

INSPECTION REPORT

Corpus Christi RC Primary School, Stanley Road, Chadderton, Oldham OL9 7HA

Inspection date 1st March 2017
 Reporting Inspector Mrs. Anne Heard
 Mr. Brendan Hennessy

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

Type of School Primary School
 URN 105718
 Age range of pupils 3-11
 Number on roll 349
 Appropriate authority The Governing Body
 Chair of Governors Reverend Father Dermot Heakin
 Executive Headteacher Mr. Christopher Hanson
 Head of School Mrs. Helen Williamson
 Religious Education Subject Leader Mrs. Jane Gifford
 Date of previous inspection January 2012

The Inspection judgements are:	Grade	
Overall effectiveness of the school	1	Explanation of the Grades 1 = Outstanding 2 = Good 3=Requires Improvement 4 = Inadequate
The quality of Catholic Leadership	1	
The quality of the Word of God	1	
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

Corpus Christi is a voluntary-aided Catholic school serving the families of Chadderton. There are currently 349 children on roll which is larger than the average sized primary school. The school is oversubscribed and there is a waiting list for all year groups. The number of baptised Catholic children attending the school is increasing - this is currently 61% of the total attending. The area is one of high social deprivation and is categorised in the poorest 20% nationally, with 31% of children eligible for pupil premium funding. Pupils attending the school from minority ethnic groups is above the national average. The school continues to ensure that children in all age groups receive an outstanding education. The children's attainment on entry to the school is significantly below the national average but throughout their time at the school this is overcome and most children leave with good or outstanding levels of progress and attainment. There are 14 teachers of whom two-thirds are Catholic and they are supported by 16 teaching assistants. At all levels continuing professional development is offered to develop skills and ensure future succession planning is in place.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL IS OUTSTANDING

Corpus Christi is an outstanding Catholic primary school, where the gospel values are truly witnessed in all areas of the school. The school is led by a dynamic senior leadership team including the religious education subject leader, whose clear and challenging vision is known and understood by all. In recent years there has been a significant change over of staff. This has enabled the appointment of key figures to support the drive to become outstanding. The Catholic ethos of the school permeates all aspects of school life. The strong sense of community and team spirit fosters a cohesive approach which benefits the whole community. Children are challenged to aspire to be the best and this is evident in the excellent progress and attainment of pupils across all key stages. The pupils are friendly, happy and confident; they take pride in their work and their school environment. They have a strong sense of belonging and responsibility. They talk about excellent relationships between teachers and children and they feel they have a significant voice in making positive changes to the school.

KEY STRENGTHS OF THE SCHOOL INCLUDE:

- Inspirational and talented leadership at all levels, including governance
- Commitment of the whole staff team to work together and live out the school's mission in all aspects of school life, ensuring all children are challenged and motivated
- Children are focused, polite and well-mannered. They share a positive attitude for learning and strive for the pursuit of excellence
- The school is proactive in building positive partnerships with parents and the parish. The pivotal role played by the parish priest in the spiritual life of the school is fundamental

THE QUALITY OF CATHOLIC LEADERSHIP IS OUTSTANDING

Corpus Christi Primary School is an outstanding Catholic school that has the "pursuit of excellence" in all aspects of school life as its core mission. The school is led effectively by an inspirational senior leadership team under the guidance of a dedicated and aspirational executive headteacher. His drive to provide outstanding opportunities for all is endorsed by his hard working and dynamic senior leaders. The executive headteacher currently supports another Catholic school in the borough and it is through his transformational leadership qualities that he is able to relinquish control of the day to day running of the school, knowing that Corpus Christi continues to be an outstanding Catholic school. A governor commented: "Corpus Christi is the Northern powerhouse of Catholic education." The executive headteacher, supported by the exceptional head of school and senior

staff members lead staff at all levels with a shared and aspirational goal for excellence. Since the executive headteacher took up post 3 years ago, the school has been on a meteoric journey where all aspects of school life have seen significant improvements. "The pursuit of excellence whilst loving God and others" is underpinned by prayer and worship and grounded in the Gospel values. The experienced, knowledgeable and hard-working governing body offer challenge and support. They are well informed and are regular visitors to the school, ensuring they have a strong awareness of all aspects of school life. They share the executive headteacher's desire to provide the best Catholic education for all. This effective team collaboration with a shared vision has been very successful in its pursuit of excellence. Effective monitoring and challenge by leaders and governors has ensured that the highest expectations are demanded and are consistently achieved. All leaders are firmly committed to a sense of accountability and mission.

