

**INSPECTION REPORT**

**St Dunstan’s RC Primary School, Bacup Street, Moston, Manchester, M40 9HF.**

Inspection date 30<sup>TH</sup> November 2016

Reporting Inspector Mrs Anne Heard  
 Mr Jim Graves

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

Type of School Voluntary Aided Primary School  
 URN 105526  
 Age range of pupils 3-11  
 Number on roll 358  
 Appropriate authority The Governing Body  
 Chair of Governors Mrs Lynda Walker  
 Headteacher Mrs Gabrielle Eccles  
 Religious Education Subject Leader Mrs Gabrielle Eccles  
 Date of previous inspection November 2011

<b>The Inspection judgements are:</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Explanation of the Grades</b>  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	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 Dunstan's RC Primary School is an above average sized voluntary aided primary school serving the parish of St Dunstan's in Moston. The school works in close cluster partnership with other Catholic schools including St Matthew's RC High School. There are currently 358 children on roll, of which 74% are baptised Catholic. The school takes children from aged 3-11 years. There are 16 teachers of which 10 are Catholics. They are supported by 16 teaching assistants. 38% of children attending the school are eligible for pupil premium funding, which is higher than the national average. The deprivation indicator is significantly higher than the national average. 25% of pupils have English as an additional language. There are a significant number of children attending the school from a number of ethnic minority groups. The school is oversubscribed and there is a waiting list for all year groups.

## **OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL IS GOOD**

St Dunstan's is a good school with some outstanding features. It is a school where all are welcomed and nurtured. A fully inclusive environment has been created by the caring and dedicated staff to which all feel that they belong. The school offers the children many opportunities to develop their faith life, spirituality, dignity and respect for each other. Over the past two years the school has seen a considerable improvement in standards and expectations. There is confidence in the school's capacity to allow these to embed and further develop. Following the appointment of the hard working and dedicated headteacher, supported by the senior leadership team and staff, a vision to provide the best they can is lived out through Gospel values which are evident in all aspects of school life. The governors are proactive and well informed, sharing this vision for the school. They are regular visitors and fully aware of the school's strengths and the next steps in its development. The parish priest is a regular visitor to the school and works closely with the headteacher to ensure the Catholicity of the school is paramount. They share a common goal to develop close links between the parish and the community. The behaviour of the children is excellent. They show respect for themselves and others and feel valued and listened to. Parents feel the school goes out of its way to welcome and support them. This was further evidenced in their acknowledgement of the work of the parent support advisor.

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

- Provision for the welfare of all within the school community.
- The shared vision of all leaders to provide the best Catholic education for all.
- Pupils' behaviour and attitude to learning.
- The importance of the dignity of the individual is clearly evident at all levels.

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

Since taking up the position of headteacher two years ago, the new headteacher very quickly recognised the strengths and areas for improvement and set about the challenge of moving the school forward. There has been a significant improvement in standards and attainment since this time. This hard-working and dedicated headteacher has a clear vision for the school and has demonstrated capacity to move the school even further. The excellent relationships between the recently formed senior leadership team demonstrate shared commitment to providing the best opportunities for children. Whilst the inspection was taking place contractors were on site developing the outdoor provision and further funding has been obtained to enhance the fabric of the building by replacing windows. Standards, behaviour and attainment across the school continue to be a priority, but are addressed in a caring and thoughtful way ensuring that the Catholic ethos underpins everything. The governors are proactive and enthusiastic in carrying out their roles and responsibilities to the bishop. They are well informed and the chair of governors meets weekly with the headteacher, so that she is well informed about what is happening in the school. Governors have attended training courses to support them in their roles. They act as a critical friend to the headteacher and ensure

accountability is expected of all staff in their common goal to be the best they can be. There has been a considerable change in staff members over the past few years and this has resulted in coordinators taking on new or different roles and responsibilities. The children are articulate and express clearly their pride in the school. They talk about the positive changes that have taken place in the past few years and are eager to take responsibility for the benefit of their fellow pupils. The GIFT pupil chaplaincy team act as role models to others, they are able to initiate their ideas and are supported in their roles by two members of staff. On the day of the inspection eight children were enrolled as Caritas Ambassadors at Salford Cathedral. When they returned to school they were very keen to tell the inspectors about their action plans for encouraging their peers to support others in practical, purposeful ways.

