

INSPECTION REPORT

CORPUS CHRISTI CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL
Stanley Road, Chadderton, Oldham OL9 7HA

Inspection date January 2012

Reporting Inspectors Mrs Cas Page & Mr John Thorpe

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

Type of School	Catholic Primary
URN	105718
Age range of pupils	3-11 years
Number on roll	320
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of Governors	Fr Dermot Heakin
Headteacher	Mr Andrew Sowerby
Religious Education leader	Mrs Nicola Perry
Date of previous inspection	July 2007

The Inspection judgements are:	Grade	Explanation of the Grades 1 = Outstanding 2 = Good 3 = Satisfactory 4 = Inadequate
Overall effectiveness of the school	1	
Spirituality	Statement	
The quality of the Word of God community	2	
The quality of Witness	1	
The quality of the Welcome community	1	
The quality of Welfare	1	
The quality of Worship	1	
<i>The following pages provide reasons to support these judgements</i>		

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- Corpus Christi is a larger than average Roman Catholic Primary School including a nursery in Chadderton, Oldham. The school serves the parish of Corpus Christi, Hollinwood, which is situated in an area of mixed rented and privately owned housing. The local area of the school is predominantly terraced housing and light industry. Only a few children are from high status professional backgrounds but there is fairly high employment, particularly in services and commerce.
- A number of children travel from outside the immediate locality. There are currently 320 children on roll, including 41 in the nursery class, 170 boys and 150 girls. 57.2% of pupils are baptised Catholics. The indicative admission number is 40. Pupils are 3-11 years arranged in a mixture of single age and mixed age classes.
- The school attracts children from some of the poorest wards in Oldham. Approximately 38% of its pupils live within the ward where the school is situated whilst another 40% come from three of the poorest wards within the Oldham L.A.
- The number of children receiving free school meals is 22.8%. The FSM benchmark group is in the 17.6% category on Raise on line. This has risen since that last inspection and is now slightly above the national average. The school deprivation indicator supports the view that the children who attend the school are now slightly below the national average in terms of deprivation. Children for whom English is not their first language are well below the national average.
- The school has an increasing number of pupils (24.4%) for whom English is not their first language which is above the national average and is likely to increase as the majority of these children tend to be in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 and reflects the school's changing pattern of admissions.
- The school serves a mainly white population with 65.3% of children coming from white British backgrounds. The school has a growing number of children from other ethnic groups currently 34.7%. Of these children there are 24.4% of them for whom English is an additional language. This has had a positive effect on the school as the predominately white children who attend the school now have access to wider range of different ethnic mixes.
- The school has 15.0 % of children who have special educational needs which has risen slightly over the last three years though it is still slightly below the national average. The needs of these learners range from moderate learning difficulties, to emotional and behavioural difficulties. Currently there are five children with a Statement of Special Educational Need. The school context has changed only slightly in recent years but there has been a significant rise in the number of children attending the school who display behavioural and emotional difficulties.
- Level of attendance is very high at 96.1 % in 2010 and has been consistent for many years. 3 pupils have been excluded in the last 10 years.
- The school has achieved Investors in People Award 2010, Rights Respecting Schools Award 2008, Arts mark 2007, Healthy Schools Silver Award 2008, Platinum Tooth Award 2011, Food for Life Bronze Award 2009, Silver Award 2011 and Bronze Eco Award 2008.
- 75% of the teachers are Catholic. 8 hold the Catholic Teachers' qualification or equivalent. There has been some staff mobility during the last three years as a number of experienced staff have been appointed to promoted posts in other schools. The experienced Head Teacher is currently the national president of the Catholic Association of Teachers, Schools and Colleges. and also a Section 48 inspector for the Salford Diocese.
- The after school club is signposted to an outside provider but employ a number of staff who work in the school in other capacities. There are many popular and very successful extra curricula activities. The partnership of these aspects has led to a developing role for the extended school service.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL

