

INSPECTION REPORT St Ann's RC Primary School Stretford

Inspection date 20th June 2014

Reporting Inspector Sister Judith Russi
Mrs Donna Kiernan
Mr John Thorpe

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

Type of School Catholic Primary

URN 133248

Age range of pupils 3-11 years

Number on roll 455

Appropriate authority The Governing Body

Chair of Governors Mrs Sheila Casey

Head teacher Mr John O'Brien

Date of previous inspection 2008

The Inspection judgements are:	Grade	Explanation of the Grades 1 = Outstanding 2 = Good 3 = Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness of the school	3	
The quality of Catholic Leadership	3	
The quality of the Word of God community	3	
The quality of the Welcome community	2	
The quality of Welfare	3	
The quality of Worship	2	
The quality of Witness	2	

The following pages provide reasons to support these judgements

CHARACTERISTICS AND CONTEXT OF THE SCHOOL

St. Ann's is a larger than average Voluntary Aided Roman Catholic primary school with 52 (2x26) Nursery places serving St Ann's parish and local area. The school welcomes pupils from a varied socio-economic area which extends beyond the parish boundaries. On entry assessments indicate that attainment is in line with national expectations. The majority of the children are of white British heritage with 352 of the 455 pupils being baptised Roman Catholic. However, there has been an increase in the numbers of pupils coming from more diverse ethnic backgrounds with the greatest number being from the Polish community. 20% of children are eligible for free school meals. 42 children are on the Special Educational Needs register. 7 children have Statements or Special Health Plans. There are 77 children for whom English is not their first language. 32% of children are not of White British Origin. The school has strong links to local High Schools with emphasis on ICT, Business and Enterprise and Music. The school is a leading member of the School Sport Partnership and was recently awarded the Active Mark for PE. 89% of adults working in the school are Roman Catholic with the remaining 11% being Christian.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL REQUIRES IMPROVEMENT

Since the last inspection the school has faced significant challenges which are now in the process of being addressed. The many good features of the school clearly indicate that there is much to celebrate whilst recognising the key areas for development. Observations indicated that attainment on entry to the school is broadly in line with national averages. Attainment across all key stages is variable. The school's self-evaluation demonstrates a tendency to overestimate standards and achievement. The school has recognised the variations in standards of teaching and the need for raising achievement of all pupils throughout the school and in particular the most able students. The ongoing formation and training of the governing body is required in order to make rapid improvement across the school as they develop their understanding of their roles and responsibilities and become more familiar with the life of the school. A diocesan review of governance is necessary in order to assist rapid improvement.

KEY STRENGTHS OF THE SCHOOL INCLUDE:

- Pupils clearly love their school and showed a high level of concern and support for one another.
- The relationships between staff and pupils were very good and resulted in very good behaviour for learning.
- The commitment and dedication of both the teaching and support staff is a strength of the school.

THE QUALITY OF LEADERSHIP REQUIRES IMPROVEMENT

The recently formed governing body is in the process of carrying out a skills audit which should assist in a more rigorous analysis of both the needs of the governing body and the school as a whole. Governors were found to be ready to address the key areas which will be possible once they are in possession of and able to use, all the necessary information to enable them to be more effective as the key strategic decision makers for the school. A more robust strategic framework for setting priorities, creating accountability and monitoring progress needs to be developed. The review of and tightening of targets and key performance indicators would accelerate progress across all areas of the school. The focus should be on significant strategic challenges and opportunities for school

improvement. Avoidance of unnecessary detail and peripheral issues will assist in staying focused on particular areas for development and improvement whilst remaining true to the schools core mission. In order to better understand the school's data, governors and senior leaders would benefit from further regular training in the use of and familiarity with the school's own internal tracking of pupil progress as well as external data. The role of the governor as critical friend, seeking to understand and support, needs to be revisited to ensure that all governors feel confident to challenge, question and hold the leadership of the school to account.

Governors and the senior leadership of the school would benefit from an urgent review of the distribution of responsibility across the senior leadership team to ensure a more even and achievable distribution of roles and responsibilities. The leadership of religious education could become outstanding with the availability of more time to give to staff training, monitoring and evaluation across the school. Pupils across the school are keen to take on leadership roles and are ready to be given greater freedom and responsibility.

