

**INSPECTION REPORT**

**St John Bosco RC Primary School, M9 7AT**

Inspection date 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2014

Reporting Inspectors Mr Brendan Hennessy  
 Mrs Anne Heard

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

Type of School	Primary
URN	105530
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Number on roll	240
Appropriate authority	The Governing Body
Chair of Governors	Mrs Lorraine McCauley
Headteacher	Mrs Cathy Quinn
Religious Education Co-ordinator	Mrs Erica Hanrahan
Date of previous inspection	July 2008

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	1	
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	2	
The following pages provide reasons to support these judgements		

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

St John Bosco's is a Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary School in the Diocese of Salford situated in Manchester. The school serves the amalgamated parishes of St John Bosco's and Mount Carmel. This is a slightly smaller than average sized primary school with 240 pupils on roll including 30 children in the nursery, in year admissions are rising; 88% are baptized Roman Catholic: there are more boys, 56%, than girls, 44%. The school is situated in an area of social disadvantage, 49% of pupils are entitled to Free School Meals. On entry to nursery the attainment of the majority of pupils is below the national average. The majority of pupils have made good or better progress in their learning by the time they leave at the end of KS2. The school currently has 21.6% of the pupils with Special Educational Needs. The school's attendance rate is in line with the national average at 95%. There are 12 teachers in school, 10 of whom are Catholics; 6 have the Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies.

### **OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL**

St John Bosco's is a good Catholic primary school with some outstanding features. This warm and friendly school offers all children a rich faith experience and a true Catholic education in a caring and supportive environment where all are welcomed and differences celebrated. The strong, spiritual commitment of the Headteacher who values every member of the school community; the talented and enthusiastic leadership team; combined with the hard work and dedication of all of the staff, ensures that the spiritual and pastoral needs of all are very well met and that the Gospel values are clearly evident and lived out by all. The Parish Priest and Governing Body are very supportive, cohesive and committed to their leadership role in ensuring that Catholic education of the highest standard is provided for all in this compassionate, inclusive and happy school. The friendly, polite and well-mannered children are very proud of their school, their behaviour and attitude to learning is very good. They enjoyed sharing with the inspectors examples of their work and their thoughts about the school; "We all look up to Jesus" and "At St John Bosco's we are one with God". Parents are welcomed and feel that they can talk to the staff freely and that they are listened to, they are very proud of their school and comment that St John Bosco's is "brilliant and perfect" and that it "doesn't get the praise it deserves". The quality of the prayer life and opportunities for worship, combined with good teaching and learning and high quality displays clearly demonstrate the support for the individual faith journeys of all members of the school family. A new leadership team has been appointed since the last inspection. Monitoring, assessment and effective evaluation of Religious Education in school has ensured that the school has continued to develop since the last inspection.

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

- The quality of the relationships across the school and the children's excellent behaviour, good manners and respect for others.
- The introduction of pupil chaplaincy is having a significant impact on the life of the school.
- The dedication and commitment of all the staff to providing a caring and nurturing school that has a positive impact on the lives of the children.
- The positive partnership with the parish and the involvement of the parish priest in the spiritual life of the school.
- Leadership and Management is a strength of the school: the Headteacher has a clear vision for Catholic Education in the school and is supported in this by a dedicated, committed and enthusiastic RE subject leader and Governing Body.

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

St John Bosco's is very well led by a dedicated Headteacher who has a clear vision, a sense of purpose for the education of the whole child and values the individual worth of every member of the school community. The Headteacher is aided in this by a recently appointed, committed and very effective RE subject leader, an enthusiastic and hardworking leadership team and supported by a very willing staff. They all share and live their vision for Catholic education ensuring that the development of the Catholic life of the school is at the forefront of their thinking and practice. The governors are committed, supportive and proactive they state with absolute conviction that the school is based on "love and Jesus Christ". They have worked with school to help shape the vision of the school especially in self-evaluation and the delivery of Religious Education. The very supportive Parish Priest is a regular visitor to school and is fully involved in the religious life of the school: an excellent example of this was seen in "Fr Brady's Mass Book" where he writes comments to the children following Masses and liturgies. All of the school leaders set the example for others in the school to follow. Through effective monitoring, assessment and evaluation the leadership team is fully aware of the strengths of the school and what needs to be done to develop even further. Pupil leadership has recently been strengthened through the commissioning, training and establishment of a Pupil Chaplaincy Team. The quality of leadership at all levels of the school community makes a significant contribution to the provision for Catholic education at St John Bosco's.

