

**St Joseph and St Bede RC Primary School, Danesmoor Drive, Bury, BL9 6ER.**

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Inspection date 8<sup>th</sup> December 2015

Reporting Inspectors Mrs Jackie McNally  
Mrs Marie Kwaitkowski

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

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Type of School Catholic Primary  
 URN 105336  
 Age range of pupils 3-11 years  
 Number on roll 336  
 Appropriate authority The Governing Body  
 Chair of Governors Mr M Joyce  
 Headteacher Mrs E Connolly  
 Religious Education Subject Leader Mrs H Aspinall  
 Date of previous inspection September 2010

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<b>The Inspection judgements are:</b>	<b>Grade</b>	Explanation of the Grades  1 = Outstanding 2 = Good 3=Requires Improvement 4 = Inadequate
Overall effectiveness of the school	2	
The quality of Catholic Leadership	1	
The quality of the Word	2	
The quality of the Welcome	1	
The quality of Welfare	1	
The quality of Worship	1	
The quality of Witness	1	
The following pages provide reasons to support these judgements		

## **CHARACTERISTICS AND CONTEXT OF THE SCHOOL**

St Joseph and St Bede RC Primary School serves the parishes of St Marie's and St Joseph's. The school welcomes children from a variety of faith backgrounds; 67% of whom are Catholic, 14% are Christian, 3% of other faith backgrounds and 14% of no faith background. The proportion of pupils supported by pupil premium funding is 25% and 13% of children are identified as having Special Educational Needs.

## **OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL**

St Joseph and St Bede RC School is a good Catholic school with significant outstanding features. The headteacher, staff and governors have high aspirations for the school and have worked as a cohesive team to bring about positive changes. There is a strong commitment to developing every child academically, socially and spiritually and the school successfully creates a supportive and nurturing learning environment in which every child can thrive. Children's behaviour is outstanding and they demonstrate confidence and enthusiasm; during the inspection the children were a credit to the school and their parents. A positive and energetic atmosphere permeates every aspect of the school and this creates a secure and happy learning environment in which all members of the community feel welcomed. The parents feel that belonging to St Joseph and St Bede is like being part of a family and this is a strength of the school.

The teaching of religious education overall is good and the children demonstrate a secure religious knowledge and faith commitment. Children are provided with a range of opportunities to worship and explore their faith further. The school engages parents in the religious development of their child by welcoming them into school to worship together and providing information about the RE curriculum. The children are confident and enthusiastic learners who bear witness to the Gospel values.

## **THE KEY STRENGTHS OF THE SCHOOL INCLUDE:**

- The ethos, relationships, behaviour and care for all within the school is outstanding.
- The headteacher, staff and governors have high aspirations for this Catholic school; they genuinely want the best for all the children and work as a cohesive team to achieve this aim.
- There is a strong community spirit and all members of the community bear witness to the Catholic faith through their relationships with each other.

## **THE QUALITY OF CATHOLIC LEADERSHIP IS OUTSTANDING**

The quality of Catholic leadership is outstanding. The leadership of the school clearly recognises that Christ is central to all aspects of school life and all staff are committed to creating a loving and nurturing environment for all children; this is a significant strength of the school. The headteacher provides strong, but supportive leadership and it is clear that she has the support of the whole staff; this teamwork has helped to bring about many positive improvements in recent years. Governors are well informed about the Catholic life of the school through the headteacher's reports and they are committed to deepening the children's faith. The leadership team are beginning to evaluate the religious life of the school more rigorously and they show a clear commitment to establishing an outstanding Catholic school. The newly appointed RE subject leader is passionate about her role and has worked hard since her appointment to monitor and evaluate the subject, but to move the quality of Word to outstanding, the senior leadership team need to focus on developing differentiation and the quality of marking.

Pupils are confident and enthusiastic about taking on responsibilities and they are able to talk about how they supported each other and people in the wider community. The pupil chaplains are excellent role models for other children and they are excellent ambassadors for the school.