Corpus Christi is an outstanding Catholic Primary school. There is a genuinely warm and caring welcome given to all. All children are offered a traditional Catholic education in a friendly and supportive environment where differences and diversity are evident, welcomed and celebrated. The school ensures the faiths and cultures of pupils who are not Catholic are understood, respected and valued. The word of God is central to the life of the school. There are excellent parish links. Corpus Christi works collaboratively with the parish priest and the school is firmly at the heart of the parish. This ensures the pastoral and spiritual needs of the learners and their families are fully met. Parents expressed their enjoyment at the visit of the priest to their homes. The hardworking, head teacher and his senior leadership team have high expectations of adults and children. Together the hard working staff has created an ethos where everyone recognises the need to work together as a "family", showing love and concern for all its members. The children enjoy coming to school and the school council expressed how very proud they are of all the wonderful opportunities given to them. Pupils are friendly, polite and welcoming and their behaviour at all times is exemplary. They work hard to achieve the high expectations of the adults who work with them. They enjoyed every opportunity to share with the inspectors their work. The staff and pupils demonstrate a very high level of respect, care and service to others. Collective worship is a notable strength of the school. The school very successfully realizes the aims of its contemporary Mission Statement known, lived and witnessed by the whole community, "The school is in pursuit of excellence whilst loving God and others"

Improvement since the last inspection

There were no substantive issues to address from the last inspection

Capacity to improve

The governing body and head teacher, fully supported by his staff, share a clear vision for the future development of this successful school. They have the knowledge, commitment and enthusiasm to realise their vision. Therefore the capacity to improve is outstanding.

What the school should do to improve further

The school should continue to offer a quality Catholic education to its learners by implementing the priorities identified in its Religious action plan. Assessment linked to the new scheme being a priority. Pupil's independence should be encouraged and higher order questioning developed further.

Spirituality in Corpus Christi

Corpus Christi is a safe, secure and welcoming school. Children and adults know that they belong and feel trusted to blossom into the person God wants. Adults, led by the hard-working, head teacher, supported by an involved Parish Priest, assisted by a knowledgeable RE leader, set a tremendous example to the children through their daily lives in school. Children have a secure sense of the love of Christ and are respectful of each other. Children have a positive self image and demonstrate a sense of calm happy well being. The school council were eager to express their feelings, their knowledge and demonstrate a high sense of morality and responsibility. They extend the love of Christ to

the wider world. In Corpus Christi nothing is insurmountable when attempted in the love of Christ.

The quality of the word of God is good because:

- The Mission Statement is contemporary and regularly revisited. It is known, lived and witnessed to throughout the school and is evident at every level of the school. The policies and procedures have a significant impact on learning and the life of the school.
- The Religious Education of the pupils is the core of the Core Curriculum. The staffing and resources devoted to RE is of the highest standard, reflecting its significance and importance in the school.
- Standards are equal to those of Literacy at all Key Stages including Foundation Stage.
- Teaching is at least good across the school. Pupils are challenged to engage with the Big Questions of the purpose and meaning of life throughout the curriculum.
- Scripture is clearly known, understood and made relevant throughout the school. The staff and pupils demonstrate and can articulate the centrality and importance of the Word of God.
- Religious literacy is developed to a good level for most pupils.
- The home, school and parish links are innovative, inclusive, creative and effective. Pupils are actively trained in outreach to the local community.

The Inspectors cite the following evidence to confirm their judgements:

- Overall the standards of attainment, progress and hence achievement are good. As the curriculum is based on the mission it is challenging, interesting and fulfilling. The children are developing the age appropriate knowledge and skills.
- The school has begun to incorporate "The Way, The Truth and the Life" scheme. Standards of teaching are good and one lesson was outstanding. Staff share ideas and coach each other to increase their expertise and create challenge in the RE curriculum. Catholic teachers act as mentors to non catholic teachers.
- Interactive white boards were used well to support teaching.
- The school has introduced the "The Statements to Live By" These link to many of the high quality Acts of Collective worship in which the children participate.
- The school also invests in "The Wednesday Word" which is sent home on a weekly basis. This has helped improve the knowledge that many of our parents have of their faith.
- Standards in RE are consistently good. The children must be encouraged to further take the initiative and lead their own learning thereby developing their independence. Book scrutiny shows pupils take pride in their work! The children use bibles and other resources well and enjoy learning set prayers and special aspects of their faith. They are currently enjoying the challenges of the new mass format.
- There are regular visits into and out of school to enrich the RE curriculum such as participating in joint Diocesan masses and celebrations such as the Cornerstones, CAFOD and Year of Catholic Education Masses.
- The school is continuously enhancing the opportunities that children have to experience aspects of World Faiths. There have been visits to the Jewish museum and mosques.

