

St Anne's RC Primary School, Greenacres Road, Oldham OL4 1HP.

Inspection date 5th November 2015

Reporting Inspectors Brendan Hennessy
Julie Frazer

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

Type of School	Primary
URN	105725
Age range of pupils	3 - 11
Number on roll	234
Appropriate authority	The Governing Body
Chair of Governors	Patrick Scrivens
Executive Headteacher	Anne Ostmeier
Head of School	Mary Garvey
Religious Education Subject Leader	Suzanne McHale
Date of previous inspection	November 2010

The Inspection judgements are:	Grade	Explanation of the Grades 1 = Outstanding 2 = Good 3=Requires Improvement 4 = Inadequate
Overall effectiveness of the school	1	
The quality of Catholic Leadership	1	
The quality of Word	1	
The quality of 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 Anne's Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary School serves the parish of St Anne's and St Michael's, Oldham. This is an average sized primary school with 234 pupils on roll, 56% are baptised Roman Catholic. The school is situated in a culturally diverse urban area of social disadvantage; 42.4% of pupils are currently entitled to Free School Meals. The school currently has 15% of the pupils with Special Educational Needs and 22% of the pupils with English as an additional language. On entry to the nursery the attainment of the majority of pupils, especially in language development, is considerably lower than the national average. Most pupils have made good or better progress in their learning by the time they leave at the end of KS2. There are 15 teachers in school, 11 of whom are Catholic: 8 teachers have the Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies and 6 have either started or are waiting to start the CCRS. School provides extended provision for children both before and after school. The school holds a National Healthy Schools Award, Activemark and school leaders are accredited Forest School instructors.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL IS OUTSTANDING

St Anne's is an outstanding Catholic primary school that offers a deep faith experience, with Jesus clearly at the centre of all aspects of school life. The strong catholic ethos that is so evident throughout the school has helped to create a vibrant, lively, diverse and highly inclusive community where the very happy children thrive as they learn and play together. The inspirational and dedicated executive headteacher and head of school, share the same vision and aspiration for the school, "to provide a Catholic education that raises children up to live the gospel and make a difference in the world". They are very well supported by the talented and committed leadership team, RE subject leader, staff and governors. The Mission Statement is visible, understood and lived by all in the school family; all do indeed "Grow together in God's love". The gospel values are very evident across the school and underpin all that happens in this warm and friendly school. Prayer and worship are very much at the heart of this inclusive school enriching everyone's experience of God's presence and enhancing their individual faith journeys. The parish priest and governors are very supportive and absolutely committed to ensuring that the best possible Catholic education is provided for all. The quality of teaching in Religious Education is always at least good and more often better, which ensures high standards are achieved across the school, as evidenced in the children's books and work around school. The friendly and very well behaved children have an excellent attitude to learning and are very proud of their school. Parents feel welcomed, included and valued, they are unequivocal in their appreciation of all that goes on in school commenting that their children are very happy and are extremely enthusiastic about all that they do in school. School takes every opportunity to build on the excellent links with the parish and home. Effective monitoring, assessment and evaluation of Religious Education has ensured that the school has continued to develop since the last inspection.

THE KEY STRENGTHS OF THE SCHOOL INCLUDE:

- The inspirational leadership of the dedicated executive head teacher and head of school, supported by a committed leadership team, RE subject leader, staff and governors.
- Prayer and worship is at the heart of the school, affirming, uplifting and inspiring all members of this inclusive school community.
- The relationships across the school and the children's excellent behaviour, manners and respect for others. The introduction of pupil chaplains is having a significant impact on the life of the school.

- The commitment of all the staff to providing a caring and nurturing school has a positive impact on the children's welfare and well-being so that they are best placed to engage in effective and meaningful learning.
- The positive links with the parish and the involvement of the parish priest in the spiritual life of the school.

THE QUALITY OF CATHOLIC LEADERSHIP IS OUTSTANDING

St Anne's school is extremely well led by an inspirational executive headteacher who together with the head of school demonstrates a strong, spiritual commitment. There is a clear vision "to provide a Catholic education that raises children up to live the gospel and make a difference in the world", aspiration and sense of purpose for the education of the whole child. Both clearly value the individual worth of every member of the school community and are committed to providing as many opportunities as possible in school for reflection and consideration, so that all at St Anne's may have a deeper awareness of this vision for Catholic education. They are supported by a talented leadership team, a committed RE leader and an enthusiastic and dedicated staff team. The governors have a clear, strategic vision for the school. They are deeply committed to the success of the school and are proactive in providing support and challenge. Together with all of the staff, they do all that they can to ensure that RE and the development of the Catholic life of the school is at the core of the school's thinking and practice. Pupil leadership is well established through the school council and strengthened by the commissioning of the school chaplains. Staff, children and governors all have a voice in planning for future development. The very supportive parish priest is a regular visitor to school; staff, governors, parents and children really value his contribution to and impact on the spiritual life of the school. Effective and accurate monitoring, assessment and self-evaluation allied to relevant professional development for staff all contribute to the positive impact on the quality of provision in RE. This has also ensured that the leadership team is clear about the strengths of the school and what needs to be done to develop even further. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural education was found to be outstanding and permeates all aspects of school life. All school leaders set the example as role models, and make a significant contribution to the outstanding provision for Catholic education in St Anne's.

