

**INSPECTION REPORT**

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**Inspection carried out Under Canon 806**  
**and in accordance with Section 48 of the Education Act 2005**

**St Philip's RC Primary School, Cavendish Road, Salford M7 4WP**

Inspection date: 30<sup>th</sup> January 2018

Reporting Inspectors: Brendan Hennessy, Anne Heard

Type of school	Primary
URN	105968
Age range of pupils	3 -11
Number on roll	370
Appropriate authority	The Governing Body
Chair of Governors	Peter Riley
Headteacher	John Barrett
Religious Education Co-ordinator	Evelyn Clayton
Date of previous inspection	April 2013

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 Catholic life of the school (incorporating Welcome, Welfare and Witness)	1	
The quality of Religious Education (incorporating Word)	1	
The quality of Worship	1	
The following pages provide reasons to support these judgements		

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

St Philip's Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary School serves the parish of Our Lady of Dolours, Salford. This is a larger than average sized primary school with 370 pupils on roll, including a 30 place nursery, 99% of whom are baptised Roman Catholic. The school building is over 100 years old and requires regular investment, however the best use is made of all the space available. The school is situated in an urban area of mixed housing. On entry to school the children's starting points are generally in line with the national average. Most pupils have made good or better progress in their learning by the time they leave at the end of KS2. The school currently has 9% of the children eligible for Pupil Premium, 13% with Special Educational Needs and 34% with English as an additional language. There are 20 teachers in the school, 17 of whom are Catholic, 5 hold the Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies.

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

- **The spiritual leadership of the head teacher, who leads by example and is supported by a dedicated senior leadership team, a committed governing body and talented staff team.**
- **The quality of Religious Education and spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is outstanding.**
- **The confident, happy and extremely well behaved children who are so proud of their school.**
- **The impressive staff teamwork that is evident throughout the school and the excellent relationships they foster with all members of the school community.**
- **Prayer and worship is at the heart of the school community affirming, uplifting and inspiring all members of the school family.**

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

Outstanding spiritual leadership has created a truly Catholic and inclusive school where all feel valued and respected. The school environment reflects the care and attention to detail that creates a positive and encouraging atmosphere for learning. Senior leaders have a clear focus on providing the best education for every child in school. The governors are very supportive and absolutely committed to ensuring that Catholic education of the highest standard is provided for all. The dynamic, hardworking teachers and classroom support assistants have created a warm, caring and safe space where children are encouraged to have high expectations in all areas of their lives. Prayer and worship are very much at the heart of this school, enriching everyone's experience of God's presence and enhancing their individual faith journeys. The teachings of Jesus and Gospel values are reflected in all aspects of the school. Creativity in all forms is evident in the high quality presentation of displays and religious artwork throughout the school. The quality of teaching in Religious Education is outstanding, with creative and inspiring lessons observed across the school. The happy, confident and well-mannered children thrive as they learn, play and pray together. Their behaviour and attitude to learning is exemplary; they are very proud of their school. Parents feel very welcome, included and valued; they state that there is a great supportive, family atmosphere throughout the school. The school takes every opportunity to build on the excellent links with the parish and home. Effective self-evaluation of Religious Education has ensured that the school has continued to develop since the last inspection. The areas for development noted in the last inspection have been met in full. The recently reviewed Mission Statement underpins every aspect of school life and is lived out by all in the school family.

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

St Philip's is extremely well led by an inspirational headteacher, who has a strong, spiritual commitment and a clear, shared vision for the education of the whole child. He is committed to providing opportunities for every member of the school community to reflect upon and come to a deeper awareness of this vision. The headteacher is supported by a dedicated leadership team that includes the RE subject leader; and an enthusiastic and talented staff team. The governors are deeply committed to the success of the school. They are actively involved in school and are very effective in providing support and challenge. The supportive parish priest is a regular visitor to school and all in school value his contribution to the

spiritual life of the school. Pupil leadership is well established through the Mission Teams, school council, prayer leaders, prefects, play leaders and play zone managers; pupil voice is prioritised in many areas of school life. Continuing professional development for staff, combined with rigorous, honest and accurate self-evaluation, has made a positive impact on the quality of provision in Religious Education. It 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. The headteacher and three senior leaders support other schools in the Diocese experiencing challenge and looking to improve. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is a great strength and permeates all aspects of school life. All school leaders do what they can to ensure that the development of the Catholic life of the school is at the heart of the school's thinking and practice.

