

Inspection date 16th November 2012

Reporting Inspector Sister Judith Russi
Mr Gerard Keane

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

Type of School Catholic Primary
 URN 131285
 Age range of pupils 3-11 years
 Number on roll 232
 Appropriate authority The Governing Body
 Chair of Governors Mrs E Aspin
 Head teacher Mr Andrew Brown
 Date of previous inspection March 2009

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

CHARACTERISTICS AND CONTEXT OF THE SCHOOL

Our Lady of Mount Carmel is a Catholic Primary school serving the Catholic families of Ashton under Lyne. 62% of children are Baptised Catholic. All classroom teachers are Catholic or Orthodox Christian.

This is a slightly larger than average-sized primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals are broadly average and increasing. The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and who speak English as an additional language are slightly above the national average. The proportion of pupils supported by School Action Plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well below the national average.

The mobility of the school's population is slightly below the national average. The school has received the ECO Green Flag Award.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL IS GOOD

Our Lady of Mount Carmel is a good school with many outstanding features offering the children a rich faith experience which permeates all aspects of school life. The many challenges which have faced the school since its last inspection are now being met with effective leadership on many levels. The Governors and staff have dedicated themselves to the building up of a Catholic learning community which is rapidly improving and in all instances is either good or outstanding. The children receive a Catholic education which enables them to understand their place in the world as people who can influence, change and contribute to the common good. The head teacher leads the school with a clear vision and sense of purpose recognising the dignity and value of every member of the community. The schools welcome, inclusivity which focuses on personal development, ensures that all pupils receive an integrated Gospel based formation and education. Parents expressed a high level of commitment to the school because it is a Catholic school recognising that their children were respected and valued for their unique gifts and qualities.

KEY STRENGTHS OF THE SCHOOL INCLUDE:

- The Catholic life, relationships, behaviour and care for all within the school is outstanding.
- The quality of religious education and spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is outstanding.
- The outreach to parents and families in the local community is strength of the school and the welcome for all is outstanding.

THE QUALITY OF LEADERSHIP IS GOOD

The strength of the senior leadership team is rapidly developing. Significant developments in leadership at all levels are impacting on the overall effectiveness of the school as staff and pupils are trained in a distributed leadership model, where all members of the community are empowered and impacting on the success of the school. There is a strong sense of ownership and vision across the community. The school Mission Statement is under review. The Parish Priest contributes significantly to the Catholic life of the school. The very supportive Governing Body act as a critical friend and are involved at all levels in the life of the school. The Head teacher is acting as the RE Coordinator whilst he seeks to train a suitably qualified member of staff. There are a variety of opportunities for pupils to engage in the leadership of the school the latest being the introduction of a pupil led Chaplaincy team involving pupils from Years 5 and 6.

THE QUALITY OF WORD IS GOOD

The school is developing the RE scheme, The Way, The Truth and The Life. Teaching and learning was found to mainly good in Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. In Key Stage 2 teaching and learning was at least good with many outstanding features. Religious language was promoted in the best lessons and pupils were confident in their use of theological terms. Creative, interactive teaching strategies were employed to a high standard in Years 2, 3, and 6. The teaching and learning in Year 6 was outstanding. In the best lessons learning moved forward quickly and pupils clearly achieved the objective. A more interactive use of Teaching Assistants in all lessons would facilitate a higher level of learning support across the school. Assessment for learning is matched with literacy and standards were found to be equally good. Marking was clear in most books but needs to be further developed so that pupils know exactly how to progress through a more rigorous insistence on pupil responses to teacher comments. Pupils Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural education was found to be outstanding. The Religious Education budget is set according to the needs of the curriculum and the Catholic life of the school and is adjusted on yearly bases in line with other core subjects. All classes receive a minimum of 10% RE curriculum time.

THE QUALITY OF WELCOME IS GOOD

The welcome extended to all visitors is underpinned by a common vision built on Gospel Values and the Mission Statement. The school actively seek to engage with and support members of the community and this is particularly appreciated by the parents. Those interviewed spoke of the school as *'Always welcoming, warm and relaxed. No one is afraid to come if they have any worries.'* One parent pointed out that the vast majority of parents chose to send their child to the school because *'Mr Brown makes this school a very safe and happy place'*. Children know what to do if they have any worries and spoke about making sure everyone had a friend to play with. The pupil's sense of ownership and responsibility for what happens in their school was remarkable. They felt that they were heard and their views welcomed. The development of the school community room, which provides a positive and welcoming environment for meetings and activities, is a special feature of the school. Further development of a more systematic and planned involvement of parents particularly from ethnic minority groups, would enhance an already good provision to becoming outstanding. Members of staff demonstrate a keen sense of community affiliation and the strength and quality of relationships exemplifies respect for the dignity of all members of the school community. Children and parents are proud of their school.