### **THE QUALITY OF THE WORD IS GOOD**

The quality of the Word is good overall. The quality of lessons taught is good with some outstanding teaching observed during the inspection. Children are prompted to reflect on big questions and there are opportunities for children to share ideas and talk about their faith. The quality of teaching and learning in EYFS is a particular strength of the school and the activities planned are creative and engaging; including both child initiated and adult led activities. The children in EYFS could confidently talk about the Christmas story and showed an excellent level of religious knowledge. Throughout the school the lessons observed showed that the children have a good knowledge of religious education, as well as knowing what it means to follow Jesus.

Various samples of children's work from across the school were examined during the inspection. Work set was at an appropriate level and matched to the pupils' ability and standards were broadly similar to those of literacy. In order to develop teaching and learning further, differentiation needs to be included in the planning and learning opportunities as there is currently limited evidence of differentiation in the pupils' books. All books were marked but in order to further develop marking, children need to be provided with comments which invite them to explore their faith further or provide them with next steps in their learning. Children have a good awareness of cultural differences and other world faith traditions, and this could talk about the religions they had studied. In all classes the children produced work of a good quality; shared their views and listened to each other with respect and interest. In every class, support staff were used effectively to support children and promote further learning. Behaviour for learning throughout the school is outstanding. Pupils are clearly enthusiastic and keen to learn. Pupils enjoy talking about their faith background and felt at ease doing so. The quality of religious displays in the school reflects the school's commitment to Catholic teaching and the spiritual development of the child.

The headteacher, staff, governing body and parish priest have worked together to enable the school to develop a vision about how RE should be taught in the school and there is a strong commitment to religious education. Links between home and school are strong and the parents are provided with regular information about the religious education curriculum.

### **THE QUALITY OF THE WELCOME IS OUTSTANDING**

St Joseph and St Bede is a school where everyone feels welcome and all members of the school community demonstrate a great sense of pride and belonging. Parents feel welcomed into the school and enjoy attending school masses and assemblies. The school has achieved the Leading Parent Partnership Award which recognises the efforts they make to help families and carers. The EYFS carry out home visits and this helps to make the children feel welcome and establishes quality relationships with parents. The school has excellent links with the parish and the children talked enthusiastically about how much they enjoy the parish priest coming into school. The school environment is an inviting and stimulating place for children to work and children's behaviour is outstanding. Relationships between children and staff are strong, bearing witness to Christ being at the heart of the community. As a result of a strong Catholic ethos, the children show respect and consideration for each other and the importance of the dignity of the individual is clearly evident. Children of all faiths are welcomed into the school; their individual beliefs and values are respected and pupils recognise, value and celebrate diversity as evidenced in their interfaith week. The parents talked about how the school reaches out to vulnerable members of the school community.

### **THE QUALITY OF THE WELFARE IS OUTSTANDING**

It is evident that pupils at St Joseph and St Bede receive outstanding care, guidance and support. The school is committed to creating a learning environment where children feel safe and secure, so that they can achieve their full potential. The school uses part of the pupil premium grant to provide a part time pupil support mentor and support for families is also provided through family support learning sessions, the before and after school club and the Caritas Family Worker. Vulnerable pupils are well cared for and supported. The pupils said that they are confident that if they have a problem they can speak to any member of staff and they knew that their opinions were valued. This view was supported by the parents who said that they feel able to talk about any concerns and they were confident that they would be dealt with

effectively. Members of the school council and chaplaincy team are enthusiastic about their role and they demonstrate a real care for their school and their peers, and are enthusiastic about their responsibilities. They offer practical solutions for improving the school and are generous with their time and commitment. The calm support offered by adults ensures learning and good relationships are cultivated. The Christ-centred ethos is loving, highly positive and fosters understanding empathy and forgiveness. The school is fully inclusive and supports all children.

