

INSPECTION REPORT

Holy Cross and All Saints RC Primary School

Email: education@dioceseofsalford.org.uk

Inspection date 6th December 2013

Reporting Inspectors Sr Judith Russi
Mr Martin Johnson

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

Type of School Catholic Primary
 URN 105952
 Age range of pupils 3-11 years
 Number on roll 240
 Appropriate authority The governing body
 Chair of Governors Mr Kevin Morrissey
 Head teacher Mrs Annemarie Bell
 Religious Education Co-ordinator Miss Clare Euston
 Date of previous inspection January 2009

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 of God community	2	
The quality of the Welcome community	1	
The quality of Welfare	1	
The quality of Worship	2	
The quality of Witness	1	
The following pages provide reasons to support these judgements		

CHARACTERISTICS AND CONTEXT OF THE SCHOOL

Holy Cross and All Saints serve the families of the former parish of Holy Cross and St Mary's borders. It is an average-sized primary school with full time nursery provision. Most pupils are from White British heritage, with an increasing proportion coming from minority ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals have been increasing over the years at a faster rate than the national average and is now above the national average. The proportion of pupils requiring special educational needs provision is low. Pupil stability in terms of pupils leaving and joining the school at times other than at the start of the academic year has improved markedly since 2010. The school's deprivation indicator is well above the national average. The current Head teacher took up post in 2011.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL – GOOD

The Governing body and staff of Holy Cross and All Saints are fully committed to the building up of a Catholic learning community which is good with many outstanding features. The overall Catholic life of the school is further enhanced by the significant contribution made by parents and parishioners to ensure a secure foundation and a safe environment on which the faith and well being of the whole school community can grow and flourish. The Mission Statement and school motto '*Love Jesus, Love Learning, Love Life*' is further developed through the explicit living out of the values of '*Love, Faith, Hope, Truth, Joy, Prayer, Mission, Justice, Peace, Mercy and Community*' which are displayed, known and lived as a driving force for the community. The conscious option for those on the margins or in the greatest need is considerable. The children and staff give a significant amount of time to understanding how they must strive to influence, change and contribute to the common good for all people. The Governors and Head teacher are working closely together to evaluate their service and leadership to the school community. The leadership of the school have a clear understanding of their next steps as the school strives for excellence. The parental and parishioner contributions to the life of the school are considerable.

THE KEY STRENGTHS OF THE SCHOOL INCLUDE:

- The Catholic life of the school which has fostered and developed a strong partnership between home, school and parish is inspirational.
- The explicit, known and lived commitment to Christian values across all aspects of the school is outstanding.
- Relationships, behaviour and care for all within the school are outstanding.

THE QUALITY OF CATHOLIC LEADERSHIP IS GOOD

The school is led by an inspirational Head teacher who is motivating and inspiring her team to continually strive for excellence. She actively seeks to identify the gifts and talents of all throughout the school and through the development of a distributive leadership model has empowered leaders to take ownership and lead improvements across the school, ensuring they have opportunities to evaluate and reflect on the impact of their work. Rigorous and effective systems are in place to ensure children are fully supported and can achieve their full potential.

Governors are fully supportive and growing in their understanding and ability to move the school from good to outstanding. They are becoming increasingly more confident in providing high levels of professional challenge and support. The introduction of the pupil chaplaincy team has done much to develop pupil leadership and encourage innovation, challenge and risk taking. There is a very active and thriving school council. Pupil voice is valued and used to shape aspects of school improvement work. Leadership is being developed among the pupils through Year 6 acting as special friends with Reception children, sharing letters, play and learning sessions. Older children run a daily library club open to KS 1 & KS 2 children and pupils from Year 6 support play in EYFS during play time and lunch time.