The quality of welcome is outstanding because:

- There is a culture of welcome and all the pupils and staff demonstrates a very high level of confidence and outreach to all within the school community.
- Visitors are welcomed with love and respectful care. The importance of the dignity of the individual is clearly evident at all levels. Clear structures and procedures are

followed by all staff and pupils who consistently witness to Christ being at the heart of the community through excellent communication, relationships and a joyful, holistic approach to daily life.

- All members of the school community demonstrate a very high level of belonging and ownership of the school. Pupils are given a high level of responsibility in creating and sustaining the school's sense of welcome.

The Inspectors cite the following evidence to confirm their judgements:

- New families are welcomed into the school with warmth by the opportunities which are created to visit the school and meet the whole team. The hard working parish priest visits all families of the sacramental programme group. Parents voiced to the inspectors how wonderful and special this made them feel
- In the first few weeks of the school year parents and carers of children in the nursery and reception classes are invited to bring their child into school in the morning and stay until the children settle down.
- Parents are kept informed through school newsletters and the school website.
- Parents informed inspectors how much they enjoyed class and school assemblies which made them feel welcomed into school and often very emotional! They are well attended.
- The school shares their Feast day with the parish.
- Parents reported there are excellent nativity plays and Easter services that are of an extremely high quality.
- The school enjoys strong links with other local primary schools especially St John Bosco's in Blackley.
- Children of other faiths who attend Corpus Christi School are welcomed with dignity and respect. All children are taught to respect each other so that everyone at the school feels part of the Corpus Christi family. In year 4 children decorated prayer boxes to take home. Muslim children put a copy of their prayer to "Allah" in their box, while the rest of the class placed into their box a copy of the "Our Father".
- The school works with and welcomes friends and ambassadors from nearby Stanley Rd School sharing friendship and cultural exchange.
- The school supports the Good Shepherd Orphanage in Kampala Uganda.
- Members of the parish and the local community share in the life of the school. The past head teacher, Sister Mary Francis continues to offers a child supportive role by offering guidance to the children and families in the sacramental programme. Additional adults enrich school life by helping in classes, attending Fun Days and other school events such as Nativity and Easter productions.
- At Christmas time the school strengthens their special relationship with the Ena Hughes Centre, (a day centre of disabled adults) and the Sunshine Club for the over 60's, by singing for them.
- The established school choir takes every opportunity to sing in church, for the community and at local retirement and care homes. The children have been known to be accompanied by the musically able Parish priest on his guitar!
- Within school relationships are of the highest quality. Older children care for the younger ones to help to create fun and peaceful playtimes.
- A sense of belonging to the Corpus Christi family permeates throughout the school
- The school actively reaches out to the more vulnerable and through high expectations ensures every child reaches their full potential
- Movement between classes and to senior school are carefully and sensitively planned so that the children feel well prepared for the next step of their learning/life journey!

The quality of welfare is outstanding because:

- The staff and pupils demonstrate a very high level of respect, care and service to others.
- The structures and procedures ensure that all pupils and staff feel safe and are treated with respect and dignity.
- The Christ-centred ethos is loving, creative, highly positive and fosters understanding, empathy, forgiveness and respect for diversity.
- All pupils and staff feel safe and free to express their opinions and know that these will be valued.
- Importance and recognition is given equally to all. Pupil voice is appropriately represented at Governors' and SLT meetings.
- The budget, staffing and resourcing decisions demonstrate a consistent commitment to Christian stewardship throughout the school.
- The parents and friends play a highly significant part in school life and their contributions are valued throughout the school.