THE QUALITY OF THE WORD OF GOD IS OUTSTANDING

The school Mission Statement is visible, understood, lived and witnessed by all in school where everyone does indeed "Grow together in God's love". The importance of the Word of God was clearly demonstrated throughout the school in many creative, enriching and thoughtful displays. Scripture is made relevant and shared in many vibrant, joyful ways including music, hymns and drama; it is clearly known and understood throughout the school. All staff place a high priority on the teaching of Religious Education which was demonstrated in their knowledge and understanding of RE, and evident in the high standards of children's work and in their contributions to lessons. RE is at the core of the school's curriculum with some outstanding examples of inspirational teaching and engaging learning observed throughout the school. In one such lesson the children were asked to think about justice; they were challenged by effective questioning, including the 'big questions' and engaged in thoughtful discussion. The children produced some high quality writing that showed great understanding and compassion. In another lesson, engaging learning was enhanced with images and practical concepts to help the children develop their understanding of the Trinity. In both of these lessons there was clear evidence of consistent high expectations and challenge, good pace and rigour, thoughtful questioning and differentiated activities. This ensured that the learning was productive and well balanced with confident children secure in expressing their thoughts and their spirituality. Teaching Assistants have a good understanding of the teaching of RE; they effectively interacted with pupils to support their learning. Constructive marking and feedback was evident across the school, which ensured that pupils

knew how to improve their work and enabled them to reflect on their learning and understanding of RE. Children show a real interest and enthusiasm in RE. They have an excellent attitude to learning and were happy and confident to share their understanding of their faith. They learn about other faiths through religious education and assemblies, and this helps them to understand and respect the beliefs and cultures of others.

THE QUALITY OF THE WELCOME IS OUTSTANDING

The quality of welcome in St. Anne's school is outstanding, because it provides a very warm, welcoming and extremely inclusive environment where committed staff have high expectations of the pupils. Parents say that the school gives the highest regard to welcoming the children into the school; both as the children join the school in nursery or the reception class and when they arrive in school every morning. At the start of each day pupils are greeted by members of staff at the door, settling them into the familiar environment as soon as possible. This also provides an opportunity for communication with parents and so assuages any concerns. During the inspection, the children were consistently welcoming to the inspectors; greeting them warmly and welcoming them into their classrooms. One member of staff made particular reference to their positive approach to the cultural diversity and multi faith school. She said that the truly inclusive nature of the school ensures the continued high regard for other religions and faiths, whilst retaining the distinctive nature of this Catholic school. There is a clear and explicit respect for every member of this school community and everyone is regarded as having a voice to be heard and listened to. This has an enormously positive impact on the pupils' behaviour and approach to one another and to the wider community, which is exemplary.

THE QUALITY OF THE WELFARE IS OUTSTANDING

The quality of welfare is outstanding, because all staff and children demonstrate an extremely high level of respect for and care of others in school and in the wider community. The school is fully inclusive and meets the needs of all children regardless of the difficulties they may be experiencing. There are a number of children who have emotional and behavioural difficulties and their needs are well met by caring and skilled support staff. Staff work hard to ensure that these children engage with their own learning as effectively as possible without interrupting the learning of others. The school is so committed to inclusion that they have retained a pupil in school preventing a possible move to a local special school. The school employs two members of staff who form their Pastoral Team and their roles complement one another in that one member of staff works with parents and families whilst the other works with the children. However their common goal is to ensure that all the children with welfare needs are as settled as possible so that they can engage in learning. This outstanding practice provides a safe haven in school. The range of provision by the Pastoral Team is from child protection issues to allaying pupils' or parents' concerns. Parents are able to access this support and children are welcome to 'drop in' during the school day knowing that they will be able to speak with someone who will help them; the children are loved and cared for and this reflects on the way they love and care for others.