#### **THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL (incorporating Welcome, Welfare and Witness) IS OUTSTANDING**

Respect for the dignity of the individual is clearly evident across the school and all staff set the example for children to follow. A warm, friendly welcome is extended to all visitors from the moment you enter St Philip's school. The staff team clearly demonstrate a caring nature for the children, parents and each other. This gives a sense of belonging and an affirming ethos throughout the school. The school welcomes parents and encourages their contribution to the life of the school. Parents commented that they feel appreciated and involved in all that their children do. They feel that respect for everyone underpins the school and describe it as "The best". St Philip's gives the highest priority to procedures to safeguard and protect. This good practice enables children and staff to feel safe and well cared for. Children with additional needs are extremely well supported with child centred learning support plans for those who need extra provision. Excellent relationships are evident based on love, care and respect. The staff are great role models for the children and their team work. The children are happy, confident, enthusiastic, polite and very well behaved. They state that they feel safe and know who to turn to if they are worried. The children are encouraged to make the right choices and treat each other with care and respect. The older children speak with great enthusiasm about their role in supporting and caring for the younger children. The children understand that it is important to help others and show compassion for those less fortunate as they support many local and international charities. The recently reviewed Mission Statement builds on the core values and aims of the previous one while allowing the school to focus on the unique aspects and growing diversity within the school community. It underpins every aspect of school life and is lived out by all in the school family. The children and staff take every opportunity to fulfil their Mission; they carry out their role as God's ambassadors on earth through their involvement in the prayer life of the school and demonstrating service to others on a daily basis. Children, parents, staff and governors quite rightly have a great sense of pride and belonging in this happy, caring Catholic school.

#### **THE QUALITY OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (incorporating Word) IS OUTSTANDING**

Religious Education is at the core of St Philip's school curriculum; it is the foundation block that allows the children to develop their sense of identity. All members of the school community are very clear about their Mission and take every opportunity to help the children to see how this impacts on their everyday lives. The school demonstrates a real commitment to creativity across the whole curriculum including Religious Education. This includes high quality displays, featuring appropriate references to Scripture, in every classroom, on walls, doors and in sacred spaces. Scripture is a real strength of the school, it is made relevant and meaningful to the children in many ways including their response to the weekly quotation from Scripture in their Reflect and Respond books. The quality of teaching in Religious Education is outstanding, with creative and inspiring lessons that engaged and challenged the children's learning evidenced across the whole school. All these lessons were well pitched and demonstrated excellent teacher knowledge and understanding of RE, consistently high expectations, good pace, appropriate challenge and engaging learning. Thoughtful questioning challenged the children and moved the learning on, including the effective use of 'big questions'. The staff work collaboratively to analyse the nature of challenge in lessons helping the children to become secure in expressing their thoughts. High standards are consistently achieved across the school, as evidenced in the children's books, in their contributions to lessons and work displayed around school. The children are rightly very proud of their Religious Education books and their class Reflect and Respond books. Constructive marking and feedback was consistent across the school, which ensured that children knew how to improve their work and enabled them to reflect on their learning and understanding of RE. They learn about other faiths in lessons, assemblies and from visitors to school, helping them to understand and respect the beliefs and cultures of others. Caritas in Action is used to help the children's understanding of social justice. Teaching Assistants are actively involved in the teaching of Religious Education and effectively interacted with pupils to support their learning and pastoral needs. Parents were extremely positive about the quality of Religious

Education provided for their children. They are very happy and enthusiastic about all that the children do in school. The children have an excellent attitude to learning and were happy and confident to share their understanding of their faith.

### **THE QUALITY OF WORSHIP IS OUTSTANDING**

Prayer and acts of collective worship are at the core of all that happens at St Philip's. The school demonstrates a high level of creativity in their worship, liturgies and celebrations; including purposeful action, mindfulness and private prayer. This was evident in the acts of worship, reflections in lessons and the prayer service. All were, without exception, prayerful, creative, uplifting and thought provoking spiritual experiences for all present. The singing and signing of hymns by the whole school family was joyful and inspiring. The children's Mission Teams, supported by the deputy headteacher and Mission Team leaders, have enhanced the quality of prayer and worship. They stated that they try to express their prayers in language that connects with other children so that they can "share our hopes and dreams". The children were very clear in expressing their understanding of the importance of the Prayer Room in the life of the school and in their own lives. Staff and 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. Staff offer extra-curricular opportunities that further develop the prayer life of the school, including the Prayer and Worship Club, Mindfulness Club, Gardening Club, School Choir and prayer and faith focused arts and crafts clubs. Each classroom has an age appropriate and relevant focal point for prayer, these are clearly valued by the children. The parish priest is very much a part of the school family and the strong links with the parish promote a deep-seated sense of service for each other. Parents were extremely positive about the range of opportunities the school offers for prayer and worship. They emphasized the wonderful school, home, parish links that helps to make "Everyday a nice day" for the children. A high level of dedicated funding and resourcing has enhanced the quality of prayer and worship.

### **AGREED AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT**

- **To share the outstanding practice that is so evident in all areas of the religious and spiritual life of the school with other schools.**