THE QUALITY OF THE WORD OF GOD IS GOOD

The school delivers the RE curriculum in a creative and innovative way enhancing 'The Way, The Truth and the Life' with a broad range of teaching and learning materials in order to meet the diverse needs of the pupils. Overall the standards of attainment, progress and achievement are good. Although assessment for learning, monitoring and evaluation are rigorous across all Key Stages, a more consistent approach to allowing pupils to be active learners, leading their learning would further improve the levels of learning. The RE coordinator has a very good understanding of next steps in order to take the pupils learning to a consistently outstanding level across all Key Stages. Where teaching was found to be very good or outstanding, lesson objectives were clear and success criteria were accurately differentiated. Pupils were highly motivated and engaged in a variety of thought provoking activities. Pupils were challenged to work independently, as well as in teams or pairs. Clearly learning was fun. Where teaching and learning was good pupils were enjoying their learning, expectations were clear and activities were well matched. However, a greater emphasis on pupil's independent learning and initiative would result in more rapid progress. All teachers are focusing on religious literacy which is having a positive impact. In the best lessons open ended questioning at a high level left children feeling challenged to think and reflect deeply. The strong emphasis on SMSC can be seen throughout the curriculum, resulting in pupils being able to make links and connections between beliefs and values in many areas of learning. Teaching about other faiths occurs within the curriculum and is enriched by outside visitors and global links.

SRE is delivered through the 'In the Beginning' programme. Parents were consulted before its introduction and support the curriculum through the work completed as part of the home learning links. The SMSC provision is evident in much of the teaching and learning throughout and has been identified as an area for further mapping and review.

THE QUALITY OF WELCOME IS OUTSTANDING

The welcome extended to all who come to Holy Cross and All Saints is outstanding. The preferential option for welcoming those on the margins and in need of help is evident throughout. Staff are proactive in going out to ensure those due to start at the school are made to feel valued, welcome and loved. The school excels in keeping parents fully on board with the life of the school, their child's progress and well being. Parents spoke at length about the fact that this was the school of choice because they felt needed and appreciated. *'The best thing about this school is that we can all get involved'* One parent made the important point that *'Nana's and Grandparents are important here. They need us'*. Parents/carers are regularly welcomed into school for assemblies, prayer services and Masses. Parishioners are also invited to school Masses and feast days. Invitations are extended through

letters, texts and information via the school website. The inclusion of parishioners in the life of the school is outstanding. They act as a valuable link with the parish and actively engage in the preparation for the sacraments.

THE QUALITY OF WELFARE IS OUTSTANDING

Welfare was found to be outstanding across all areas of the school. The very prominent references to the school values result in everyone having a clear understanding of the dignity of each person made in the image and likeness of God and respected and valued as such.

Children spoke extensively about the processes and procedures for responding to behaviours that would not be acceptable in their school. They were clear and demonstrated ownership for each other's happiness and well being. There was a strong sense that this is a community where justice is tempered with mercy and founded on the desire to live the call to reconciliation and healing. Pupils enjoy coming to school because, as some say, *we look after each other here because we are a family*'. Behaviour is exceptionally good. There is a very happy and joyful atmosphere.

Children and families are supported through difficult times. There is a CARITAS family support worker available every Tuesday morning to work with children and families providing counselling and advice. Some children have taken part in art therapy sessions. These have helped to explore emotional issues on a one to one basis through the medium of art and in a non-invasive environment. Excellent safeguarding procedures are in place and are monitored effectively by senior leaders. The school designated safeguarding officer ensures that vulnerable pupils and families receive support and attends meeting and training to ensure requirements are met. The leadership of the school respond quickly to the particular needs of the more vulnerable children and or their families. In response to a request from a Governor and in light of the fact that a parent has a life threatening heart condition, school recently installed a defibrillator on site. A well developed Buddy system is in place to ensure all children are included. PSHE and citizenship for all children is further developed through Circle time. Being good stewards is a high priority and the pupils are keen to remove any litter around school, cultivating their class vegetable patch, recycling and conserving energy.

