

**INSPECTION REPORT**

**St. Charles' RC Primary School, Knowles Street, Rishton, Blackburn BB1 4HT**

Inspection date 17<sup>th</sup> March 2017  
 Reporting Inspector Jackie McNally  
 Brendan Hennessey

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

Type of School Primary  
 URN 119650  
 Age range of pupils 4-11 years  
 Number on roll 193  
 Appropriate authority The Governing Body  
 Chair of Governors Mr N Yates  
 Headteacher Mrs Vivien Baker  
 Religious Education Subject Leader Mrs Joanna Troughton  
 Date of previous inspection 30<sup>th</sup> March 2012

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

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

St. Charles' RC Primary School is an average sized primary school which serves the parish of St. Charles Rishton. There are 193 pupils on roll and the majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The pupils attending the school come from homes across a range of socio-economic circumstances and the number of pupils eligible for pupil premium has increased over the last three years and is 8% higher than the national average. There are currently 5% of pupils for whom English is not their first language. The proportion of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is 7% higher than the national average. The most significant faith group is Roman Catholic.

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

St. Charles' is a good school which provides a caring and nurturing place of learning. The children are enthusiastic about their learning and they are keen to achieve success in everything they do. The teachers are enthusiastic and hard-working and demonstrated a commitment to providing the children with a good level of religious knowledge and understanding. The lessons observed were of a good standard but would be further enhanced through the use of additional differentiated activities and by allocating more time to independent activities. Children's behaviour is outstanding and at all times during the inspection the children were a credit to the school and their parents. The children are encouraged to think of those less fortunate than themselves and they are keen to organise and participate in fund raising activities.

The governors are very supportive of the school and the senior leadership team and they regularly visit the school. Fr Martin's contribution to the school is valued by the whole school community. The religious education (RE) subject leader is enthusiastic about her role and regularly provides information to the governing body about the monitoring and evaluation activities that have been carried out. The school mission statement, 'Bring Forth Christ,' is not yet known and understood by all children but the school is working towards making this a living statement which is shared by the whole school community. The governors and staff are aware of the 5Ws but these have not yet been shared with the parents and children. These key words underpin the ethos and values in Salford Diocese and need to be known and understood by all members of the school community.

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

- The children are confident, polite and well-mannered individuals who are enthusiastic about their learning and hold high personal aspirations.
- The commitment shown by teachers and support staff to providing a caring and nurturing place of learning.
- A positive welcoming culture permeates the school and everyone is treated with care and respect.

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

The senior leadership of the school clearly recognises that Christ is central to all aspects of school life and all staff are committed to creating a loving and nurturing environment for all children. The governors are supportive of the senior leadership team and actively contribute to the life of the school so they can secure the best possible education for all children. Fr Martin plays a proactive role in the school and his contribution to the spiritual development of the children is highly valued by staff, parents and children. The subject leader undertakes her role with passion and enthusiasm and she constantly strives to achieve excellence. This view is supported by the governors who spoke with high regard about the work of the RE subject leader who they describe as 'a treasure' due to her commitment to the religious life of the school, her involvement in the Sacramental Programme and her engagement with the children and parents. As part of the subject leadership role she regularly reports to governors and played a pivotal role in preparing the Self Evaluation Form (SEF). The subject leader regularly monitors the quality of religious education in the school against the 5Ws and shares the judgements with governors but to improve the process further the self-evaluation and improvement of religious education needs to be a shared process, taking into

consideration monitoring and evaluation activities carried out by all levels of the senior leadership team. Pupils are enthusiastic about taking on responsibilities and they are able to talk about how they support each other and people in the wider community through their fund raising activities. The GIFT team, school council and eco group are excellent role models for other children and are keen to contribute to the religious life of the school. In order to develop their leadership skills further the children now need to be provided with the skills to take a more proactive role in the organisation of collective worship and other liturgical events.

### **THE QUALITY OF THE WORD IS GOOD**

The Word of God is known and understood by children in the school. Teachers provide well planned and structured lessons and deliver lessons with confidence and enthusiasm. The children demonstrate a good knowledge and understanding of Scripture and can confidently answer questions, recalling previous learning. In the lessons observed the teachers spent a great deal of time asking questions to secure the children's religious knowledge but in order to sustain children's interest they need to move more rapidly onto independent tasks. Behaviour for learning is excellent. The children demonstrate high levels of personal motivation and they are keen to achieve success in all their learning. The work in pupil books is of a good standard but pupils' learning could be further enhanced by providing more opportunities for differentiation in their work. Fr Martin regularly visits school and encourages the children to ask searching questions which develops their religious and spiritual knowledge even further.

The children talked with enthusiasm about their knowledge of different faiths and their Muslim pen pals. The school welcomes speakers from other faiths into the school and provides opportunities for children to visit other places of worship. The children were able to draw comparisons between their own faith and other faiths as a result of the good quality experiences that have been provided. Parents are provided with a curriculum map which includes information about the religious education topics their child is studying. The subject leader monitors and evaluates the standards in religious education and provides feedback to staff in order to improve the quality of teaching and learning.

