

INSPECTION REPORT

ST MARY'S RC PRIMARY SCHOOL, MILNER ST. SWINTON, M27 4AS

Inspection date	21 st June 2013
Reporting Inspector	Sister Judith Russi Mrs Margaret O'Brien

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

Type of School	Catholic Primary
URN	105957
Age range of pupils	3-11 years
Number on roll	261
Appropriate authority	The Governing Body
Chair of Governors	Mr Mark Brady
Headteacher	Mrs Dee Raynor
Date of previous inspection	July 2008

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	1	
The quality of Welfare	1	
The quality of Worship	1	
The quality of Witness	1	
<i>The following pages provide reasons to support these judgements</i>		

CHARACTERISTICS AND CONTEXT OF THE SCHOOL

St Mary's is an average sized Catholic Primary School serving the parish of St Mary's in Swinton. Since the last inspection the school has undergone significant changes in staffing and leadership. A large majority of pupils are White British with an increasing number of pupils from minority ethnic groups. There are currently 19 different languages spoken by the pupils in school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average. The number of pupils at school action is below average and those at school action or with a statement of special educational need is also below average. The proportion of looked after children and children on child protection plans is very low. Mobility is below average. Attainment on entry to the school is at the age-related expectations for the majority of pupils. In 2012, Government 'floor' targets were exceeded. The school has been awarded Arts Council Silver award 2010-13, Bronze School Games Kite Mark award 2012, FMSiS 2010, International Schools Award –Foundation level 2011 and Bronze Eco Friendly school award 2012. The school provides extra-curricular activities at lunchtime and after school which include guitar, netball, football and choir. A Change for Life club also runs for half a term during the year.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL IS GOOD

The Governing body and staff of St Mary's have dedicated themselves to the building up of a Catholic learning community which is good with many outstanding features. The overall Catholic life of the school has developed considerably since the previous inspection offering the children a faith experience which permeates all aspects of school life. There is a planned review of the Mission Statement, which will provide a more contemporary and child friendly statement. However, the school is clearly united and driven forward by a strong commitment to a Christ centred approach at all levels. The children receive a Catholic education which enables them to understand their place in the world as future stewards who can influence, change and contribute to the common good for all people. The Governors, Head teacher and leadership team lead the school with a vision and sense of purpose recognising the dignity and value of every member of the community. The passion for learning and personal development ensures that all pupils receive an integrated Gospel based formation and education. The leadership of the school have a clear understanding of their next steps as the school strives for excellence. Those parents who were interviewed spoke of the excellent communication from the school which helped to make them feel very much at the heart of the community. Parents felt *'a high level of belonging'*, and that this was indeed *'our school'*.

KEY STRENGTHS OF THE SCHOOL INCLUDE:

- **Welcome, relationships, behaviour and care for all within the school are outstanding.**
- **Prayer, worship and celebrations are outstanding in their creativity and child centred leadership.**
- **The witness and confidence of the pupils in expressing their beliefs and values was outstanding and in some cases exceptional.**

THE QUALITY OF LEADERSHIP IS GOOD

The mission of the school is clearly lived as part of the Church's mission in education. The Governing body are highly committed to taking the school forward. Governors are beginning to be part of the more rigorous monitoring and ongoing evaluation of the progress of the school. The newly appointed Chair of Governors clearly recognised the need for further training and support from the diocese for governors to help in their task of moving the school from good to outstanding in all areas. Continuing professional development, mentoring and support at all levels has improved and developed significantly since the previous inspection. Pupil leadership is working well through the School Council, Guardian Angels, Playground leaders and Prefect monitors. This will develop further through the introduction of the planned Chaplaincy team and through pupil involvement at

Governor and senior leadership levels through appropriate attendance at meetings. The Head teacher is presently the RE coordinator. However, this is under review and will be delegated next year. Processes and procedures are in place for assessment for learning which are being further developed through a more consistent approach to diagnostic marking, success criteria and the introduction of personalised targets to move all teaching and learning to an outstanding level across the school. The targeting, monitoring and challenging of the most able pupils will also serve to further raise standards.

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 be good overall and in some cases outstanding. A more consistent use of assessment for learning, success criteria and diagnostic making in RE would enable pupils in all classes to have a clearer understanding of how to achieve their next steps for learning. Further development of more challenging tasks and an increase in independent learning would enable the most able pupils to excel. In the best lessons, highly creative teaching and learning strategies, the development of language in RE and higher order questioning skills, enabled many pupils to achieve at a good and in some lessons, very high level. Pupils had a good understanding of scripture and were often able to make the links between the scripture passage they were using and their own personal lives. The school has fully embraced the Year of Faith themes through a wide range of activities. Pupils learn about a range of other faiths through the RE scheme. The proposed mapping and evaluation of spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) education across all key stages will further develop and enhance the already good and very good learning seen in art, music design technology and literacy. Pupils were readily able to talk about the beliefs and values of the Catholic community and were proud to explain or refer to the 5W's without prompting. Behaviour for learning was found to be outstanding in all lessons and around the school.

The Religious Education budget is in line with other core subjects and set according to the needs of the curriculum and the Catholic life of the school. All classes receive a minimum of 10% RE curriculum time.

