enthusiastic leadership team and hardworking staff, they do all they can to ensure that the spiritual and pastoral needs of all are met in this inclusive Catholic school. The parish priest and governors are supportive and committed to ensuring that Catholic education of the highest standard is provided for all. Gospel values are clearly evident and lived out by the whole school community. The quality of teaching in religious education is always at least 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, polite and well-mannered children are very proud of their school; their behaviour and attitude to learning is excellent. Parents feel very welcome, included and valued. School takes every opportunity to build on the excellent links with the parish and home. Effective monitoring, assessment and evaluation of religious education has ensured that the school has successfully addressed all areas for development identified in the last inspection.

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

- The dedicated headteacher has a clear vision for the Catholic life of the school and is supported in this by a committed and enthusiastic RE subject leader, leadership team, staff and governors.
- The commitment of the staff team to work together and live out the school's mission statement in all aspects of school life, ensuring all children are nurtured and motivated.
- The confident, happy, polite and well-mannered children who have high aspirations for themselves and each other.

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

St Edmund's is extremely well led by a dedicated headteacher who has a strong spiritual commitment and a clear vision for Catholic education. She has a sense of purpose for the education of the whole child and values the worth of every member of the school community. The headteacher is very well supported by a committed RE leader, an enthusiastic leadership team and a hard working staff team. The governors are deeply committed to the success of the school. They have a clear, strategic plan for the school and provide both support and challenge. It is evident that staff and governors do all that they can to ensure that religious

education and the development of the Catholic life of the school is at the core of the school's thinking and practice. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural education was found to be outstanding and permeates all aspects of school life. 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 has been established through the school council, eco council and curriculum council. Pupil voice has been strengthened by the contribution of the very enthusiastic school chaplaincy team. A wide range of relevant professional development for staff has ensured that staff are confident with their spiritual role. This, combined with self-evaluation that is rigorous, honest and accurate has had 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. All school leaders demonstrate a strong commitment to the Church's mission in education and make a significant contribution to the outstanding provision for Catholic education in St Edmund's.

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

The school mission statement is visible, understood, lived and witnessed by all in school. It is clear that school is indeed a family where God is at the heart of everything it does. The importance of the Word of God was clearly demonstrated throughout the school in many creative, enriching and thoughtful displays. Sacred Scripture is made relevant and meaningful to the children across the school. It is known and understood by pupils and shared in many vibrant, joyful ways. All staff place a high priority on the teaching of RE. This was demonstrated in their knowledge and understanding of RE, and evident in the high standards of children's work and in their contributions to lessons. Teachers have a very good knowledge and understanding of RE; they employ a consistent model of assessment and moderation to monitor children's progress. Teaching and learning in RE was found to be at least good, and more often better with examples of inspirational teaching and engaging learning observed across the school. In lessons observed in KS1 and KS2, common attributes were clearly evident. These lessons were all very well planned with consistently high expectations, clear learning objectives, differentiated activities, challenge, good pace, engaging learning, with many opportunities for the children to share their thoughts and ideas. This ensured that the learning was productive and well balanced, with confident children secure in expressing their thoughts. Thoughtful and effective questioning, including the use of the 'big questions', was observed in lessons and this challenged the children's thinking and moved their learning on. Teaching Assistants have a good understanding of the teaching of RE and they effectively interacted with pupils to support their learning. 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 in RE, they 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, and this helps them to understand and respect the beliefs and cultures of others.

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

St Edmund's provides a very warm, welcoming and totally inclusive environment for all its children, their families, staff and visitors. On entering the school, visitors are immediately aware of its mission and the day to day significance of the school mission statement and the 5W's. There is an atmosphere of purposeful calmness in school. It is bright, clean and enhanced throughout by attractive and varied displays. The polite and well-mannered children are rightly proud of their school and warmly welcome visitors. They enjoy coming to school, feel safe and secure and treat each other with respectful care. Children confidently told the inspectors they follow the rule; 'treat others as you want to be treated yourself'. Procedures are in place to ensure that children new to the school feel welcome and as a result they settle in quickly. School staff visit children at home prior to them starting in the school's nursery and the sense of welcome begins there. This is enhanced with EYFS play sessions, parent

induction sessions, meet the teacher sessions and regular parents' evenings all of which sustain the school's sense of welcome. Parents were keen to express how all of them felt included and how any concerns they might have are quickly and sensitively dealt with by the very caring staff. Parents of children with extra needs spoke very highly of the support and care their children had received. The appointed children's and family worker is always on hand to reach out to and work alongside more vulnerable families. In the words of one parent "you can feel the love in this school." Parents also really appreciate the invitations and welcome they receive when attending class masses and class celebrations.

