

INSPECTION REPORT

St John Southworth RC Primary School, Lomeshaye Road, Nelson, BB9 0DQ.

Inspection date 14th December 2016

Reporting Inspector Julie Frazer
 John Thorpe

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

Type of School Catholic Primary
 URN 119655
 Age range of pupils 4-11 years
 Number on roll 209
 Appropriate authority The Governing Body
 Chair of Governors John McManus
 Headteacher Jemma Stuttard
 RE Subject Leader Dee Whittaker
 Date of previous inspection September 2011

The Inspection judgements are:	Grade	Explanation of the Grades 1 = Outstanding 2 = Good 3=Requires Improvement 4 = Inadequate
Overall effectiveness of the school	2	
The quality of Catholic Leadership	1	
The quality of the Word	2	
The quality of the Welcome	1	
The quality of Welfare	1	
The quality of Worship	2	
The quality of Witness	1	
The following pages provide reasons to support these judgements		

CHARACTERISTICS AND CONTEXT OF THE SCHOOL

St John Southworth is a Voluntary Aided Roman Catholic Primary School, admitting 31% baptised Roman Catholic pupils. There are 21% Christian other denomination, 45% Muslim and 3% are registered as having no faith. It is slightly smaller in size to most other primary schools nationally. It serves the Roman Catholic Parish of St John Southworth's. Many of the children entering the school come from home backgrounds which experience some hardship and economic difficulties. The proportion of children from minority ethnic backgrounds is 57% and have English as an additional language, which is well above the national average. The proportion of children who are in receipt of pupil premium is 13%. There are 17% of the children on the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) register and there are 5 children with an Education Health Care (EHC) plan. The mobility of children impacts on achievement. Two of the eight teaching staff are Catholic, however, the governors have recently appointed a new deputy headteacher who is Catholic and will join the school in January. Three of the twelve teaching assistants are also Catholic. The religious education (RE) subject leader has recently evaluated the Catholic life of the school and teaching in RE and as a result of this has produced an effective and detailed action plan for improvements within the school.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL IS GOOD

St John Southworth is a good Catholic primary school, with some outstanding features. It is very successful in offering its learners a holistic Catholic education in an extremely warm, friendly and supportive environment. The school community, very well supported by the governing body and driven by the headteacher, works very hard to ensure the pastoral and spiritual needs of all learners are met and often exceeded. Positive relationships are evident throughout the whole school community. The strong commitment of the headteacher and RE subject leader, together with the hard work and dedication of the staff, has created a culture in which gospel values are clearly evident and all are encouraged to 'be shining examples of God's love'. Pupils, staff and parents are happy to belong to the St John Southworth school community; pupils enjoy coming to school and say that they feel safe and they celebrate their diverse community. The recently appointed headteacher has brought about an extremely rapid change in the Catholic life of the school and within the RE curriculum. These extremely positive changes have been welcomed by all members of the school community and have impacted very positively on the children. The pupils are happy, friendly, polite and welcoming, and the behaviour of pupils is excellent.

KEY STRENGTHS OF THE SCHOOL INCLUDE:

- The leadership and management of the school is outstanding. The recently appointed headteacher and the RE subject leader exude enthusiasm for the RE curriculum and the Catholic life of the school. As a result of their actions there has been rapid progress and development in these areas.
- The children's behaviour and respect for one another is excellent. Relationships throughout the school are outstanding and there are very high levels of care for all within the school community, especially the most vulnerable.
- The school celebrates its diversity, whilst placing its Catholic identity at the centre of all school life and curriculum.

THE QUALITY OF CATHOLIC LEADERSHIP IS OTSTANDING

The headteacher is clearly, deeply dedicated to the Catholic life of St John Southworth School. There is explicit evidence that she places Catholic faith at the heart of the school and everything that she does in the school. She has a clear holistic vision for the school which is extended to families and the wider community, including the most vulnerable. The RE subject leader and staff support her well in promoting her vision for this Roman Catholic school.

Members of staff have worked hard to implement the 5Ws model within the school and there is a wealth of evidence to support the positive impact that this is having within school. The children understand the concept of the 5Ws in a meaningful way and, through clear leadership and guidance, are able to embed these principles as part of their daily lives. There is a real sense of respect, justice and tolerance permeating

throughout the whole school. The very recently appointed chair of governors was able to talk about the rapid progress that has been made in curriculum RE and the Catholic life of the school since the new headteacher arrived. He demonstrates a clear commitment to ensuring continued professional development for all staff and says that curriculum RE will be funded in the same way as mathematics and English. Governors, as well as staff, share the vision of the headteacher and work hard to support her in ensuring the highest quality of provision for the children of St John Southworth. They make a significant contribution to the Catholic life of the school.

The parish priest demonstrates a clear commitment to the school and he celebrates Mass with the children throughout the liturgical calendar. There is a clearly effective sacramental programme which is run by the RE governor. Parents and children are well supported throughout the programme and many children continue to attend Mass afterwards.

THE QUALITY OF THE WORD IS GOOD

Whilst the school's mission statement is due for review, the very recently appointed headteacher has a clear vision for this Catholic school. Both she and the very recently appointed chair of governors have placed this review process as their upmost priority; they have a good understanding that this process should include all members of the school community.