THE QUALITY OF THE WORD IS OUTSTANDING

When you enter Corpus Christi school you are very quickly immersed in the word of God. Scripture quotes adorn the walls and it is evident that you are entering a Christ-centred environment. The school mission statement is well known by the whole community and is referred to consistently in school policies and procedures. The children are introduced to the word of God at the start of the day when the gift pupil chaplaincy team broadcast takes place. On the day of the inspection (Ash Wednesday) the theme of sacrifice and fasting was explored. The broadcast was planned and delivered by the children and the inspectors were very impressed by the children's responses to it. In classroom observation children were very attentive and respectful. A daily Lenten challenge was given by the gift pupil chaplaincy team to "be kind to everyone you meet today." The daily broadcast has been embedded into the school's routine and is an excellent example of how Sacred Scripture is known and made relevant throughout the school. Parents spoke positively about how the school has developed opportunities for prayer and spreading the word of God in working alongside home and Parish. They reflected on the work carried out by staff and Father Heakin in establishing a "very strong and engaging prayer-faith life." The R.E. curriculum is the core of the school. The standards of teaching of religious education observed on the day of the inspection were outstanding as was the work in the children's workbooks. High expectations were witnessed in all lessons observed. Challenge and opportunities to reflect were highly effective elements of the learning taking place. Lessons were well prepared, engaging and stimulating. The use of religious literacy and vocabulary was used very effectively to immerse children in the big questions. There is a clarity of vision about how the school delivers religious education to its pupils. It provides doctrinal teachings, a knowledge of Christ's life on earth and its relevance to the contemporary life we live today. During the Ash Wednesday Mass held at the parish church the children were reverent and attentive, they knew the responses to the Mass and joined in with enthusiastic singing. The Word of God is alive at Corpus Christi. From the early years to year six classes, children are taken on a journey of growing in God's love and developing a deep and true relationship with Christ at the centre. The faith life leadership team should be recognised for the excellent work they have done to ensure children, staff, parents and the wider community have the opportunity for evangelisation and for the Word of God to touch all hearts.

THE QUALITY OF WELCOME IS OUTSTANDING

Corpus Christi is a warm, welcoming and inclusive school that clearly has Christ at the centre of all that it does. Respect for the dignity of individual is clearly evident across the school and all staff set the example for children to follow. The dedicated staff team encourage full participation in every area of school life. They demonstrate a caring nature for the children, parents and each other; this gives a clear sense of belonging and an affirming atmosphere throughout the school. The happy, friendly and well-mannered children have a positive and cheerful outlook as they strive to be the best that they can be. A friendly welcome, built on an acknowledgement of Christ's presence in others, is extended to visitors by all the children and staff from the moment you enter the school. The school welcomes a wide range of visitors, parents and members of the wider community with love and respectful care. The parish priest is a welcome visitor and the children and staff look forward to his regular visits. Corpus Christi school welcomes parents and encourages their contribution to the life of the school, they in turn feel appreciated and involved in all that their

children do. Parents stated that they very much appreciate the willingness of staff throughout the school to listen to them. They are encouraged to contribute to their child's learning through shared curriculum information and a positive use of social media. Children and staff who are new to the school are quickly made to feel welcome and valued members of the school community. There is a loving family feel that permeates the school and beyond. Many generations of families have attended the school over the years. The school's caring, compassionate ethos and the development of the children's personal qualities are of paramount importance to the staff and governors. Children, parents, staff and governors quite rightly have a great sense of pride and belonging in this happy, calm and caring Catholic school.

THE QUALITY OF WELFARE IS OUTSTANDING

At Corpus Christi respect for each other is fostered in a loving and Christ-centred environment. A safe haven is created to ensure that all within the family of Corpus Christi feel valued and able to express their thoughts without being singled out or marginalised. The dignity of the individual is celebrated as being in Christ's own image. On the day of the inspection a rainbows group was held where children were encouraged to share their worries and concerns with each other. The children listened to each other and then offered their own ideas of how to overcome these worries. The atmosphere in the group was very moving, the two members of staff supporting the children very carefully explored sensitive issues, whilst at all times showing respect and a genuine sense of support and understanding. It was a very humbling experience to see the excellent relationships between staff and children in cultivating an atmosphere of love, care and respect which witnessed Christ at the centre of the school community. During the inspection, there were countless examples of the outstanding care, guidance and support given to staff and pupils to "be the best." A culture has been created in the school of service to God and to each other, enabling all within the school community to grow and overcome barriers to successful learning. It was clearly evident that staff and children aspire to achieve their true potential in all aspects of their lives providing holistic growth in following the teachings of Christ. The school (staff and children) go out of their way to ensure they bear witness in promoting a sense of responsibility and service to others. Fundraising events and visits to Cornerstones and the homeless ensure that children have the welfare of others firmly embedded in their understanding of service, justice and charity.