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

The mission statement of the school is known and lived by all. Displays around the school reflect scripture passages. Care and attention is given to these displays, which reflects a commitment to spreading the Word of God. Classroom prayer tables are carefully organised and are covered in the appropriate colours to match the liturgical year. On the day of the inspection, St Andrew's Day, a display of fish was created in one classroom, with the children's own prayers written on display. The Mass celebrated at St Dunstan's church was attended by the Year 3 children and the GIFT pupil chaplaincy team. The children played an active part in the Mass, undertaking readings, bidding prayers and the offertory procession, and again St Andrew's feast day was referred to. The parish and school come together in these celebrations to reinforce the idea of community. Children are confident in their use of bibles and were able to talk about what was contained in the old and new testaments. The school RE curriculum is delivered through the 'Come and See' programme alongside 'Caritas in action'. Several staff members are undertaking the Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies, whilst others have attended the Kyrygma courses offered by Salford Diocese, in order to develop their knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith. Governors are committed to purchasing appropriate and relevant resources for RE. Children are challenged and enjoy learning in RE. In some classes the 'big questions' were apparent, but this is yet to be fully embedded across the school. Lessons observed during the inspection were of high quality with appropriate differentiation and some examples of excellent creativity were witnessed, making the Word of God relevant and meaningful. Children are confident to talk about their religion; they are knowledgeable and there is evidence of the use of religious literacy across the school. Some children observed had a great depth of knowledge and insight into their own spirituality and beliefs. Assessment of RE is an ongoing process and has developed considerably in recent years. Religious education books are of a good standard and children show care and attention in their work. There is a great sense of pride in learning about and bearing witness to the Catholic faith.

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

St Dunstan's is a very welcoming school where all stakeholders feel valued and respected. They in turn ensure that visitors to the school are treated with equal respect, while celebrating the diversity and uniqueness of each individual. Christ is at the heart of the community as many examples of this were witnessed on the day of the inspection. Children were able to express the view that 'you should treat everybody how you would like to be treated.' The school has strict safeguarding policies in place and ensures that all within the school community feel safe and protected. Visitors to the school are made aware of these procedures to ensure the safety of all is paramount. The children's rich and diverse cultural backgrounds are celebrated and promote mutual respect and a sense of belonging to the community of St Dunstan's. Parents spoke very positively about how they feel part of the school community. They feel well informed through the variety of communication lines used by the school, including letters, the school website and text messages. Parents are welcomed into the school twice a week for parental groups, further enhancing the sense of community. The parents who spoke to the inspectors during the day were extremely complementary about how the school reaches out and supports them. They felt listened to and valued. The recognition and celebration of different cultures and faiths provides opportunities for children to have a deeper understanding of others beliefs and traditions. The exemplary behaviour of the children witnessed throughout the day demonstrated how children from an early age are taught to look after and care for each other. The staff act as excellent role models in the way they conduct themselves. The relationships between

the staff and children have created a warm, caring environment where children are able to succeed and reach their full potential in an environment of true Christ centred learning.

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

There has been a culture created at St Dunstan's where the welfare of all within the community is of paramount importance. Staff ensure the pupils and their families are supported and comforted when difficulties arise. The role of the family support officer ensures that parents are offered confidential advice and support. This in turn allows children to continue their education unaware of difficulties there might be in family circumstances. The children themselves, particularly older pupils, are vigilant in ensuring that playtimes and lunchtimes are enjoyable. They intervene between children's disagreements and are a listening ear when children are upset or challenging. Staff spend time getting to know children and their families. They provide an open-door policy where parents have access to staff to discuss their worries or concerns. Safeguarding and behaviour policies are used effectively to ensure the safety of all. A comprehensive sex and relationship programme is delivered to each year group in the summer term. Children are confident to express their views and opportunities are given to develop children's self-esteem and self-worth through positive reinforcement. Pupil voice is alive at St Dunstan's; children feel empowered to offer suggestions for their development. The GIFT pupil chaplaincy team and Caritas ambassadors are just two examples of how pupil leaders are empowered. This Christ centred approach ensures all members of the school community are treated fairly, with respect. The gospel values permeate all aspects of school life. Parents and children referred to the parables as lessons they should live their lives by.

