

INSPECTION REPORT

St. Mary's RC Primary School, Club Lane, Chipping, Lancashire, PR3 2QH.

Inspection date 8th February 2016

Reporting Inspector Jackie McNally
 John Thorpe

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

Type of School Primary
 URN 8883734
 Age range of pupils 4-11 years
 Number on roll 33
 Appropriate authority The Governing Body
 Chair of Governors Mr A Lund
 Headteacher Mrs M. Morris
 Religious Education Subject Leader Mrs M. Morris
 Date of previous inspection February 2011

The Inspection judgements are:	Grade	Explanation of the Grades 1 = Outstanding 2 = Good 3=Requires Improvement 4 = Inadequate
Overall effectiveness of the school	2	
The quality of Catholic Leadership	2	
The quality of the Word	2	
The quality of the Welcome	2	
The quality of Welfare	2	
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 Mary's RC Primary School is a smaller than average primary school which serves the parish of St Mary's, Chipping. There are 33 pupils on roll, the majority of whom are White British heritage. Pupil numbers have remained fairly stable over the last three years. The most significant faith group is Roman Catholic. There are no pupil premium children and only a small number of pupils with additional needs. The school is located in a small rural village where there is a strong community spirit.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL IS GOOD

St Mary's is a good Catholic school, where there is a commitment to developing each child academically, socially and spiritually. The governors, staff, parents and children all see themselves as belonging to a family and they are very proud of their school. The school extends a warm welcome to visitors and prides itself on being a school which serves the local community. The staff and governors show a commitment to nurturing and supporting every individual child by offering them an education enriched with additional opportunities for personal and social development. The whole school community bears witness to the Gospel values through their relationships with each other. The governors are extremely supportive of the headteacher and are proactive in their role by visiting the school and assisting in lessons.

The children are enthusiastic about their learning and they are keen to achieve success in school. The quality of teaching and learning is good, but could be further developed by ensuring the children are offered a rich variety of differentiated writing activities in RE. A continued focus on developing rigorous marking and feedback procedures would also help to raise standards further. The children are respectful and reverent when taking part in collective worship activities and are developing the skills to independently lead acts of worship.

KEY STRENGTHS OF THE SCHOOL INCLUDE:

- The ethos, relationships, behaviour and care for all is a strength of the school.
- The children are provided with a wide range of enrichment activities and there is a strong commitment to developing happy and confident pupils.
- The welcome extended to pupils, parents, visitors and members of the community.

THE QUALITY OF CATHOLIC LEADERSHIP IS GOOD

The quality of Catholic leadership at all levels is good. The leadership of the school clearly recognises that Christ is the central to all aspects of school life and all staff are committed to creating a loving and nurturing learning environment for the children. The headteacher monitors and evaluates the quality of religious education and produces the SEF for the governors, who then discuss the judgements. In order to develop a more evaluative approach to working, the SEF needs to be completed together, taking into consideration the evidence available from lesson observations, scrutiny of work and monitoring activities. There are currently limited opportunities for moderation of religious education work with other catholic schools and the school would benefit from adopting a shared approach to moderation.

Pupil leadership has been developed through a wide range of opportunities to participate in groups such as the school council, eco council and fair trade group, and the children are enthusiastic about their roles in these groups. In order to develop their leadership skills further, the children now need to be provided with the skills to take a more proactive role in the organisation of collective worship and other liturgical events.

THE QUALITY OF THE WORD IS GOOD

Lessons are based on the scheme, 'The Way, The Truth and The Life', but in order to enhance the religious education curriculum further, all teachers need to differentiate the activities so that they cater for all ability

levels. Consideration also needs to be given to how the scheme can be delivered in a more creative way using a variety of different activities. Various samples of children's work from across the school were examined during the inspection. Standards in RE are broadly similar to those in literacy, but the school needs to remain focused on achieving even higher standards of written work in RE. Moderation activities with other Catholic primary schools would help to strengthen the staff's knowledge of expected standards. All books were marked, but in order to further develop the quality of 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.

During the inspection there was evidence of good questioning skills by teachers and children were always given time to provide individual responses to questions. They shared their views and listened to each other with respect and interest; and they could confidently communicate their ideas. Children could talk about their previous learning in religious education and spoke with enthusiasm about their knowledge of other faiths. Behaviour for learning in lessons is excellent throughout the school and the pupils were keen to participate fully in lessons. Support staff are used effectively to support religious education. Displays and artwork around the school are witness to the central importance of catholic education.

Procedures have recently been put into place to monitor and evaluate standards in religious education and lesson observations have taken place. This more rigorous approach will help to ensure that the school offers the best quality religious education to all children. There are strong links between the parish, home and school and the religious life of the school is actively promoted.

THE QUALITY OF WELCOME IS GOOD

St Mary's prides itself in the welcome it extends to pupils, visitors and members of the community. There is a family atmosphere in the school and every child is valued as an individual. This was observed throughout the inspection, especially during lessons, where every child was asked to contribute their ideas. The children are very proud of their school. New members of the school community told us that they were made to feel welcome and this helped them to settle into school quickly. The children talked confidently and with great pride about their school, they said that they enjoyed their lessons and all the extra activities that were provided for them. As a result of the strong Catholic ethos, the children show respect and consideration for each other and it is clear that the children view themselves as belonging to a family.