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

St Edmund's is an inclusive and caring school that welcomes all and celebrates differences. It clearly does all that it can to ensure that the needs of children are met. All in school actively seek to treat one another fairly, equally and with respect. Procedures to safeguard and protect are given the highest priority. Throughout the school there is evidence of good practice enabling the children and staff to feel safe, well cared for and able to adopt safe practices themselves. There is a genuine concern from all staff for the welfare of pupils and Christ is used as an example for the whole community to aspire to. The school gives a high priority to those in the greatest need in the way that they reach out beyond the school community. The children have a real sense of outreach to the community and undertake local and international charity work including; CAFOD, Cornerstones, St Joseph's Penny and making up food parcels for the community. They demonstrate compassion towards others and view the world with care and concern. School successfully uses the Caritas in Action programme to support the children's sense of responsibility and service, and their understanding of how they can help those in need. Parents were very positive about the school's care and support for their children and families. The behaviour of the children is exemplary in and out of the classroom, and the school, quite rightly, is very proud of their kind and caring children. Older children are actively involved in supporting and nurturing younger children in a variety of roles. Pupil voice is well established in school helping the children to develop their leadership role in school. The school employs a dedicated children's and family worker, whose contribution is greatly valued by families and staff. There are effective safeguarding, SEND, Sex and relationship education and behaviour policies in place. Pupil Premium funding allocation ensures equality of provision for all and vulnerable pupils are recognised as a priority.

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

Prayer is at the heart of St Edmund's school community and staff are confident in planning and leading prayer and worship. All in the school family are nurtured and developed in prayer through a range of prayer opportunities: classroom acts of reflection and meditation, spontaneous prayer, assemblies, Masses and liturgies. The weekly 'statements to live by' give a theme for class reflection and worship. Sacred Scripture is effectively used to nurture the faith and spirituality of each child. The school ensures that prayer and worship opportunities are well-resourced and planned for. Displays are used effectively and feature child-initiated and child-centred approaches to developing the prayer life of the school. These displays highlight both seasonal aspects of the liturgical year and words of Sacred Scripture that reflect how the school community should follow the gospel values. Each classroom has an age appropriate and relevant focal point for prayer which are clearly valued by the children. Additional focal points for prayer are situated at key areas in the school, not least the peace garden and sacred spaces, which can be accessed by the children. A sense of joy and a sharing of God's love permeates all areas of the school. The very enthusiastic and active chaplaincy team are developing their leadership role and making a valuable contribution to the Catholic life of the school. 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. During the inspection the school assembly, classroom acts of worship and the reflections

within the lessons observed, provided opportunities for full participation, joyful singing and reflection. They were uplifting, inclusive and thoughtful spiritual experiences for all present. These special moments of prayer and reflection were respected by the children and enhanced their relationship with God and one another. A systematic and developmental prayer programme has been introduced across the whole school. Parents were positive about the range of opportunities the school offers for prayer and worship and the support for the sacramental programme. The parish priest is actively involved in supporting the staff and children to deepen their own faith and understanding.

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

The school's mission statement is a strong declaration of how all in the school community bear witness to a loving God in all that it does. It guides all in the school community to live out the beliefs and values of the Catholic faith in their everyday lives. The school does all that it can to prepare the children 'to be agents of change and social transformation as builders of the Kingdom of God'. Relationships between all members of the school community are excellent and all are able to talk openly and confidently about their faith. Observations and discussions confirmed that staff and children treat each other with respect, compassion and dignity, clearly demonstrating that gospel values are lived out by the whole school community. All staff are positive role models for the children; they promote the ethos and values of the school, helping the children 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. There are strong home, school and parish links, which are enriched by the regular visits of the parish priest. 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 demonstrates how they can have a positive impact for good in the wider community. They are encouraged to reach out to those in need through their wonderful support for local, national and world charities. The children know that they have a vital role to play in looking after God's world. The school fosters a spirit of awe and wonder through RE and the broader curriculum.

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

- Continue to promote exceptional teaching across the school by coaching and modelling outstanding teaching that will further enhance the quality of RE.
- Continue to develop pupil leadership of prayer and worship in order to embed the work of the recently established pupil chaplaincy team.
- To further develop the strategic role of governors to provide support and high levels of professional challenge for RE and the Catholic life of the school.

### **Summary Report to Parents**

On 11<sup>th</sup> July 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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11<sup>th</sup> July 2016

Dear Children,

Thank you for the very warm welcome you gave us and for making our visit to St Edmund's 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 and work very hard to always do your best, 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 St Edmund's. 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 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 very impressed by the way you all want to succeed in school and how well you look out for each other. You were so well behaved; your politeness, your manners and your kindness towards each other was wonderful to see.

It was so pleasing to see how attentive and confident you were in the acts of worship and the GIFT chaplaincy team's assembly we saw. Everyone showed great respect and reverence; your behaviour was excellent, your singing and prayers were uplifting. The GIFT chaplaincy team is a great asset to your school as they set such a wonderful example for you all to follow.

The staff, school governors and your parents are extremely proud 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 so that you can continue to grow as leaders of prayer and worship in school.

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

Yours sincerely,

Mr Brendan Hennessy and Mrs Pam Macro  
(Section 48 Inspectors)