THE QUALITY OF WORD REQUIRES IMPROVEMENT

The school mission statement ..."*We the family of St Ann's; rejoice in our learning, striving for excellence. We challenge ourselves, follow Jesus and empower each other to be the best we can be. Motivate, learn, inspire.*" was reviewed and rewritten recently with the full involvement of all pupils, staff, governors and parents. It is well known, celebrated and used in the daily life of the school as a focus for encouraging everyone to be their very best. A mission statement book has been given to each class for pupils and staff to record on a regular basis how they are meeting its challenges.

The overall quality of teaching and learning in Religious Education across the school was found to be variable. Where teaching was good or better; speaking and listening was encouraged, discussion was promoted, the classroom environment reflected high standards of religious literacy and differentiation was evident in planning, delivery and outcome. Good subject knowledge was delivered imaginatively to maximise pupil interest. Teachers' questions probed pupil knowledge, skills and understanding. Misconceptions and errors were skilfully turned into learning opportunities. In two classes, the pupils' knowledge and understanding of scripture was of a significantly high standard. All pupils would benefit from a greater emphasis on independent learning and being encouraged to question at a deep level. The school has introduced a 'Big Question Book' for each class to record their questions and write up the responses in question time. This intervention should serve to encourage the development of higher order questioning. Where this was in evidence, pupils were clearly achieving at a higher level. Additional adults were deployed to effectively meet the differing needs of pupils. Where teaching and learning was not good, understanding of how to differentiate appropriately, in particular, required improvement and as a result the learning needs of a significant proportion of pupils were not being met. In some classes pupils were kept sitting on the mat for the greater part of the lesson with little evidence of learning or reflection taking place. There were limited opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their own learning. Marking did not support pupils' learning and progress. Targets and expectations did not challenge and were not stimulating. Throughout the observations, work scrutiny and discussions with pupils there was little or no evidence of assessment taking place. Oral and written feedback, whilst being affirmative, did not help pupils know their next steps for learning. Support staff were not used consistently or effectively.

Progress is being made on planning SMSC interventions across all areas of learning. Further training of all staff would help to ensure a deeper understanding of the use of SMSC interventions through natural links and connections with the rest of the curriculum rather than teaching RE in other subject areas. Pupils were clearly being taught to recognise good, challenge injustice and respond to those in need. Monitoring, tracking and assessment of RE has been identified by the school as a key area for future development. The dedicated and skilled RE coordinator is aiming to ensure that RE is the lead area of learning but requires more time to address the key areas for development. RE is well funded and resourced in line with other core subjects and receives the required 10% of curriculum time.

THE QUALITY OF WELCOME IS GOOD

St Ann's is a happy, joyful place of learning. Children and adults actively reach out to one another. Pupils and staff were found to be confident and welcoming towards visitors, keen to tell the story of their school and were clearly very proud to be at St Ann's. Pupils spoke of how happy they were to be able to look after children who had newly arrived and spoke of the challenges that they knew these children faced. *"When someone arrives and they don't speak English we try to get someone who can speak their language and everyone in the class tries to learn some of their words so we can at least say something."* Parents are invited into the school on numerous occasions as well as the school operating an open door policy. A significant number of parents help in the school running activities such as an Indian dance club, another provides a photography club, others hear reading and support at whole school celebrations, assemblies, liturgies and activities. Diversity and difference are valued and seen as a strength of the community. St Ann's actively reaches out to those children in the greatest need, supporting both the family and children.

THE QUALITY OF WELFARE REQUIRES IMPROVEMENT

St Ann's school community clearly demonstrates respect and care for one another. The school is highly involved in a wide range of charitable activities both at home and abroad. Pupils are frequently engaged in activities which encourage the making of 'right choices' and 'staying safe'. However, concerns were identified during the inspection regarding safety across the school premises, the levels of supervision of children on site before school and the awareness of all staff regarding correct procedures to ensure health and safety needs to be urgently reviewed. The carrying out of a rigorous review of health and safety at every level should ensure that the issues that were highlighted during the inspection are addressed. The SRE provision is currently under review as the school has already identified that the present provision needs to be enhanced. The school is planning to involve parents and teachers in awareness and training for the delivery of SRE across the school next year. Pupils feel secure in expressing their opinions, hopes and fears to adults and recognised that these were taken seriously. In response to questions regarding bullying, pupils showed that they would not tolerate it but their responses demonstrated the need to revisit the procedures for reporting bullying incidents earlier. Parents needing particular help felt that they were well supported and cared for.