THE QUALITY OF WELFARE IS OUTSTANDING

Staff and children demonstrate respect and care for each other and for the fabric of their school building of which they are justifiably proud. Children are confident that teachers will treat their concerns seriously. When asked about bullying, pupils stated that it was not an issue as everyone knew exactly what to do if there were any problems. The school's provision for safe-guarding and keeping children safe is outstanding. The provision for SRE is through the Diocesan Guidelines for EPR. Topics are well planned and delivered through PSHE, RE and Science. Pupils and parents spoke highly of the pastoral support for all and the open attitude of the school to listening to one another's needs. One parent commented on the impact of the values clearly expressed by the leadership of the school *'My child gave up winning in a race so that they could hold hands with someone who was lagging behind!'* When I challenged them they told me *'Mr Brown said it's not the winning that matters but the taking part.'* The ECO committee work hard to bring issues concerning the environment and good stewardship of the earth's resources to the attention of all members of the school community. All resource decisions are made to ensure the school's commitment to those in the greatest need. Behaviour and movement of pupils around the building is outstanding.

THE QUALITY OF WORSHIP IS GOOD

Children are provided with a range of opportunities to develop and enrich their prayer life including Masses, assemblies and collective worship during RE lessons. There is a focal point for prayer in each classroom. Staff are confident in leading prayer and worship. During Advent prayer services are held before school for all who wish. Training for celebrations of the Eucharist has been provided by the Chaplain and he continues to offer support and inset for prayer and worship in the school. Celebrations are designed to be child centred and involving all. An outstanding extended act of worship was seen in Year 4 where a very creative approach led to pupils being able to reflect and pray spontaneously. The introduction of the pupil chaplains is set to significantly impact on the Worship within the school. Pupils have allocated themselves to year groups and will be leading prayer and worship in these classes each week. The Parish Priest plays a significant role in helping staff and pupils to develop their prayer. The school has recently introduced a more systematic and development approach to pupil's formation in prayer and worship which is age related and pupil led. A further development in the provision of more regular Assemblies involving parents in the worship of the school community would enrich the whole school.

THE QUALITY OF WITNESS IS OUTSTANDING

Staff and pupils are confident in actively shaping Our Lady of Mount Carmel as a Catholic learning community. Witnessing to Christ and the values of the Gospel are evident in displays and children's work throughout the school. Children were found to be very confident and willing to speak about their faith and why it was important to them. One parent new to the school commented that *'Ever since they have come here they never stop asking me questions about God and Jesus'*. Pupils are able to relate the values of the Gospel to their daily lives. The values of the school have a very definite impact which extends beyond the school into the community. This was clearly seen in the activities which engaged the pupils in issues of justice and peace and care for the environment actively encouraging an earth care ethic. It is clear that the school stands as a witness to Christ's love, justice, forgiveness and compassion. A moving example of this was seen in the meeting of the pupil Chaplaincy team as they shared their development plan with their peers who had not been on the training day. The confidence and determination of the leadership of the team was outstanding. The support for families in difficulty or any trouble is exceptional. The work of charities such as CAFOD and CARITAS are fully supported.

AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT:

- Continue to develop the leadership of RE through the appointment of an RE coordinator in order to further develop the consistency of outstanding teaching and learning at all key stages.
- Further develop the already active Chaplaincy work through the introduction of pupil chaplains in order to further develop pupil leadership in the worship and celebrations linking home school and parish.
- Continue to share best practice in diagnostic marking in all classes.
- Continue to develop Worship to further involve parents and parish in the Assembly provision.

November 18th 2012

Dear Pupils

Thank you so much for the wonderful welcome you gave us when we came to visit you. So many of you helped us to find our way round the school and you were very welcoming. Your school is a good school with many outstanding features. This is because you and your teachers are working so hard to always do your very best.

You have a beautiful school. Your work is of a good standard and we could clearly see that you take your learning very seriously and are proud of your achievements. Your RE is good and in some classes it is outstanding. Your creative ideas are very good and we could see that you can make connections between what you are learning in RE with other areas of the curriculum. Thank you for letting us share so much of what you are doing. I was very impressed by your beautiful time of prayer Year 4. Thank you for inviting me to take part.

Your teachers are keen to help you develop the Catholic life your school even further and to do this they have started the exciting pupil Chaplaincy team to work with Father Firth in helping you to lead the Catholic life of your school.

God bless you all and have a really happy term.

Yours sincerely

Sr Judith Russi

(Section 48 Inspector)

Summary Report to Parents

On 16th November 2012 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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