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

The religious education of the children is at the centre of the school's core curriculum. The school has been creative in developing and planning RE around the Come and See programme to meet the needs of the pupils at St John Bosco's and enhance the RE curriculum. The Mission Statement has recently been reviewed by the children, staff and governors and is known, lived and witnessed throughout the school. Teaching and learning was found to be consistently good with some very good practice observed. Teachers have good subject knowledge and lessons overall were well planned with clear learning objectives, good pace, opportunities for the children to think and share ideas, differentiated activities, good use of questions and effective plenary sessions to ensure that the learning objectives were met. Religious literacy was promoted in the best lessons and children were confident in their use of religious terms: a good example of this was seen in a Year 4 lesson on the "The calming of the storm", children were also asked for their reactions, feelings and to improvise how they thought the apostles felt. Their responses, "they are safe with Jesus", showed a familiarity with and knowledge of the Bible. This was extended by the children who were confident enough to ask the big questions e.g. "If the Bible didn't exist would God exist?" Stimulating teaching was observed in the nursery where the children were actively engaged in learning about God's special love for them, they were able to talk about God's love for them and others. Pupils are well motivated and engaged, they show a real interest and enthusiasm in RE, and were happy and confident to share their understanding of their faith. They are very proud of their books and know how to improve their work and where constructive marking was used it provided challenge and enabled them to reflect on and improve their learning. Teaching Assistants have a good knowledge and understanding of the teaching of RE, they effectively interacted with pupils to support their learning and they contribute significantly to RE across the school. Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural education is fully embedded and evident throughout all aspects of the school. Pupils learn about other faiths through the RE scheme and assemblies, this helps them to understand and respect the beliefs and cultures of others. The Religious Education budget is set according to the needs of the curriculum and the Catholic life of the school and is adjusted on a yearly basis in line with other core subjects. The school prioritises Religious Education on their professional development programme and it has a high priority on the School Improvement Plan.

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

St John Bosco's school is a warm, welcoming and inclusive community, where enthusiastic and committed staff encourage full participation in every area of school life. The friendly welcome in the true spirit of hospitality 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. This welcoming tradition helps the school to reach out and support all in the community, recognizing and respecting diversity at all levels. The school welcomes a wide range of visitors, parents and members of the wider community with love and respectful care. All members of staff demonstrate a caring nature for the children, parents and each other, this gives a sense of belonging and an affirming ethos throughout the school, where these supportive relationships thrive. Respect for the dignity of the individual is clearly evident across the school and all staff set the example for children to follow; they are indeed role models of the love of Christ. The children are polite and well-mannered with a cheerful outlook in this happy, caring and compassionate school. The parish priest is a welcome visitor and the children and staff look forward to his regular visits. St John Bosco's school welcomes parents and encourages their contribution to the life of the school; they feel appreciated and involved in all that their children do. The school's caring ethos and the development of the children's personal qualities are of paramount importance to the staff and governors. Children and staff who are new to the school are quickly made to feel welcome and valued members of the school community. Children, parents, staff and governors quite rightly have a great sense of pride and belonging in this happy, caring Catholic school.