THE QUALITY OF WORSHIP IS GOOD

The planning and provision for prayer throughout the school has been enhanced by the appointment of Prayer Leaders in each class. The added dimension of Year 6 Prayer Leaders working with the part time chaplain (1/2 a day a week) across the school is further enriching the provision. Prayer and worship is a strong feature and at the heart of the daily life of all that happens. This would be further enhanced by giving the pupils more responsibility in leading prayer and worship which has a tendency to be too reliant on teachers at present. Prayer is a part of RE lessons and each room has a prayer focal point reflecting the time of the year. Evidence was seen of a wide variety of prayer celebrations, liturgies and para- liturgies. Father Pat Greasley is

seen as an integral part of the school life, and frequently visits classes for the celebration of the Eucharist and special occasions. The school also visits the Church and contributes to parish based liturgies and services. The high level of funding dedicated to the development of prayer, liturgy and worship is now enabling the staff to develop this area further both in their own formation and training and through the Prayer Leaders. The designated quiet room in nursery is well used by the younger children for reflection and the outdoor reflection area/prayer garden are important features of the school and appreciated by all who use them. The recent purchase of a set of rosary beads for everyone in the school was greatly appreciated and is helping the pupils to pray both in school and with their families.

THE QUALITY OF WITNESS IS GOOD

Witnessing to Christ and the values of the Gospel are central to the life of St Ann's and this is clearly having an impact on the community. Gospel values are to the fore in displays and children's work throughout the school. Children and staff were found to be confident and willing to speak about their faith. The provision for Chaplaincy is developing through the Prayer Leaders and would benefit from embracing the full range of possible Lay Chaplaincy provision. The Year 6 Prayer Leaders proudly wear their new and distinctive tops which mark them out. The work in supporting CAFOD, CARITAS (St Joseph's Penny), Mary's Meals, Macmillan Nurses, represent just a few of the many areas where the school witnesses to a commitment to the Gospel. Pupils know that their questions about the faith will be heard and as one pupil said *'I can ask any question I like.'* Pupils enjoy living their faith in action and are fully supported by the school in doing so. Whilst the encouragement of all adults to facilitate the children's confidence in witnessing to the faith is a feature of the school, some staff would benefit from access to training in the teachings of the Church particularly concerning contemporary issues today. This would enhance their ability to respond to the many very perceptive children who ask challenging questions about today's world. Teachers' responses to the few occasions when pupils were distracted or not doing their best was always in a spirit of compassion, understanding and forgiveness, which quickly enabled the pupil to return to their best behaviour. Teachers and support staff were living examples of learning being a process which brings life to the full.

AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT:

- Review the policy and procedures for health and safety to ensure that the appropriate risk assessments are undertaken and that safety is at the highest level.
- Accelerate the development of training for all governors so that they are able to be fully effective in their roles and responsibilities.
- Review the structure, roles and responsibilities of all members of the SLT so that they are able to contribute and develop their roles in line with their strengths and the needs of the school.
- Raise standards in curriculum RE by ensuring consistently high quality teaching and developing the standardisation, levelling and tracking of assessment.

July 3rd 2014

Dear Pupils

Thank you so much for the wonderful welcome you gave us when we came to visit you. We had a very interesting day and really enjoy listening to you tell us what you enjoy and are learning.

There are many very good things happening in St Ann's because you are striving to live out your mission statement to be the very best you can be. We were very impressed with your behaviour, respect for each other and the way you clearly are so proud of your school. To help you to improve further your teachers are going to develop your RE so that it is the leading area of learning and excellence across the school and invite you to become better independent learners.

You told us that everyone needs to be treated with the same care and respect and that you wanted everyone one to feel safe in your school. In order to do this your teachers are going to review all the health and safety procedures to make sure everyone knows exactly how to stay safe.

To all St Ann's pupils we would like to say 'Thank you' and keep up your very high standards of behaviour, respect and love for one another.

Yours sincerely

Sr Judith Russi

(Section 48 Inspector)

SUMMARY REPORT TO PARENTS

On the 20th June 2014 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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