The Inspectors cite the following evidence to confirm their judgements:

- The physical, spiritual and mental well being of each person is central to the school's mission. In Year 2 the children identified the qualities Christ asks us to demonstrate each day to be "Rays of Sunshine" especially sharing the Love of God, and having a good heart. The school council discussed with inspectors the need to reach out with kindness to others for example those less fortunate in Uganda. A sense of justice and responsibility prevails within the school and it is immediately apparent on entering the school that the Holy Spirit is present. Children are caring and have a true sense of right and wrong.
- All the community of Corpus Christi support the lives of each other. The inspectors noted the outstanding love and respect all children had for one pupil with severe physical disabilities.
- The school is a very caring community where everyone is valued! Children during lessons listened respectfully to other pupils ideas. In Year 6 pupils discussed the need to make sacrifices for others proportionate to their current position. A great cross-curricular opportunity was taken to link with maths!
- Play partners and prefects look after and care for younger children. They encourage and pray for each other for example in the upper key stage two assembly children were given badges with the names of another child to pray for during the day.
- Calm support is offered by sensitive adults when children have difficulty remaining on task. Such role models ensure learning and loving friendships develop
- Playtime buddies lead play sessions and encourage friendships. The school council reported that on any occasion if a child feels worried there is always a grown up to talk to especially in the Friday afternoon "Teacher Talk Time" Also they proudly announced "We can always have a chat with the head teacher!" Pupils felt problems are always resolved.
- Maturity and self responsibility are strongly encouraged. This is evident in the work of the Class Councils and the School Council
- The school stresses the importance of reaching out beyond its own community so that children feel part of God's world. The charity work is a living example of this as children support, CAFOD, St Joseph's Penny and many chosen by the children in special circumstances, on their own initiative. During an assembly the head teacher read a letter of thanks from the Good Shepherd Orphanage for the £319 raised from the

children's toy sale and sent to those in need. Community cohesion is outstanding.

- The children of the school council confirmed they feel very safe! The school goes to great lengths to ensure as far as possible children are free from worry and a happy, calm atmosphere is the norm. The school provides a variety of activities in order to ensure that this occurs. Examples of this include the Breakfast Club, The Sunshine Club, and "Talk to a Teacher Time"
- The mission is continued after school with a host of excellent clubs that are extremely varied hence meeting the needs and interests of all the children.
- Pupils see the world as God's world and care for the environment and themselves very well. The school holds the Healthy school status, are a Rights Respecting School as well as a Flagship School for the Food for Life Project. The school has also achieved Silver Enhanced Model for Healthy Schools.
- Very good behaviour underpins the well being of all! This is achieved through the provision of a clear behaviour policy which respects the dignity of all children and is based upon the importance of forgiveness.

The quality of witness is outstanding because there is evidence of:

- Giving witness to a loving God who is the centre and way of life for all
- Recognising that God is with us in every aspect of school life
- Adults who see and express their roles in school as co-creators with God and as part of the redemptive activity of Christ in all aspects of school life
- Adults and pupils witnessing to the Mission Statement of the school which informs everything and is explicit in policies and the lived experience of the whole community
- Adults as role models of the school's mission and values and as key promoters of the ethos of the school for the pupils and the school community's witness to the wider community.
- Witnessing to the values of the Gospel such as reconciliation, compassion, justice, liberation, service, stewardship in every aspect of school life and in policies at all levels
- The staff and pupils feel confident and secure in their witness to Christ, the Gospel and the teachings of the Church.
- Pupils are confident in witnessing to the beliefs and values of a Christian community and are actively encouraged and supported in being pro-active citizens who participate in the decision-making processes at a local and national level.
- An explicit Catholic culture permeates the whole of school and is clearly identifiable through relationships, decision-making and actions.

The Inspectors cite the following evidence to confirm their judgements:

- The entire school community recognises that God is at the heart of the school in their actions and their relationships
- All live the word of God. The mission statement, is the powerful tool which is used to demonstrate how the school bears witness to a loving God! All members of the school family meet God each day and strive to meet all the challenges involved in this witness.
- The school mission is known and understood by all at appropriate levels. It is in 'child and adult speak', but is powerful in its ambition. It is discussed and shared in assemblies, in class and in RE lessons. The statement can be seen displayed in school.
- Relationships are very good at Corpus Christi and a strong sense of teamwork and belonging exist. There has been some staff mobility during the last three years as a number of experienced staff have been appointed to promoted posts in other schools. The school and

parish were described by parents as “a big family”, where relationships are built on love and trust.

