

**INSPECTION REPORT**

**Christ the King R. C. Primary School**  
**Holly Road, Walkden, Salford**

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Inspection date 28<sup>th</sup> March 2012  
 Reporting Inspector Mr. A. J. Sowerby  
 Inspection carried out in accordance with Section 48 of the Education Act 2005

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Type of School Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided School  
 URN 105950  
 Age range of pupils 3-11 years  
 Number on roll 232  
 Appropriate authority The governing body  
 Chair of Governors Mr Columb O’Shea  
 Headteacher Mrs Rosanne Eckersley  
 Religious Education leader Miss J. McAllister  
 Date of previous inspection November 2008

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<b>The Inspection judgements are:</b>	<b>Grade</b>	Explanation of the Grades 1 = Outstanding 2 = Good 3 = Satisfactory 4 = Inadequate
Overall effectiveness of the school	1	
Spirituality	1	
The quality of the Word of God community	2	
The quality of Witness	2	
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**

Christ the King Primary School is a slightly smaller than average sized primary school with a nursery in Walkden. It is situated in an area of mixed social and privately owned housing. There are currently 232 children on roll, including 30 in the nursery class, 119 boys and 113 girls. 85% of pupils are baptised Catholics. The indicative admission number is 30. The pupils who are aged 3-11 years are arranged in single age classes.

Most pupils are from White British backgrounds, with a smaller than average proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds. Currently the school has on roll a small number of Polish, Muslim and Greek Orthodox children. The proportion of pupils for whom English is an additional language is well below average and currently stands at 4%. 14% of children are entitled to Free School Meals which is below national expectations. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is 13% which is below average. The needs of these learners range from moderate learning difficulties, to emotional and behavioural difficulties. Currently there are 3 children with a Statement of Special Educational Need. The school context has changed in recent years as there has been a significant rise in the number of children attending the school who display behavioural and emotional difficulties.

There are good links with the local high school and the church. The parish priest is a frequent and regular visitor to the school and provides support to all groups within the school. There are 10 members of the teaching staff and 8 of the teachers are Catholic. 5 hold the Catholic Teachers' qualification or equivalent. Level of attendance is high at 95.9% in 2010 and has been consistent for many years. No pupils have been excluded in the last 5 years.

The school is part of a local learning network with other schools and works in partnership with initial teacher education establishments. The school holds a number of awards, including the Inclusion Quality Mark and Investors in People.

## **OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL**

Christ the King 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 good parish links. Christ the King 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 well met. The hardworking head teacher and her staff have high expectations of adults and children. Together with the hard working staff she 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 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 inspector 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.

### **Improvement since the last inspection**

All the issues from the last inspection have been addressed and fully implemented

## **Capacity to improve**

The governing body and head teacher, fully supported by her staff, share a clear vision for the future development of the 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 Development Plan, assessment linked to the new scheme being a priority. Pupils' independence should continue to be encouraged and higher order questioning developed further.

## **SPIRITUALITY IN CHRIST THE KING**

Christ the King is a safe, secure and welcoming school. Children and adults know that they belong and feel trusted to grow into the person God wants. All adults, led by the hard-working head teacher, supported by the 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 very 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 through their support of a variety of different charities. In Christ the King School all learning is seen in light of the school motto "To work is to pray" and as a result the school provides a variety of opportunities to all children to develop their God given talents in an atmosphere of mutual respect.

## **THE QUALITY OF THE WORD OF GOD COMMUNITY is good because:**

- The Mission Statement is clearly displayed throughout the school. It is known, lived and witnessed to 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 are of the highest standard, reflecting its significance and importance in the school.
- Teaching is 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 inclusive, creative and effective. Pupils are actively trained in outreach to the local community.

## **The Inspector cites the following evidence to confirm his judgement:**

- 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 two lessons were outstanding. Staff share ideas and coach each other to increase their expertise and create challenge in the RE curriculum. This was witnessed in one of the two outstanding lessons seen where the Year 6 children were challenged to extend their thinking about Catholic social teaching and how it is relevant in their daily lives. Catholic teachers act as mentors to non catholic teachers so as to ensure that the quality of R.E. teaching is good.
- 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 the parents have of their faith.