THE QUALITY OF WORSHIP IS OUTSTANDING

Worship in all its forms is outstanding at Corpus Christi school. The senior leaders along with the faith life leadership team have created a child-centred and child-focused approach to worship which provides the foundations for each individual's faith journey. Worship is an integral part of school life. The children are led by a hard working and enthusiastic gift pupil chaplaincy team who lead daily broadcasts, assemblies and the numerous Masses celebrated throughout the year. They are confident in their roles and are proud to undertake the many opportunities they are given. On the inspection day, the inspectors were privileged to take part in a number of acts of collective worship which were thoughtfully planned and participated in fully by the pupils. A gift pupil chaplaincy team led prayer session was an outstanding example of how children thrive in an environment where they are given responsibility and independence. The session saw the team asking questions and gathering responses, discussion of Holy Scripture, prayers, a Lenten song and a prayer for the children to take away with them. Further evidence was gathered from how the whole school, staff and children pray and reflect together. The creative approaches to prayer and worship engages the pupils and staff in their own spiritual development. The celebration of Mass by the school and parish community was truly uplifting; the singing was enthusiastic; the children knew the responses and showed reverence and respect. It is very clear that the children have been taught to nurture their relationship with God by praying in many different ways. Prayer bags are sent home to support families in developing their prayer life. Children are encouraged to make up their own prayers. Their prayer journey through the school encourages the pupils and staff to be confident in planning and leading prayer and worship which is pupil-centred, creative, inclusive and relevant. The parish priest, a regular visitor to the school, is instrumental in ensuring that the school community are a

worshipping community and his hard work and dedication to the prayer life of the school is a further strength of this outstanding Catholic primary school.

THE QUALITY OF WITNESS IS OUTSTANDING

The children at Corpus Christi school develop a deep sense of witness and from an early age know that they are part of a truly Catholic community. The mission statement is alive and relevant to all: "The pursuit of excellence whilst loving God and others." The children are given mission awards in response to their witness to Christ's teaching. As they go through the school they grow in their understanding of what witness truly means. The school encourages the children to have a voice and this was evidenced in a discussion with the mini vinnie's who were able to clearly talk about how they took responsibility for choosing and supporting good causes. They raise funds for a variety of charitable organisations: Cornerstones, Mary's Meals, Cancer Research, CAFOD, St. Joseph's Penny, Francis House, etc. As one pupil said, "We turn concern into action." The gift pupil chaplaincy team and school council were further evidence of how the pupils reach out to witness to the gospel values. During the inspection Caritas in Action lessons were observed which provided the children with relevant and age-appropriate opportunities to love one another and to help others. The strong and caring relationship witnessed across the school are a further indication of how the ethos of this outstanding Catholic primary school permeates all aspects of school life. There is a sense that all are role models for each other in their endeavours to be servants for the common good. The outstanding relationships between the staff, pupils, parents, parish and the wider community bear witness to Christ's teaching. Regular attendance at Masses, the sacramental programme and assemblies bring the school community together to bear witness to their faith. Parents commented on how the children are at the centre of everything the school does. The parish priest and the parish community support the school fully in witnessing to the gospel values and the parents added further: "Children thrive on the sacramental programme." They praised the parish priest for his home visits and the work and input from the parish community.

AGREED AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT:

To continue to inspire, challenge and develop the expertise of staff within the school in order to support other school communities.

8th March 2017

Dear Pupils

Thank you so much for making us so welcome when we came to inspect your school for the bishop a few weeks ago. You made us feel very welcome with your happy smiling faces. Mrs Heard and Mr Hennessy really enjoyed learning about all the great things that you do at Corpus Christi. Your mission statement is clearly lived by everyone at your school.

We know from talking to you and watching you that you are very proud of your school and take great care of it and each other. We really enjoyed listening to you talk about your prayer garden and the new mural designed by years 5 and 6 which is all about your school. Continue to look after each other and help those in need just like Pope Francis asked us to do.

You will be happy to know that we think you have an outstanding school. You work very hard to be the best you can. We enjoyed being part of your lessons. Your teachers work very hard to give you exciting and challenging lessons and we would like to say thank you to them and all who help them in making your school so special.

Your headteacher, with the support of the other school leaders and governors, has worked really hard to improve your school buildings which look fantastic. Mr Hanson is a very dedicated headteacher, and along with all the other teachers and support staff they have made your school a very special place. You are very lucky to have so many people who think the world of you and keep you safe.

Your beautiful singing and your participation in the Mass and during acts of Collective Worship show that you enjoy living in Jesus.

We have asked your teachers to continue being as good as they are and to help other schools to be as good as your school.

God bless you all,

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Anne Heard and Mr Brendan Hennessy

(Section 48 Inspectors)

Summary Report to Parents

On Wednesday 1st of March 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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