THE QUALITY OF THE WORSHIP IS OUTSTANDING

Prayer and Worship is central to the life of St Anne's school and the combined efforts of all in school ensures that "The Eucharist is at the heart of our worshipping community". The importance of prayer and worship is expressed and witnessed through: classroom acts of reflection and meditation, spontaneous prayer, assemblies, Mass and liturgies. These all enhance the individual faith journeys of everyone in the school community. Each classroom has an age appropriate and relevant prayer

corner with additional focal points for prayer, display and reflection situated at key areas in the school, including the prayer garden and Rainbow room that can be accessed by all. The children pray together as a school, in classes, small groups and individually, with great reverence and respect. They are comfortable with their feelings and confident to write and share their own prayers. Many examples were seen all around school. Chaplaincy is very well established with high levels of pupil participation. It is very inclusive, with all children involved and able to participate at their own level and within their own cultural background. The chaplaincy team support prayer and worship in school and have created a beautiful, well used, prayer focus area in the Rainbow room. The children are aware that they can use this area for their own personal prayer, as well as displaying their photographs of loved ones who need prayer. The introduction of pupil chaplains has had a significant, positive impact on prayer and worship across the school. The whole school Remembrance liturgy, classroom acts of worship and prayer within lessons observed, provided opportunities for listening, participation, joyful singing and reflection. They were without exception uplifting, inclusive, creative and thoughtful spiritual experiences for all present. Children took a leading role in all the acts of prayer and worship observed, these special moments of prayer and reflection were beautifully respected by the children and enhanced their relationship with God and one another. The parish priest regularly visits the school and is actively involved in supporting the staff and children deepen their own faith and understanding. Parents were extremely positive about the range of opportunities the school offers for prayer and worship and really appreciate the input from the pupil chaplains.

THE QUALITY OF THE WITNESS IS OUTSTANDING

It is clear that all members of St Anne's school family demonstrate outstanding witness to the church's mission in education and do all they can to meet the challenges involved in this witness. The Mission Statement is at the heart of the school. It is a powerful declaration of how all in the school give witness to the beliefs and values of the Catholic faith as they look for God in their own lives and the lives of others. The children have a clear understanding of the statement "We grow together in God's Love" and are confident in witnessing the catholic beliefs which underpin this statement. They are developing considerable maturity as a reconciling community. One child stated with true conviction that she "Feels valued because someone always helps you in this school and makes you feel like friends forever." Children trust the adults who support them and are confident that any difficult issues will be dealt with fairly. Relationships are excellent between all members of the school community and all are able to talk openly and confidently about their faith. All 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. There is a great sense of teamwork, enthusiasm, joy and celebration of success at all levels among the staff, children and parents. An atmosphere of calm and a sense of belonging permeates the whole school which helps to create a happy and purposeful working environment for everyone in school. There are strong home, school and parish links which are enriched by the regular visits of the parish priest. The children are encouraged to reach out to those in need and give witness to Catholic values by organising events and fund raising for local and global charities, including CAFOD, MacMillan, Oldham Foodbank and refugees. The children say that the school also responds to international disasters with fundraising activities and they show their care for people within the local community at Harvest time by collecting food. The children put the welfare of others at the heart of what they do. They know that they do this because Jesus told us in word and deed to love our neighbour as ourselves. The school fosters a spirit of awe and wonder through religious education, the broader curriculum and initiatives like Forest School, where children are encouraged to look after God's world as they develop a love of nature.

AGREED AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT:

- To share the school's outstanding practice with other school communities.

Summary Report to Parents

On 5th November 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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5th November 2015

Dear Children,

Thank you for the very warm welcome you gave us and for making our visit to St Anne's RC Primary School such a joyful occasion. We really enjoyed our time with you. You and all the adults in school are indeed living your Mission Statement and do "Grow together in God's Love" and because of this your school is an outstanding Catholic school.

We really enjoyed seeing your lessons and learning about all the wonderful things you do in St Anne's. We saw as many of you as we could and we are sorry if we didn't see you in your class. Thank you for sharing your work with us, we were very impressed with the standard of work in your RE books and in your wonderful displays around school. It was clear to us that you have a very good knowledge and understanding of our Catholic faith and that you all really try your best in all of your lessons.

It was lovely to see so many happy, smiling faces. You are clearly very proud of your school and all that you have achieved together. We were also very impressed by the way you all really want to succeed in school and how well you look out for each other. You were so well behaved, and your politeness and manners were simply superb.

It was so pleasing to see how attentive and confident you were in the acts of worship and the school Remembrance service that we saw. Everyone showed great respect and reverence, your behaviour was excellent, your singing was wonderful and your prayers were uplifting.

Mrs Ostmeier, all the staff, Fr Derek, the school governors and your parents are extremely proud of all of you and of what you have achieved over the years, well done and keep it up!

All the adults in school want to work with you to build the Catholic life of your school even further so that together you can continue to grow together in God's love and share what you are doing so well with others.

God bless you all and enjoy the rest of the school year.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Brendan Hennessy
Mrs Julie Frazer
(Section 48 Inspectors)