THE QUALITY OF WELCOME IS OUTSTANDING

The welcome extended to all visitors and all members of the school is outstanding and underpinned by a common vision built on Gospel values and the Mission Statement. Pupils and adults demonstrate a sense of joy and happiness. Parents spoke of their love for St Mary's and being actively encouraged and invited to play a key role wherever possible. There is a high level of parent involvement in fund raising activities as well as in the fuller life of the school. The open door policy by the Head teacher was greatly appreciated by pupils and adults. One pupil spoke of their happiness in how they had been helped to feel at home in St Mary's; *'I know I can always come and talk to Mrs Raynor and she will listen to me...she says I'm her success story'*. The pupils' sense of ownership and responsibility for what happens in their school was remarkable. Pupils and staff play a key role in hosting events with friends and families and ensure that hospitality is always outstanding. Children, parents and staff are proud of their beautifully cared for school. This is further reflected in the lovely grounds and prayer garden designed with wood carvings crafted by the site manager.

THE QUALITY OF WELFARE IS OUTSTANDING

St Mary's staff and pupils demonstrate a high level of respect and care for each other. The use of the nurture groups in school 'Time to talk', ensures that all children have the opportunity to grow and develop their confidence and self-esteem. Forgiveness and reconciliation are central to the growth and development for the whole community. Specialist support is brought into the school to assist families in any particular need. 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 and PSHE is set within the context of the sanctity of life and the dignity of the person made in the image and likeness of God. Quality before and after school care is provided for families needing this support. The school actively reaches out to those in need at home and abroad, through a wide variety of charity work such as working with and fund raising for local charities including Caritas, Loaves and Fishes, Marie Curie, Macmillan Cancer Care and CAFOD.

THE QUALITY OF WORSHIP IS OUTSTANDING

The whole school policy for prayer and worship is of an excellent standard. The use of different creative approaches ensures a wide range of opportunities to develop and enrich the prayer life of the community. The quiet reflection points around the school highlight the centrality of prayer in the daily life of the community. Times of prayer and reflection during RE lessons and the whole school assembly provide excellent opportunities for prayer and worship. Pupils and staff worked well together in leading celebrations and were able to create a sense of prayerful calm and focus. All year groups have a clear understanding of the liturgical life of the school. Each of the main times of the year is celebrated by the whole school community through very creative child centred liturgies. Pupils, staff and parents expressed their commitment to the school especially in the outreach to families through experiences such as the Sacramental Programme and the weekly 'Wednesday Word'. Parents and staff are looking to develop stronger links with the parish to encourage a greater accessibility and participation in the sacramental life. The leadership of the school, working closely with the parish, hope that the development of the Lay Chaplaincy team will also assist in developing these links further. Prayer and worship are well resourced. Training and support are ongoing for both pupils and staff.

THE QUALITY OF WITNESS IS OUTSTANDING

Witnessing to Christ and the values of the Gospel are central to the life of St Mary's. The confidence of pupils in discussing matters of faith and values was found to be excellent and clearly reflected the leadership's priority of ensuring all staff are supported and trained as educators in Catholic education. The competence and confidence of Year 6 pupils was outstanding and significantly beyond their years. They spoke of times when neighbouring children had challenged them about being at a Catholic school and demonstrated a great maturity in the way in which they had engaged with these challenges, showing respect whilst being true to their own beliefs. The use of the weekly '*Statement To Live By*' serves as a unifying focus across all age groups. Pupils spoke freely of being proud to be Catholic, and that it was very important to be part of a Catholic community. They were able to link home, school and parish with ease. Displays of children's work showing the integration of faith, life and learning demonstrate that the values of the school have a very definite impact which extends into the global Church community. It is clear that the school stands as a witness to Christ's love, justice, forgiveness and compassion.

AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT:

- **Continue the development of assessment in the RE programme, through the setting of personalised pupil targets for each topic, success criteria and end of topic challenges to encourage a higher level of independent learning in all classes.**
- **Further develop marking in RE to ensure it is diagnostic enabling all pupils to identify next steps in all classes.**
- **Implement and develop the lay and pupil chaplaincy team to further develop the leadership of the Catholic life of the school and links with the parish.**

June 23rd 2013

Dear Pupils

Thank you so much for the wonderful welcome you gave us when we came to visit you. 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 and you look after one another so well. You have a beautiful school and we could see how proud you were of your achievements in the exciting displays around the school. We loved your prayer garden.

Congratulations Year 3 on the assembly celebrating your sacramental journey. Thank you for inviting us to take part. 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. To help you develop even further your teachers are going to help you with your RE targets, success criteria and assessments.

You are working hard in your RE lessons and your families told us how seriously you take your learning. We could see that you can make connections between what you are learning in RE with other areas of the curriculum and your daily lives. Thank you for letting us share so much of what you are doing.

We were pleased to hear that your teachers and Father Lomax would like to introduce a pupil Chaplaincy team to enable you to develop your leadership skills and the Catholic life of the school even further. We could see how confident you all are in witnessing to your faith and your willingness to take responsibility. I am sure this will be a great success.

We would like to thank all of you who came to see us and share so much about your school.

God bless you all and have a really happy end of term and summer holiday.

Yours sincerely

Sr Judith Russi

(Section 48 Inspector)

St Mary's RC Primary School, Swinton

Summary Report to Parents

On the 21st June 2013 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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