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

St John Bosco's is a very inclusive school that is outstanding in its welfare of and care for all members of the school community. Relationships within the school are excellent and children work well to support each other in their learning. Older children are encouraged to develop their leadership skills by taking responsibility for younger children especially at break and dinner times through a well-established "Buddy" system. Teaching assistants are used effectively to support and engage reluctant learners and those with some behavioural needs. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported in order to access the curriculum at the appropriate level. Staff demonstrate a deep understanding of each child and all in the school community feel well supported. The children are confident in expressing their feelings and can name who to ask for help when worried or concerned. Children report that incidences of bullying are rare and if they occur are dealt with immediately. Effective safeguarding provides a safe and secure learning environment. The school ensures that children's achievements are celebrated and that the most vulnerable are well cared for and listened to. Excellent behaviour by the children, in all phases, was witnessed throughout the inspection, where children showed the ability to share, take turns and listen to each other. Teachers are approachable and parents feel able to talk with them about issues that concern them and that their concerns are dealt with quickly and effectively. All staff are supported and respected by children and their families. The Governing Body demonstrated a duty of care to all within the school community and is very proactive in carrying out its role, for example, the school employs a Caritas social worker, who works alongside staff to support children and families. The staff, parents, children and governors work very well together to promote the teachings of Jesus to "love thy neighbour as thyself". Links with the parish are very positive and the influence of the Parish Priest on the lives of the children is a key element in this. The school is working alongside other schools in its cluster to review and develop the SRE policy.

### **THE QUALITY OF WORSHIP IS GOOD**

All around the school there were good examples of the opportunities for worship throughout the liturgical year that showed worship is at the heart of this school community. The Catholic life of the

school was clearly demonstrated around the school in many thoughtful and informative displays, including a very creative and relevant Rosary display, which the children and staff are rightly proud of. The importance of prayer and worship is expressed and witnessed through classroom acts of reflection, assemblies, Mass and liturgies. Each classroom has an age appropriate and relevant focal point for prayer and these are clearly valued by the children. The children are happy to write their own prayers and to share their joy in praising God with others. The staff and children work together preparing and delivering acts of collective worship in different formats. The acts of prayer and worship observed were child centered, thoughtful and relevant ensuring that children and adults were given the opportunity to pray together as a community. At the engaging and thoughtful Key Stage 2 assembly the children were given opportunities to reflect on the importance of forgiving others. In this act of worship the children showed reverence and respect, were encouraged to speak to God in their own way and enjoyed praising God in prayer and joyful singing. In other acts of worship, including those incorporated in RE lessons, these special moments of quiet prayer and reflection were respected by the children and fostered their personal relationship with God and one another. Scripture is known, understood and made relevant throughout the school. Parents were very positive about the range of opportunities the school offers for prayer and worship, stating that their children: “enjoy being involved in assemblies and Mass” where “there is always a nice atmosphere”. The introduction of pupil chaplains has given even greater opportunities for children to take a leading role and make an even more significant impact on prayer and worship throughout the school.

#### **THE QUALITY OF WITNESS IS GOOD**

The Mission Statement is at the heart of the school and all at St John Bosco’s school try to live it out on a daily basis. Staff and children give witness to the beliefs and values of the Catholic faith, and to Christ’s teaching in their daily lives. The children demonstrated quite clearly that the Gospel values of peace, love, justice, truth, reconciliation and respect for all are promoted and evidenced throughout the entire school community. Children are encouraged to reach out to those in need not just by their support for local, national and world charities but also in how they show respect, care, compassion and consideration of others. Relationships are excellent between all members of the school community. Staff are positive role models for the children promoting the ethos and values of the school and helping them to recognise that Jesus is with them in all aspects of school life. The school fosters a spirit of awe and wonder through religious education and the broader curriculum where children are encouraged to be good stewards of creation; the children really appreciate the recently established garden area and all that it offers them. The home, school and parish links are inclusive, effective and valued by all. Close links with the parish are enhanced by the regular visits of the Parish Priest and the work of the catechists for the Sacramental Programme, which was acknowledged and greatly appreciated by the parents. A strong sense of belonging to the school community exists based on the teachings of Jesus and an explicit Catholic values-based culture permeates the whole of school which is clearly identifiable through the relationships, decision-making and actions. It is clear that all members of this school family meet God each day and do all they can to meet the challenges involved in this witness.

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

- To continue to develop the prayer life of the school so that all staff and children are confident in leading prayer and worship which is creative, pupil centred, inclusive and relevant.
- To inspire all pupils and promote exceptional teaching across all phases by modelling and coaching good and outstanding teaching that will further enhance the development of curriculum RE.

