



Catholic Schools Inspectorate inspection report for
St Herbert's RC primary school

URN:105722

Carried out on behalf of the Right Rev. John Arnold, Bishop of Salford on:

Date: 29th & 30th November 2023

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The school is fully compliant with the curriculum requirements laid down by the Bishops' Conference	✓
The school is fully compliant with all requirements of the diocesan bishop	✓
The school has responded to the areas for improvement from the last inspection	Fully

Summary of key findings

What the school does well

- The behaviour and attitude of the children in all aspects of school is exemplary; their positive attitude to school life is infectious.
- The staff team is incredibly strong and they are united in their mission to work tirelessly for the whole community.
- The pupils are very well cared for by a committed staff team and as a result show a deep personal respect for themselves and others.

What the school needs to improve:

- Broaden the opportunities for pupils to use their gifts confidently and independently to create, deliver and evaluate a variety of quality prayer and liturgy experiences.

- Improve the quality of learning by ensuring activities enable pupils to demonstrate a greater depth of knowledge and understanding.

Catholic life and mission

How faithfully the school responds to the call to live as a Catholic community at the service of the Church's educational mission.

Catholic life and mission key judgement grade:.....

1

Pupil outcomes

The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

1

Provision

The quality of provision for the Catholic life and mission of the school

1

Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic life and mission of the school

1



At St Herbert's, everybody is welcomed, respected and valued. At the centre of this are pupils who tell us they feel safe, cared for and as a result they are extremely happy at school. At every opportunity the children eulogise about their school and the opportunities afforded to them, they are rightly proud of their fully inclusive school. The pupils have many leadership roles within the school, pupil chaplains, *Laudato Si* leaders and student ambassadors, digital leaders etc, and they talk with great confidence about the impact they are having. This is because they are fully trusted by all staff who have high expectations of the pupils within their care. Kindness exudes all aspects of school and is clearly evident in every policy and action. As a result, behaviour around school and in lessons is exemplary and all the children are respectful and considerate to each other. As a group of children told inspectors, no one is ever left on their own, if anyone sees somebody that hasn't got someone to play with, they will be included by others. The children are particularly proud of the work they do to help others less fortunate than themselves. They talk very highly of the pastoral lead who supports the school and community in many ways including the "Food Bank Friday", which is having a significant impact on many within the community. The pastoral lead coordinates all donations from within the school and parish to ensure that the Food Bank Friday provides real support for those families who need it most. The 'pantry' does not just include food; it has grown to include clothes, warm blankets, toiletries and somewhere families can come for a non-judgemental listening ear.

As a result of the hard-working staff the school is genuinely at the heart of the community and everyone feels part of the Saint Herbert's family. The questionnaires undertaken by families and all parents and carers spoken to at the gates of school were overwhelmingly positive about the school and the support and care it offered to their children and the wider community. A recurring theme

when talking to families was the strength of pastoral support; nothing is too much for the hard working and dedicated staff. They all go above and beyond because they care passionately about the children and families in their care. The pupils also speak of kind and inclusive staff at the school. They gave examples of staff being compassionate with children with additional needs, 'they understand some children think differently and they are patient with them.'

The school's mission statement is clearly lived and understood by all within the community. As a result, all decisions and policy in school fully embrace the school's mission and ensure that Christ is at the centre of all aspects of school life. The school have an extremely strong leadership team who are committed to living out their faith and mission into their community. There is a genuine care and concern from all staff as a result. The head teacher is a strong role model and is committed, hardworking, knowledgeable and nurturing. The strengths of the head teacher came to the fore when she led the staff and community through a recent very challenging time, going above and beyond for all. The senior leaders are very well supported by a strong governing body. Catholic life and mission is always the first item on the governor's agenda and at meetings the governors always challenge and support in equal measure. The governors are constant visitors to the school and set a positive example for all members of the community by their presence. Links with the parish are very strong, and as a result the community have taken a lead with the diocesan *Hope in the Future* project and aspects of *Laudato Si*.

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade:.....

2

Pupil outcomes

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education.....

2

Provision

The quality of teaching, learning, and assessment in religious education.....

2

Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor, and evaluate the provision for religious education.....

2



The behaviour of the pupils observed in lessons was exemplary and as a result the children are enthusiastic and engage fully in religious education lessons. The pupils have good knowledge and they are religiously literate. The use of scripture is being embedded well across all key stages and the pupils understand scripture and can relate it to their everyday lives. One pupil was able to articulate that, after listening to a piece of scripture in class, they reflected on their behaviour and apologised to their friend for their actions. Pupils with special educational needs are very well catered for during religious education lessons with appropriate adaptations made to the curriculum so they can access it at their level. However, the curriculum and content of lessons needs to be adapted for those pupils who are capable of achieving a greater depth within their work. In addition feedback given to children needs to be developed as the pupils could not articulate what they needed to do next to improve. The standard of work in religious education lessons is good and comparable with other subjects taught within the school. Parents say they are well informed and shared that their children often recount aspects of their religious education at home and what they have learned, for example learning about the Quran and Islam.