The religious education of the pupils is the core of the core curriculum. The school places great importance on RE and it is well resourced. Standards are at least as good as those in English. The recently introduced assessment strategy is being used effectively throughout the school and teachers are able to track pupils' progress accurately. Constructive marking is used to enable children to reflect and it provides support for improvements in children's learning. Pupils are clearly given sufficient time and opportunity to respond to teachers' comments, questions and challenges. The RE subject leader, fully supported by the headteacher, governing body and parish priest and has enabled the school to develop a clear vision on how RE should be taught. As a result of this combined effort, pupils have made accelerated progress and there is much evidence to suggest that this will continue in the future. The quality of teaching is therefore good and there is clearly the capacity for this to become outstanding in the near future.

Pupils' attitude to learning is good. They show interest in and enthusiasm for their RE work and talk enthusiastically about the topics they have covered. They are happy to be in a school that identifies and celebrates different cultures, backgrounds and faiths. There are clear links between the school, home and parish. Parents say that the school provides a good faith education and that there is great respect for all faiths and that the Catholic life permeates throughout the whole school.

THE QUALITY OF WELCOME IS OUTSTANDING

St John Southworth provides an exceptionally warm welcome for all who attend the school. The children were happy and engaging as they came into school at the start of the day as they were greeted by staff and members of the senior leadership team. Inspectors were warmly greeted by staff and the children when they entered individual classrooms. When the reception class children are inducted into school there are two home visits made to every child, as well as their visits to school. This ensures that there is a smooth transition into school life. Parents were keen to express how all the children feel included. The school celebrates the diversity of faiths and cultural backgrounds of the children. They were 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 the Catholic nature of the school. The children clearly enjoy coming to school and attendance is good. Both parents and children say that the school provides a very safe environment to support learning. There is a holistic approach by everyone within school 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 school. The calm and caring ethos created within the school ensures that the children's personal qualities are valued by everyone.

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.

The GIFT chaplaincy team has a positive impact on the faith life of the school and during the 'Wednesday Word' session, which was observed, the GIFT chaplains delivered an exceptional liturgy for key stage 1 pupils. Each week the GIFT chaplaincy team plan for this session, supported by a teaching assistant, writing their own prayers and planning for the delivery of each part of the session. The GIFT chaplaincy team delivered this with extreme care for the much younger children. 'Faith Friday' has been recently introduced whereby children can come into the session during their lunch break and meditate quietly; developing their personal relationship with Christ.

Children who have additional needs are very well cared for and are fully included as part of the school community. Other children know, understand and accept that some children's needs are very different from their own and readily offer their help and support. Some older children have helped others who have come in to school speaking little or no English; they have helped them to settle in to school and even translated the school lunch time menu for them.

The school places great importance on its charity work and the children support CAFOD, the local hospice, 'Open Door' food bank and last year the school raised money for a former pupil whose mother had been diagnosed with a terminal illness. The children of St John Southworth are very enthusiastic in raising money for others whom they recognise are much less fortunate than themselves.

The parish has recently trained ten parishioners to become part of the 'Life Team'. They support the year 5 and year 6 children, out of school hours, to provide them with opportunities for social engagement discussing issues and catechetical prayer.

THE QUALITY OF WORSHIP IS GOOD

Worship is an integral part of the whole school community and pupils are extremely respectful and reverent when taking part in or listening to acts of worship. The children are increasingly becoming involved in planning for assemblies and acts of worship, which are holistic and relevant to their lives. Pupils are gaining confidence in leading prayer in order to further develop their relationship with God. The 'Wednesday Word' activity, which was observed during the inspection, was led by the GIFT chaplaincy team who took control of the entire event, from planning for and delivering the whole session by themselves, including the written prayers and activities. Children respond well to collective worship opportunities in school. They are aware of its importance and are reverent in their behaviour. All children are encouraged to speak to God in their own special way. The pupils' prayer journals demonstrate that from a very young age the children are encouraged to enter in to a personal dialogue with God, which further encourages and strengthens their own faith journey.

THE QUALITY OF WITNESS IS OUTSTANDING

Staff and pupils are confident and secure in their witness to Christ, the Gospel and the teachings of the Church. Throughout the inspection, observations showed that children treated each other with respect, care, patience, concern and with dignity, and there is an emphasis on creating a pleasant working environment for everyone in school. The RE displays were consistently outstanding throughout the school.

An explicit Catholic culture permeates the whole school and is clearly identifiable through relationships, decision making and actions. The governing body, along with the headteacher and RE subject leader, is very effective in undertaking its role of leading the school and developing it as a Catholic community. The school's GIFT chaplaincy team is well resourced, relevant and inclusive, and has a high impact on the life of the school. Staff and children clearly demonstrate and witness to justice, compassion, reconciliation, respect and dignity in their relationships and are able to see the relationship between their own behaviour and Christian values.

AGREED AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT:

- To review the school's mission statement effectively ensuring that it is contemporary and reflects the school's mission in educating children.
- To develop 'Word' from good to outstanding across the school by providing planned for whole school training and developing opportunities for teachers to observe outstanding lessons.
- To provide pupils with more opportunities to independently plan and deliver prayer and worship.

14th December 2016

Dear Pupils,

Thank you for making our visit to St John Southworth's 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 a good 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, your very polite manners and lovely behaviour. 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 St John Southworth.

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

Jesus Christ is at the centre of your school community and this is seen throughout the school every day. Your teachers are going to help you to develop even greater levels of understanding about Jesus and the Catholic faith. Many of you have a good knowledge and understanding about your faith, so this should help you to do even better.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs J Frazer and Mr J Thorpe

(Section 48 Inspectors)

Summary Report to Parents

On 14th December 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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