- Standards in RE are good. The children are encouraged to take the initiative and lead their own learning thereby developing their independence. This is particularly evident in Year 6. The children use bibles and other resources well and enjoy learning set prayers and special aspects of their faith. 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.
- The school has developed a clear and informative way to share good practice with the use of work portfolios to share different aspects of the school's work in R.E. This has recently been developed to encapsulate evidence that the school has of implementing the 5Ws across the school.

**THE QUALITY OF THE WELCOME COMMUNITY is outstanding because:**

- There is a culture of welcome and all the pupils and staff demonstrate 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 schools sense of welcome.

**The Inspector cites the following evidence to confirm his judgement:**

- New families are welcomed into the school with warmth by the opportunities which are created to visit the school and meet the whole team. Parents voiced to the inspector how wonderful and special this made them feel. As one child said " I love coming to this school because when I started here in Year 4 everyone helped me settle in very quickly and to make new friends"
- 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.
- The school has established a regular group called "Znajome" (friends who meet together) which supports the increasing number of Polish children and families connected with the school.
- Parents are kept informed and up to date about the curriculum and events in school through the use of the school newsletter and school website.
- Parents reported there are excellent nativity plays and Easter services that are of an extremely high quality.
- Children of other faiths who attend Christ the King School are welcomed with dignity and respect. Currently the school has a small number of Muslims and Greek orthodox children who attend the school. These are made to feel welcome and respected and as a result play a full role in the life of the school. As a result of the strong Catholic ethos all children are taught to respect each other so that everyone at the school feels part of the Christ the King family.
- The school works with and welcomes friends and ambassadors from nearby Springwood Special School sharing an inclusion programme for specific children.
- Members of the parish and the local community share in the life of the school. Catechists offer 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.
- Within school relationships are of the highest quality. Older children care for the younger ones, play

leaders and buddies work to ensure playtimes are fun and peaceful.

- A sense of belonging to the Christ the King 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 high 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 THE WELFARE COMMUNITY 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.
- The budget, staffing and resourcing decisions demonstrate a consistent commitment to Catholic 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 Inspector cites the following evidence to confirm his judgements:**

- The physical, spiritual and mental well being of each person is central to the school's mission. The school council discussed with the inspector the need to reach out with kindness to others for example those less fortunate in the world. 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.
- The school is a very caring community where everyone is valued! Children during lessons listened respectfully to other pupils' ideas. In Year 6 children had the opportunity to think reflectively about the importance of not judging people's actions without knowing the whole picture and that their choices in life must be made in the knowledge of what is right and wrong.
- Play partners and buddies look after and care for younger children. They encourage and pray for each other for example in the reception assembly when the older children supported them by helping with the singing. The children told the inspector that they have to look after the younger children because when they were little the older children were there to look after them and they must follow Jesus' command to treat others as you want to be treated.
- 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. Pupils felt problems are always resolved very quickly.
- Maturity and self responsibility are strongly encouraged. This is evident in the work of 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.
- At Christmas time the school strengthens their special relationship with outside groups, (a home for adults suffering from dementia and the local retirement homes) by singing for them.
- 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. 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.

- 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 THE WITNESS COMMUNITY is good because there is clear 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 act 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 Inspector cites the following evidence to confirm his 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 Christ the King and a strong sense of teamwork and belonging exist. The school and parish were described by parents as "a big family", where relationships are built on love and trust.
- The children feel a part of a long and rich history. Indeed, many parents attended Christ the King, and grandparents also have a long association with the school. 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. This was particularly evident in the way the school has developed its outdoor provision through the provision of a school growing area.
- The children have a highly defined sense of fairness and justice. They know their responsibilities in terms of equal opportunities, stewardship and reconciliation.

- The inspector noted at all times behaviour was outstanding. Children are respectful of each other. Adults working as a committed team have high expectations of the children and in this atmosphere the children thrive.

**THE QUALITY OF THE WORSHIP COMMUNITY 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 have access to a high level of dedicated funding and resourcing in order to develop prayer and worship.

**The Inspector cites the following evidence to confirm his judgements:**

- The 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, the parish and school feast day, 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 and 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 for example those witnessed in Years 4 and Year 5. 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 many classes there were examples of displays of the children's own prayers.
- Different opportunities are used to stimulate personal prayer e.g. Post a prayer, the prayer tree as seen in reception.
- Attractive displays which were seen around school are used to show and stimulate prayer opportunities. Hymns, music and singing enhanced the quality and enjoyment of prayer in school

- 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.