All staff are well trained and have accessed recent, well-planned and relevant training to assist them in delivering religious education. All staff are committed to the value and importance of religious education which positively impacts on their pupils who see it as the most important subject. In addition, all pupils show high levels of moral and spiritual development as every member of staff is a very positive role model to all the pupils. Pupils shared that they enjoy their religious education lessons as they are afforded opportunities to reflect on their work and explore questions raised through the topics. In the best lessons observed, teachers gave opportunities for children to experience a depth of scripture, which was expertly unpicked and explored with the pupils. Teachers subject knowledge and use of questioning is good and, in some cases, excellent. The

sharing of good practice between the staff within school would help develop creativity and independence in all lessons. Religious education is a high priority in the school, and it is very well resourced throughout, particularly in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. The pupils sing brilliantly with song and music used very well to enhance the curriculum.

Leaders at all levels share a deep commitment to the teaching and development of religious education ensuring that it is highly valued by all as the core of the curriculum. As a result, it is a high priority within school and has parity with other core subjects in respect to standards, financing and timetabling. Continuing professional development is well planned and resourced and the school, particularly the subject leader for religious education, is very forward looking and proactive. However, the full impact of recent developments and training is yet to be fully embedded in lessons and teaching. The subject leader has a strong vision for religious education and is skilled at highlighting areas for development. Some thorough and thoughtful work has been undertaken recently to develop and enhance the scheme of work, the impact of which is starting to be evidenced in the lessons and work. The governors and headteacher are active and effective participants in the leadership of religious education and produced accurate self-evaluation of the school. Leaders are acutely aware of areas for development and the strengths of St Herbert's. The governors are kept informed by very detailed and informative termly reports from the religious education subject leader.

Collective worship

The quality and range of liturgy and prayer provided by the school.

Collective worship key judgement grade:.....

2

Pupil outcomes

How well pupils participate in and respond to the school's collective worship

2

Provision

The quality of collective worship provided by the school

2

Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for collective worship

2



Pupils are always actively engaged and participate well and fully in all prayer and liturgy provided by the school. There are some opportunities to experience a variety of prayer and liturgy, for example, reflecting in silence and through song, however the pupils at St Herbert's need to experience more spontaneity and awe and wonder within their prayer and liturgy sessions. The pupils have a great knowledge of the liturgical year from early years right through to Year 6. It is clearly displayed in every classroom and around school and children in the reception class were aware of the changes to the calendar as they enter the season of Advent. The pupils are afforded many opportunities to experience scripture and pupils articulate well the impact and meaning. The pupils undertake ministries with real confidence and enjoyment. The pupil chaplains are very enthusiastic advocates for prayer and liturgy within school and are proud to take a lead in its delivery and presentation. One amazing example was their podcast, 'ChaplainCast' of which they are rightly proud, it is inspiring. The pupils plan some sessions but now need to be given greater independence to develop their roles in planning prayer and liturgy completely independently and when leading and participating in spontaneous prayer. For example, only recently have they been given the opportunity to write their podcasts independently.

Prayer and liturgy is central to school life and the pattern of daily prayer, that reflects the rhythm of the prayer life of the church, is embedded throughout school. The cycle of prayer is well informed by the liturgical calendar, which is thoroughly understood by all members of the community. All staff are confident using scripture to enhance the experiences for the pupils and all scripture that was observed being used was accurately informed by the appropriate liturgical season. All staff, inspired by senior leaders, are in turn positive role models to the pupils when participating in and leading prayer and liturgy. The whole community is actively involved in the prayer life of the school and are always welcome. The school works very hard to ensure that there is a positive and meaningful partnership with the local parish and links are strong. All the classrooms have prayer

spaces and there are dedicated prayer areas around school. The areas are well cared for and used regularly and appropriately. Additional spaces are also utilised well when needed. For example, the children shared they used the 'sensory room' to pray the rosary with the families and how they created a prayerful space with their use of ambient lighting. Leaders and staff now need to include a variety of prayer and liturgy experiences to enhance the experiences of all participants.

Leaders and governors are mindful of key times in the liturgical year and the life of the school and ensure pupils have the opportunity to celebrate the Eucharist regularly. Leaders have also been mindful to include a well-planned continuing professional development programme that includes prayer and liturgy for the whole staff. As a result, all staff feel well equipped and supported when leading prayer and liturgy sessions with the pupils. The school's policy for prayer and liturgy needs to be updated to reflect the areas for development and enhancements to experiences. Pupil chaplaincy is a strength of the school and the opinions of pupils are beginning to be used to suggest improvements in the prayer life of the school. The pupils are very confident when talking about all aspects of their school and recently met with governors to share their action plan. They also led the governors in prayer at the meeting.

Information about the school

Full name of school	St Herbert's RC Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	105722
Full postal address of the school	Edward Street, Chadderton, Oldham. OL9 9SN
School phone number	0161 633 1318
Name of head teacher or principal	Mrs S Milligan
Chair of governing board	Mr P Devine
School Website	www.stherberts.education/home
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age-range of pupils	3-11
Trustees	Diocese of Salford
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	May 6 th 2016
Previous denominational inspection grade	Outstanding

The inspection team

Mark Mountcastle	Lead inspector
Anne-Marie Bell	Team inspector
Name of inspector	Lead/team
Name of inspector	Lead/team

Key to grade judgements

Grade	England	Wales
1	Outstanding	Excellent
2	Good	Good
3	Requires improvement	Adequate and requires improvement
4	Inadequate	Unsatisfactory and in need of urgent improvement