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

There are many prayer and worship opportunities provided for all pupils at St Dunstan's school. Children from an early age engage in appropriate acts of simple prayer and worship. As they progress through the school, children are empowered to reflect, meditate and pray, creating their own acts of collective worship. The pupil-led key stage 2 act of worship observed during the inspection was clear evidence of how children at St Dunstan's are taught to engage in developing their spirituality as they continue their faith journey. Sacred scripture encompasses all areas of school life and children talk confidently about prayer and worship. Regular class masses, assemblies and the sacramental programme are a celebration of the faith life of the school. The school community and parish have strong links, and each are welcome to attend the many varied opportunities for parents, parishioners and the school community to come together in liturgies and celebrations. Some of the individual prayers written by the pupils showed a deep and mature approach to prayer. Children have been taught to meditate; creating a strong spiritual relationship with God. The GIFT pupil chaplaincy team act as role models and provide leadership in many whole school collective acts of worship. The school and the chaplaincy leaders are looking at ways of enhancing the work of the GIFT pupil chaplaincy team. The older children attend the Marist centre for further spiritual and creative development, whilst the GIFT pupil chaplaincy team attended a retreat especially tailored to pupil chaplaincy. There was evidence gathered throughout the day that demonstrated prayer and worship was relevant and tailored to meet the needs of all the children. The school ensures that prayer is at its core, the children come together to pray in the morning, at lunchtime and at the end of the day. The children's singing was an uplifting experience.

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

The mission statement 'we journey with Jesus beside us' encourages all to give witness to God and to develop a sense of social responsibility. The pupils bear witness to justice, compassion, reconciliation, love and forgiveness; and they talk confidently about the need to reach out to others less fortunate than themselves. Fundraising activities for charities such as Cafod and St Joseph's Penny are a regular occurrence as well as one off charity events for a variety of different causes. The newly commissioned Caritas ambassadors aim as part of their action plan to 'give back' in action; they are enthusiastic and committed to making a difference. Relationships are excellent between all within the school community. Parents are keen for their children to attend St Dunstan's and it is oversubscribed in each year group. The school ensures that the children develop

their beliefs and values through a truly Christ centred approach to learning and living. Staff are very proactive in ensuring children are given the opportunity to be involved in decision making. They foster a genuine respect for each child, created in the image of God, and strive to ensure that pupils grow in confidence in their ability to express their views and opinions. They provide opportunities for children to have responsibility and ownership of their school. When the inspectors spoke to the pupils, they gave many practical examples of how they are taught to care for God's world and all those who live in it. They live their lives by gospel values and are confident in showing through practical day to day acts of kindness and acceptance that they truly understand what it means to 'journey with Jesus beside us.'

**AGREED AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT:**

- To continue to develop a consistent approach to marking and feedback.
- To further enhance the roles of the GIFT pupil chaplaincy team and newly enrolled Caritas ambassadors.
- To extend opportunities for children to be creative in prayer and worship across the school.

Date 4<sup>TH</sup> December 2016

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 lovely manners and happy smiling faces. Mrs Heard and Mr Graves really enjoyed learning about all the great things that you do at St. Dunstan's. Your mission statement to 'Journey with Jesus beside us' 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 enjoyed listening to you talk about all the things that make your school so special. 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 your school is a good school. You work very hard to be the best you can. We enjoyed being part of your lessons and were sorry we could not get to see more of them. Your teachers work very hard to give you lots of different learning experiences 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 governors, has worked very hard to improve your school. Mrs Eccles 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 care about you and keep you safe.

We have asked your teachers to continue to give you support in your learning by the feedback they give to you. We also want them to continue to develop the roles of the GIFT pupil chaplaincy team and Caritas ambassadors and to continue to give you opportunities to develop your own prayerfulness and spirituality.

God bless you all.

Yours sincerely  
Mrs. Heard  
Mr. Graves  
(Section 48 Inspectors)

## Summary Report to Parents

On 30<sup>th</sup> November 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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