### **THE QUALITY OF THE WORSHIP IS OUTSTANDING**

Prayer and worship form a central part of school life and all members of the school community gather together to celebrate worship during assemblies, class collective worship and school masses. The assembly observed during the inspection was well prepared, interactive and stimulating. The children were respectful and reverent; they shared the Word of God and praised God with beautiful singing. The quality of teaching and learning observed during the assembly was excellent, with 'big questions' used effectively to prompt further thinking. One child said, 'I feel peace when I go to assembly, because we are all gathered together'. The class collective worship provided opportunities for listening to the Word of God, quiet reflection and sharing ideas and thoughts. In each classroom, there is a focal point for worship and during the day there are a range of prayer opportunities for children. The children talked with enthusiasm about Fr Francis and how he leads their acts of worship.

The headteacher stated that they are committed to 'bringing the church to the families' and they are very successful in this mission. There is a commitment to developing the faith through home school partnerships. The use of nativity boxes and rosary boxes is an excellent example of how families are encouraged to share their faith. The parents feel that they are welcomed and encouraged to attend masses, assemblies and collective worship and they valued this opportunity. The pupil chaplains are committed and enthusiastic about their role and the fact they wear a school chaplain jumper raises their profile in the school community. In order to develop worship further the school needs to continue to increase pupil involvement, so that children have more opportunities to plan, write and deliver acts of collective worship.

### **THE QUALITY OF THE WITNESS IS OUTSTANDING**

St Joseph and St Bede is an outstanding witnessing community. The governors, staff and pupils are confident and secure in their witness to Christ, the Gospel and the teachings of the Church. Throughout the inspection the children were observed treating each other with respect and consideration and at all times the children's behaviour was outstanding. The staff are clearly committed to providing a nurturing and supportive environment for children, so that they can develop into secure and confident individuals. The relationships between staff and children are very positive and the children said that they feel safe and happy in school.

The parish priest makes a significant contribution to the spiritual life of the school, working in close partnership with the staff and children to help develop a witnessing community. The school encourages and supports its pupils to be proactive members of its community and the children talked about how they have supported CAFOD, St Joseph's Penny and international fund raising activities. The chaplaincy is appropriately resourced, relevant and positively impacts upon the life of the school.

### **AGREED AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT:**

- To continue to develop the role of pupils, so they have the skills to take on a greater leadership role in the planning and delivery of collective worship.
- To continue to develop the role of the newly appointed subject leader, so that religious education is rigorously monitored and evaluated in order to secure improvement, particularly in Word.
- Further develop the quality of teaching and learning by providing the children with differentiated activities and ensure that marking provides children with opportunities to reflect upon their next steps in learning.

8<sup>th</sup> December 2015

Dear Children,

Thank you so much for welcoming us into your school. We really enjoyed spending the day with you and I am pleased to be able to tell you that you have a good school with many outstanding features.

We were very impressed by the care and respect you showed for each other and the special way you make everyone feel welcomed and valued. The positive and caring way you treat each other is a true reflection of being part of a Catholic community because you are following in Jesus' footsteps. Throughout the day you continually told us how much you enjoyed being in school and this makes your school a very special place to be. Your behaviour throughout the day was excellent and you are a credit to your school and your parents, well done.

We really enjoyed watching your lessons because you showed a great deal of enthusiasm for the topics you were studying and you confidently shared your ideas. Your teachers and teaching assistants work extremely hard and you told us that you really like the lessons that the teachers plan for you. The standard of your work is good but the teachers are going to help you improve your work further by providing you with more detailed feedback when they mark your work. This will help you to explore your faith further and give you the opportunity to think about how you can improve your work in the next lesson.

We also enjoyed watching your assembly and collective worship. You show a great deal of respect and reverence when you pray and your singing is beautiful. Well done to the pupil chaplains who are helping you to develop your faith, they are excellent role models to follow.

We could see that you are very proud of your school and you are happy to be part of your school family. Your school has a lovely Catholic atmosphere and you should be very proud of yourselves and your school.

God bless.

Mrs McNally                      Mrs Kwaitkowski  
(Section 48 Inspectors)

### **SUMMARY REPORT TO PARENTS**

On Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> December 2015 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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