THE QUALITY OF WORSHIP IS GOOD

Good progress has been made in developing the life of prayer and worship throughout the school. The leadership team are working hard to develop the skills of both staff and pupils in order to lead liturgies and to enable pupils across the school to feel confident in designing and leading prayer and worship. Prayer is at the heart of the school and teachers are keen to develop this further through the introduction of a systematic development programme which introduces the children to a wide range of traditions and experiences. The creation of a school chapel is much appreciated by all. The pupils have a good understanding of the liturgical cycle and take part and contribute to para liturgies and celebrations at the appropriate times of the year. The Lay adult chaplain leads a prayer meeting every Wednesday which is well attended and invited families to attend a Rosary prayer group before school during the month of October. The pupil chaplains have taken a lead on developing opportunities for prayer and worship and expressed the hope that they will soon be able to do much more.

THE QUALITY OF WITNESS IS OUTSTANDING

The Mission statement *"We are of the gospel, educating children in order for them to grow and reach their full potential as fulfilled people in Christ."* is visible throughout the school.

The recent formulation of the school motto reflects the collective belief and values of the whole community. It is as the pupils said *'The way we live together. 'Love Jesus, Love Learning, Love Life'*. Relationships are excellent at Holy Cross and All Saints. The inclusive and safe atmosphere enables pupils to feel free to express their views and feel valued. Children's behaviour is excellent both on and off site which is highlighted from positive feedback from residents in the local area and excursions. Involvement in charity work at home in the local area as well as overseas is extensive. Members of the chaplaincy Team organised a Pyjama Day to raise money for a charity project which they researched and were keen to support. The money collected has been used to adopt a child in Africa. Most recently a child in Year 2 displayed a wonderful example of witnessing his faith when he wrote to the Head teacher after watching an episode of *'Newsround'* describing the recent devastation from the typhoon in the Philippines. He asked if school would hold a non uniform day to raise funds to support families affected by this disaster. This letter was read to pupils during the weekly assembly and a non – uniform day was held a few days later raising over £250 for the appeal. Staff are confident in leading the children in developing and witnessing to their faith and are actively review new ideas for the future.

AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT:

- Continue the ongoing training and development of the Governing Body in order to move the school from good to outstanding in all areas
- Continue to develop the leadership potential of pupils through the Pupil Chaplaincy programme in designing leading specific areas of prayer and worship
- Further develop the already good practice of promoting independent learning at all levels through creativity and the development of higher order thinking skills.

December 14th 2013

Dear Pupils

Thank you for making our visit to Holy Cross and All Saints so enjoyable when we came to inspect your school for the Bishop. We really enjoyed being with you. Holy Cross and All Saints is a good school and some areas of what you do individually and together you are outstanding.

We enjoyed being part of your lessons and were sorry not to see everyone. Thank you for showing us so much of your work and activities. We could see that you are very proud of your school and all that you have achieved together. We were particularly impressed that you thought that the most important part of your learning and life together was when some of you said that the most important thing was that *'everyone felt wanted and valued'*. You also said that you were really pleased to have your own special chapel. I know the Bishop will be delighted to hear this.

Your teachers are really helping you to learn very well and I was very impressed by your excellent relationships and behaviour. It was good to see so much of your Mission Statement and school motto coming through everything you are learning; your relationships and the special way you make everyone feel at home.

You are doing well in you RE and we were very impressed with the work in your books and around the school. You are a very creative school. Well done! The teachers are going to help you to do even better by working with you to develop you thinking skills and develop further as independent learners. Many of you have a very good knowledge and understanding of your faith so this should help you to do even better. A last word must be to the chaplaincy team. We were very impressed by your commitment and leadership. Your school is very proud of you.

God bless you all and have a really happy Christmas and New Year.

Yours sincerely

Sr Judith Russi
(Section 48 Inspector)

Summary Report to Parents

On Friday 6th December 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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