The parents interviewed spoke with deep regard about the welcome they receive in school and how they are invited to share in school masses, assemblies and other events. Parents feel that their views are listened to and that everyone in school is approachable. The school welcomes the local community and there are strong links with the local High School.

THE QUALITY OF WELFARE IS GOOD

A strong Catholic ethos permeates the whole school and this is manifested in the caring and supportive relationships between all members of the school community. The school places a high priority on allowing all pupils to express their opinions and thoughts; this was observed during the assembly and lessons. The children said that they rarely have any concerns or worries, but if they did, they would feel confident that they would be helped by the staff to resolve them. The children are sensitive and supportive of each other and they talked about the importance of friendships. Throughout the inspection the children's behaviour was excellent, they were a credit to the school and their parents. Safeguarding is a high priority and the children are provided with a safe and secure learning environment. The children are being encouraged to eat healthily as part of the Lancashire Healthy Schools Award and each month they have the opportunity to make a shared healthy meal. This opportunity was observed during the inspection and the children were enthusiastic about sharing their meal with the Governors and visitors to the school.

Children learn that it is important to help others, particularly those less fortunate and they take an active role in the organisation of fund raising events. The children are encouraged to become a member of various groups: fair trade group, eco-council, chaplaincy group or student council and this helps them to understand how they can make a positive contribution to their school and the wider world.

THE QUALITY OF WORSHIP IS GOOD

Prayer and worship are central to school life. Members of the school community gather together to celebrate collective worship during assemblies, class based worship and school masses. There are collective worship areas in each classroom, which contain a good range of resources and the school mission statement is displayed throughout the school. Care must be taken, however, to ensure that any vocabulary displayed in the collective worship areas is differentiated according to the children's ages and that the language used is understood by the children.

The collective worship and school assembly observed during the inspection included pupil involvement. The children were encouraged to share their ideas, views and to contribute their own prayers. The older children are beginning to prepare their own worship and they undertake this role with enthusiasm. In order to improve the quality of worship further, the children need to be provided with the skills and independence to draw together ideas on a theme and create their own worship, using music, reflection, power points, readings and stories, rather than relying on published materials. The role of the pupil chaplain could also be developed further, so that older children are leading high quality worship for younger classes and helping with the preparation of assemblies and other liturgical events.

THE QUALITY OF WITNESS IS GOOD

St Mary's prides itself on being a school which serves the local community. The Gospel values are central to the life of the school and the whole school community share and celebrate these values. A Catholic culture permeates the whole school and is clearly evident in relationships, decision-making and actions. Staff and children demonstrate care and respect for each other and witness to justice, compassion, reconciliation, love and forgiveness in their relationships. At all times during the inspection the children's behaviour was excellent. The staff have established a nurturing and supportive environment where every child feels value and respected. The children stated that they feel happy and safe in school. The school encourages and supports its pupils to be proactive citizens, who contribute to the decision-making process. It is commendable that every child belongs to a group: chaplaincy group, eco-group, healthy schools, student council or fair trade. The children were keen to talk about how they helped their school and the role they played in organising activities for the local and global community.

AGREED AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT:

- Further develop marking so that children are provided with opportunities to reflect upon their next steps in learning.
- Ensuring that children are provided with a rich variety of differentiated activities.
- To provide pupils with the skills to further develop their leadership role in the planning and delivery of collective worship.
- To rigorously monitor and evaluate standards in religious education. Ensure that moderation judgements are secure through a collaborative approach with other catholic schools.

St. Mary's RC Primary School

8th February 2016

Dear Children,

Thank you so much for making us so welcome when we visited St. Mary's. We really enjoyed spending the day with you and sharing the Chinese meal with you, particularly because you had prepared the meal.

You will be happy to know that we think you have a good school. This is because you make everyone feel welcome and you obviously all care for each other. You and your teachers work hard to make your school a very special place and we can see that each one of you is valued. Everyone in school is treated as an individual and you are always given the chance to give your views which is very important. It is clear to see that you have a lovely Catholic school and that you are very proud of everything you do. You also told us that your friends are very important to you and they help to make you happy in school.

Your teachers are very proud of you and they are working really hard to provide you with a good education. We have asked your teachers to make sure that they plan for different ability groups and that they continually strive to help you achieve the highest possible standards of work. In the assembly and your lessons it was lovely to see how you felt confident enough to share your ideas. We enjoyed watching your worship and we have suggested to your teachers that you now need to be given even more opportunity to plan and deliver class and school worship.

We know your parents are very proud of you too! They know that your excellent behaviour and your hard work help make St. Mary's a very happy school.

So well done to you all and please make sure you all keep smiling!

God Bless

Mrs McNally and Mr Thorpe

(Section 48 Inspectors)

Summary Report to Parents

On 8th February 2016 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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