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

The school provides a welcoming environment which extends to pupils, visitors and members of the community. A calm and caring environment pervades the school and it is clear that school is a place where everyone is valued and respected. Relationships between staff, parents, pupils and members of the community are strong and parents talked about how they felt they could approach teaching staff with any problems and that they would be quickly resolved. Parents are regularly invited to school assemblies and other events and they value the opportunities to be part of the school community. The children clearly care about each other and they live out the gospel values in their relationships with each other. The children are extremely proud of their school and they talked confidently and enthusiastically about school life and the support they provide for each other. Children share the love of Christ readily with visitors, communicate very confidently and show a desire to involve everyone in the life of the school. Fr Martin talked about how he feels welcomed into the school and the children clearly enjoy the contribution he makes to the spiritual life of the school.

### **THE QUALITY OF WELFARE IS GOOD**

The school is committed to providing a caring and nurturing environment for the children and this is a strength of the school. Governors, staff and children demonstrate a high level of respect and care for each other. The children feel that their positive contributions and good behaviour are celebrated through the school reward scheme and the use of dojos. If they have any problems they feel that they can approach staff and they talked about being able to use 'whisper' on the website to report any concerns. Children are secure in the knowledge that any concerns raised will be dealt with. Parents spoke about how the school provides support for their children and about how the staff created a 'family feel' to the school.

The school organises support for local, national and worldwide charities e.g. St. Joseph's Penny, Operation Christmas Child, CAFOD and Caritas. It reaches out to the local communities and has recently planted a community garden. These activities illustrate the strong sense of responsibility the school encourages the

children to have towards others. There is a genuine commitment to helping children understanding that it is important to share God's love and have compassion for those less fortunate.

### **THE QUALITY OF WORSHIP REQUIRES IMPROVEMENT**

The school places a great deal of emphasis on living the gospel values and the children are called together to worship through liturgies, collective worship and assemblies. The children regularly celebrate whole school and class Masses and they participate in the music and contribute to the preparation of readings and bidding prayers. The governors spoke about how the children use drama and role play to share their knowledge of Gospel stories in assemblies and this was observed during the inspection. In each of the collective worships observed during the inspection a calm atmosphere was created and children were respectful and reverent. The children were encouraged to contribute their personal prayers and to share their feelings. The collective worship observed was predominately teacher led and in order to improve the quality of worship further the children now need to be provided with the skills and independence to draw together ideas on a theme and create their own worship using music, reflection, power points, readings and stories. The opportunities for reflection during the collective worship also need to be enhanced further. The GIFT team are enthusiastic about their role and talked about how they led a Bible story session in the lunch times and how a chaplaincy area has been established in the hall for them. The children are now looking forward to extending their role by helping with class worship across the school. The children also spoke with enthusiasm about the rosary club which is held each week.

### **THE QUALITY OF WITNESS IS GOOD**

A strong Catholic culture permeates the school and there is a commitment by staff and governors to developing the spiritual life of the school. The gospel values are clearly evident in relationships, decision making and actions and children and staff show care and respect for each other. The staff are excellent role models for the children and provide a nurturing and secure environment for the children where they feel confident to share their feelings and any problems they are facing. The school positively supports those less fortunate than themselves through charity work and through the eco club and the Piggy Park Community Garden the children have been provided with the opportunity to care for God's world. Children from a very early age are taught social and moral values and to follow in the footsteps of Jesus and this is a strength of the school. The school encourages and supports its pupils to be proactive members of its community and to contribute to the decision making process.

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

- To provide focused opportunities for staff professional development in order to improve the quality collective worship.
- To develop the skills of pupils so that they are able to play a leading role in planning and preparing acts of worship.
- To further develop the self-evaluation process so that the headteacher, RE subject leader and governors are working together to effectively monitor the quality of all aspects of the religious life of the school in order to secure future improvements.

17<sup>th</sup> March 2017

Dear Children,

Thank you so much for welcoming us into your school. We really enjoyed spending the day with you and we are pleased to be able to tell you that you that the quality of religious education in your school is good.

We were very impressed by the care and respect you show for each other and the special way you make everyone feel welcome and valued. Throughout the day your enthusiasm and confidence shone through and it is clear that you really enjoy coming to school and this makes your school a very special place to be. There are lovely relationships between you and the teachers, built upon trust and understanding and this is a strength of your school.

We really enjoyed watching your lessons and you showed a great deal of enthusiasm for the topics you were studying. Your religious knowledge is good and you confidently shared ideas in class and listened attentively to other people's opinions showing sensitivity and understanding. Your teachers are enthusiastic and committed and clearly want to help you to achieve the highest standards. We have suggested to your teachers that the lessons need to have a faster pace, particularly in the introduction so that you have sufficient time to complete your independent or group activities.

We were impressed by the respectful and reverent way you prayed during collective worship sessions but we have suggested to your teachers that you now need to be given more opportunities to plan and deliver class and school worship. The newly established GIFT team told us how they are looking forward to leading worship for other children and we are sure that they will take on this role with enthusiasm.

Throughout the day you and your parents told us that St Charles' is a very happy school and we saw this during our visit. Your school has a lovely Catholic ethos and you should be very proud of belonging to a school where there are such positive relationships. Keep working hard and strive to achieve your best at all times.

God Bless

Mrs McNally and Mr Hennessey

(Section 48 Inspectors)

## **Summary Report to Parents**

On 17<sup>th</sup> March 2017 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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