

INSPECTION REPORT

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**Inspection carried out Under Canon 806
and in accordance with Section 48 of the Education Act 2005**

Name of School **Sacred Heart RC Primary School, Lynwood Road, BB2 6HQ, Blackburn**

Inspection date 27th April 2018

Reporting Inspectors Peter Eavers, Patricia Ganley

Type of school	Voluntary Aided
URN	119510
Age range of pupils	4 - 11
Number on roll	174
Appropriate authority	The Governing Board
Chair of Governors	Paul Crewe
Headteacher	Michael Parker
Religious Education Subject Leader	Eleanor Lamb
Date of previous inspection	March 2007

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

CHARACTERISTICS AND CONTEXT OF THE SCHOOL

Sacred Heart RC Primary School is a single form entry primary school serving the parish of Sacred Heart, Blackburn. There are currently 174 pupils on roll, 163 of whom are Muslim children, 7 Christian, 3 Catholic and 1 Hindu. The headteacher, Religious Education subject leader and designated safeguarding lead are Catholics. Children come from a wide range of backgrounds, with 18 different languages spoken. 60% of pupils do not have English as their home language. 17% of pupils have been identified as having a Special Educational Need or Disability (SEND) and 3 of these children have Education Health Care Plans (EHCP). 14% of pupils are entitled to Pupil Premium. The headteacher joined the school in January 2016 after a period of considerable instability and lack of certainty about the school's future as a Catholic school. There is currently an acting deputy headteacher.

THE KEY STRENGTHS OF THE SCHOOL INCLUDE:

- **Happy, delightful children who have exemplary attitudes to their learning and treat each other with tremendous respect and dignity**
- **The passionate and committed leadership of the headteacher, supported by staff and governors, which has brought stability, security and cohesion to the school**
- **The welcome which all in the school community receive, based on shared values and a relentless commitment to community cohesion**
- **The integration and inclusivity of the Catholic provision which ensures that everybody feels valued and nurtured as a child of God and a member of the school family**

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL IS GOOD

Sacred Heart RC Primary School is a happy school which genuinely and consistently lives out its mission of bringing children from a diverse range of backgrounds and different faiths together as unique children of God, all loved equally in a caring and nurturing environment. The dedicated and hard-working headteacher provides clear and consistent leadership and a strong vision for the school. He is supported by a staff team who clearly care deeply about the children in their care. There is an all-pervading culture of welcome and the respect and dignity with which children and staff treat each other is a wonderful example of Gospel values in action. The children are happy and extremely well-behaved, with great enthusiasm for their learning. They are very knowledgeable about their own faith and the faiths of others and speak confidently and passionately about the need for tolerance and respect for those of different faiths. As one child put it, learning about different faiths "makes us wiser and helps us to make better decisions". Parents are very supportive of the work of the school. They feel welcomed and valued and are very appreciative of the love and care which their children receive. There are strong links with the parish and parish priest and celebrations are held regularly in the church. The school works hard to ensure that acts of worship are fully inclusive of all and focus on what unites children in their faith in God: "that Truth which enlightens all men" (*Nostra Aetate*). Children describe their school as welcoming, caring, loving, passionate, all exemplified by "togetherness".

THE QUALITY OF CATHOLIC LEADERSHIP IS GOOD

The Headteacher is passionate about and deeply committed to the school and the community it serves. He has brought much needed stability and consistency to the leadership of the school and has worked very hard to ensure that all within the school community feel genuinely welcomed and valued. He is highly regarded by the parents and children and his relentless focus on what unites children of different faiths and on the common values and messages of Christianity and Islam, has created a school which embodies true inter-faith respect, trust and dialogue, and shines as a beacon of unity for the community it serves. He is supported by senior leaders, staff and governors who share his passion, vision and loyalty to the school. The governing board have worked tirelessly to maintain Sacred Heart as a Catholic school and remained committed to its future through some turbulent and uncertain times. The Religious Education subject leader has only

recently taken on the role but, in that short time, has developed a very good understanding of the strengths and areas for development and has a clear plan to improve the subject still further. Pupils with leadership roles, such as School Council members, Head Boy and Girl, GIFT Chaplaincy Team, are very proud of, and speak eloquently about, their school and its values but there is scope to develop pupil voice and the impact of these leadership roles across the school still further. Governing Board meetings should now place greater emphasis on discussing and evaluating the Catholic life of the school.

THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL (incorporating Welcome, Welfare and Witness) IS GOOD

The welcome received by pupils, parents and visitors to Sacred Heart school is outstanding. The importance of the dignity of the individual is clearly evident throughout the school and there is a high level of outreach to all within the school community, recognising, valuing and celebrating diversity at all levels. Pupils and staff witness to Gospel values being at the heart of the community through excellent relationships and a joyful, holistic approach to school life which values each person as a unique child of God. Pupils are very proud of their school and feel that they belong to a special family. Children and parents new to the school are welcomed through a carefully considered and very supportive induction programme and the school works very hard to support parents and families new to the country. The very effective PAFOSH (Parents and Friends of Sacred Heart) committee works tirelessly to raise funds and involve parents in the everyday life of the school. The school supports a wide range of charities and fundraising activities such as the recent initiatives to support the British Heart Foundation and CAFOD have been very well embraced by the whole school community. There are effective procedures to keep children safe and support those children experiencing difficulties. Behaviour across the school is excellent and the ready smiles on the faces of the children are a feature of the school and a delight to witness. Children and staff show great respect for, care of and service to one another and demonstrate a high level of understanding, empathy and respect for diversity and the dignity of the individual. The GIFT chaplaincy team are proud of their roles and take them seriously, for example they described how they led the Easter Service in church. There is scope now to develop the leadership aspect of their work still further to have an even greater impact on the life of the school.

THE QUALITY OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (incorporating Word) IS GOOD

The Mission Statement, "Together We Shine", is known by all and has a high profile in the school. Children can describe eloquently how this statement reflects the school's emphasis on inclusivity and focus on what brings them together rather than what others may think would divide them. The school has worked hard and effectively to introduce and embed the Religious Education scheme, Come And See, and this is having a clear impact on the quality of children's work and the depth of their thinking and responses in lessons. Children take a pride in their work in Religious Education. Their books are well presented and standards are on a par with those found in their literacy work. Inspectors saw very good examples of children being encouraged to reflect deeply on religious themes through skilled questioning and good use of class, small group and paired discussions. Teaching Assistants make a significant contribution to the children's learning. Good quality religious displays support the children's learning and emphasise both the diversity and commonality of faiths within the school community. Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Education (SMSC) is evidenced across the curriculum and children are confident in expressing their own beliefs and values and the importance of respecting those of others. The importance of Sacred Scripture is respected and valued by children and staff. Spiritual and inspirational quotes are an uplifting feature across the school. The school has developed good links with the parish and a neighbouring Catholic school which are having a positive impact on the children's sense of belonging to a Catholic family. The school should now explore how it can be clearer about its unique Catholic identity in its curriculum and policy information for parents and through its outward-facing communications with the community.

THE QUALITY OF WORSHIP REQUIRES IMPROVEMENT

The school works hard to ensure that children from all faith backgrounds feel included and valued in acts of worship. Indeed, the emphasis on inclusivity and togetherness through simple techniques such as asking children to put their hands in their "prayer positions" and careful use of vocabulary in prayer is exemplary and worthy of sharing beyond the school. Children are respectful and reverent during prayer times and clearly place high importance on these opportunities. Whole school acts of worship are joyful and fully inclusive occasions and children sing hymns with gusto and great enthusiasm. The school makes good use of the church to bring all children together, such as for the Easter Service. At class level, children engage readily in prayer and reflect well on passages of scripture. Each class has a prayer corner which supports them in worship

and the school has a core list of prayers including the school prayer, which staff and children use at key times of the day. The school should now focus on improving staff and pupil confidence in planning and leading their own prayer and worship opportunities and moving towards a more developmental whole school prayer programme.

AGREED AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT

- **Ensure that Religious Education and the Catholic life of the school is given a higher priority in the school improvement plan, governing board meetings and governor involvement in school life**
- **Develop staff and pupil confidence and involvement in leading and developing a wider range of prayer and worship opportunities**
- **Ensure that all policies, procedures and communications give greater emphasis to the specific Catholic nature and designation of the school**
- **Further develop pupils in their leadership roles across the school**