- All teaching staff is given the opportunity to reflect upon what it means to work in a Catholic school and the vocation of the Catholic teacher. This is done through attendance at The Catholic Association of Teachers, Schools and Colleges Annual Study Conference.
- The children feel a part of a long and rich history. Many parents, indeed grandparents attended Corpus Christi. Friendships are an additional strength to the school.
- Children through reflection and prayer develop an awe and wonder of the love of God. Children showed a clear understanding of the beauty and mystery of God's world. Displays show the school has undertaken projects to enhance the environment and see its place in a global society.
- The children have a highly defined sense of fairness and justice. They know their responsibilities in terms of equal opportunities, stewardship and reconciliation.
- The inspectors noted at all times behaviour was outstanding. Children are respectful of each other. In Reception they willingly shared their toys.
- Adults working as a committed team have high expectations of the children and in this atmosphere the children thrive.

The quality of worship is outstanding because there is evidence of:

- Worship opportunities for pupils throughout the school (prayer, reflection, liturgies) including small and large groups – which are appropriate to their backgrounds and faith experiences
- The development of opportunities for pupils to worship according to their intellectual and life experience needs and stages of faith development
- Worshipping opportunities promote a strong community sense of service for each other
- Inclusive worship helps pupils to grow in confidence in prayer and develop a relationship with God.
- All of the pupils and staff are confident and skilled in planning and leading prayer and worship which is pupil-centred, creative, inclusive and relevant.
- There is a systematic and developmental prayer programme across the whole school which incorporates a wide range of traditions and ensures that prayer is age-appropriate, inclusive and relevant.
- All the staff are trained and supported in the formation and education of the prayer life of the school.
- A high level of creativity is evident in the worship, liturgies and celebrations, engaging all pupils and staff.
- The school actively prepares pupils to take a leadership role in engaging with families and parishes in prayer and worship.
- All the staff has access to a high level of dedicated funding and resourcing in order to develop prayer and worship.

The Inspectors cite the following evidence to confirm their judgements:

- The hardworking parish priest regularly celebrates the Mass which the children attend on a rota, in school and in church! The school shares the celebration of mass with the parish. Key events are celebrated with special masses; the beginning of each school year, our parish and school feast day, the New Year, Holy Days and at the end of the year. Parents and parishioners are welcomed into school to celebrate these occasions

together.

- During Advent, Lent and the Easter season the school holds assemblies, liturgies and times of reflection/ reconciliation that are all shared by the whole school community. The children are encouraged to voluntarily say the rosary during the month of October, rosary beads are on prayer focus areas in each classroom. The Stations of the Cross during Lent as well as take part in silent reflections during Holy Week.
- All children make Lenten and Advent promises as well as being encouraged to support worthwhile causes during these seasons of the church's year.
- There is a daily act of collective worship. These take place in a variety of formats and are thought provoking, uplifting experiences. In Year 3 water was symbolically used to wash away the mistakes **made recently at home**. A little "Sorry heart" was provided for the children to give a special person at home
- Children pray in classes, small groups and individually with great reverence, respect and thought. Those children who are not catholic either join in or show great reverence to the worship taking place.
- Pupils are comfortable with their feelings and have a good and knowledgeable vocabulary. Each class has a special area of focus. The children know many school prayers and compose powerful prayers for themselves. In year 4 there was a display of children's own prayers.
- The children have excellent listening skills.
- The children have a good awareness of the Liturgical year.
- Different opportunities arise to stimulate personal prayer e.g. Post a prayer, the prayer tree as seen in reception.
- The inspectors noted attractive displays outside the classrooms of the sign of the cross, Nativity news, Salford relay of prayer, children's rights, Judaism, the Sacramental Programme, the multi cultural nature of the school and Divali.
- The Gospel values are clearly evidenced throughout all the policies and procedures and have a significant impact on learning and the life of the school.