

INSPECTION REPORT

St Kentigern’s RC Primary School, Bethnall Drive, Fallowfield, Manchester, M14 7ED

Inspection date 23rd June 2016

Reporting Inspector Mrs. J. Frazer
 Mrs. P. Macro

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

Type of School Roman Catholic Primary
 URN 105584
 Age range of pupils 3 – 11 Years
 Number on roll 399
 Appropriate authority The Governing Body
 Chair of Governors Mr. G. Hodson
 Headteacher Mrs. B. Harrold
 Religious Education Subject Leader Mrs. McGovern
 Date of previous inspection April 2010

The Inspection judgements are:	Grade	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

St Kentigern's is a Roman Catholic School supported by the Diocese of Salford, serving the parish of St Kentigern's (Fallowfield) and St. Bernadette's (Withington) in Manchester. The school is located south of the city centre in an area of high social need. Learners come from a range of socio-economic backgrounds and the majority live in local authority housing. 364 (87%) of the children are baptised Catholics. 48% of them are eligible for free school meals. 69 pupils have been identified as having special educational needs, 4 of them have an EHCP. 71% of these are in receipt of pupil premium. 111 (28%) of the children are from ethnic minority groups and 74 (19%) have English as an additional language. 12 of the 18 teachers (66%) are Roman Catholics. Over the last few years, the school has undergone a significant period of change. A new headteacher and two deputy headteachers have been appointed and took up post in April 2015. Since their appointment the culture and ethos of the school has changed dramatically and there has been "a seismic shift in the culture and ethos of the school" (Ofsted, 2015).

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL IS OUTSTANDING

St Kentigern's 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. 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 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 headteacher, 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 Children's knowledge and understanding of scripture and its relevance to their daily lives.
- The calm atmosphere that has been created throughout the school, which supports teaching and learning as well as the Catholic life of the school.
- The outstanding artwork in the school's hall which depicts the Stations of the Cross; produced by the children as part of a whole school project.

THE QUALITY OF CATHOLIC LEADERSHIP IS OUTSTANDING

The quality of leadership is outstanding. The dedicated and passionate headteacher, enthusiastic RE subject leader, along with a knowledgeable and supportive governing body, provide strong and decisive leadership by clearly living their vision for Catholic Education. The RE subject leader's clear vision for the school, which is that its Catholic ethos is the golden thread running throughout it, provides spiritual and moral guidance for the children. There is excellent leadership at all levels of the community, contributing 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 recently been reviewed by their chaplaincy team and subsequently a new one has been implemented throughout the school. The children know and have ownership of its simple and effective message 'we learn and pray, in faith and love'. The staffing and resources that are devoted to teaching and learning in RE are of the highest standard, reflecting its significance and importance in the school. Children clearly enjoy RE and were very enthusiastic about the inspection; they wanted the inspectors to see how well they were doing and the high quality of their work, which is of the highest standard. The written work in the children's R.E. books is consistently of at least the same or of a higher standard than other areas of the curriculum. There are bright and attractive displays around the school and in the school hall there are paintings of the Stations of the Cross, which are stunning. These were painted by the children as part of a whole school project. 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 to one another. This provides a secure learning environment where everyone can safely express their views and ask questions to develop their understanding. The strong links between the school and home, along with the developing links with the parish, are inclusive and effective, and together this ensures that the children receive the highest possible quality of education.

THE QUALITY OF WELCOME IS OUTSTANDING

St Kentigern's provides an exceptionally warm welcome for all who attend the school; the children were seen running and skipping 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. 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 headteacher has transformed it. The children clearly enjoy coming to school and parents say that they will not stay off, even when they are ill and that St Kentigern's feels like a family unit. 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. School has recently introduced a nurture room and this provides a great source of support for their most vulnerable children and it provides somewhere for them to retreat to when life gets too hard for them. The outreach support provided by the school ensures that the needs of parents and families are met in a structured and sensitive manner. Parents were keen to express the view that there is a special bond and atmosphere around the school and that there is a culture of empathy for others. They gave the example that at Christmas the children were asked not to send out Christmas cards to one another but to find a 'buddy' instead; resulting in no child feeling left out as a result of not receiving a card. Relationships at St Kentigern's are of a high quality. The school's chaplaincy team said that each member of the school is like one piece of a jigsaw and that it is only when they are all put together that the whole picture can be seen. 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 stresses the importance of reaching out beyond its community, so that children feel part of God's world. The charity work is a living example of this as children support St Joseph's Penny, CAFOD, CARITAS, Shelter, Macmillan, Cornerstone as well as providing on-going support to the Manchester Food Bank.

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. RE lessons have an element of high quality worship in them and the children readily respond to their learning by composing and saying prayers confidently; reflecting on the focus of the lesson. The 'Rise and Shine' worship at the start of every school day is now also run confidently by the school's chaplaincy team in the 'Dream Zone'. This allows each year group to start the day spiritually nourished through meditation, song and prayer. Inspectors were invited to hang a ribbon on the 'forgiveness tree' along with those of the children. Throughout the school, candles are lit during worship in order to provide a focus for thoughtful reflection and these are treated respectfully and safely by the children. The inclusive and reflective collective acts of worship help pupils to grow in confidence, in prayer and to develop a close relationship with God. The provision of a quiet place in school for personal prayer, time for reflection, and a quiet area for children to go to, demonstrates the school's commitment to the development of the Catholic life of the school. The classes now take turns in attending Mass in church on a weekly basis and they actively participate in the service. Each class has a special prayer focus along with quality displays about RE. The children know many school prayers and compose powerful prayers for themselves. 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 school provides outstanding support in guiding their 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 providing food for the Manchester Food Bank.

An explicit Catholic culture permeates the whole school and is clearly identifiable through relationships, decision making and actions. Relationships are outstanding at St Kentigern's and a strong sense of teamwork and belonging 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 continue to develop the positive links, which are already being forged, between the school and parish.

Date 23rd June 2016

Dear Pupils

Thank you for making our visit to St. Kentigern's School so enjoyable when we came to inspect your school for the Bishop. Thank you for making us feel so welcome. We were delighted to spend 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 St Kentigern's.

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 Connolly regularly. I have asked for these positive links between the school and parish to continue to grow. 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. P. Macro.

(Section 48 Inspectors)

Summary Report to Parents

On 23rd June 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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