

INSPECTION REPORT

**HOLY NAME RC PRIMARY SCHOOL
 DENMARK ROAD
 MOSS SIDE
 MANCHESTER
 M15 5JS**

Inspection date 16TH October 2012

Reporting Inspectors Mr D Harrison and Mr D. Golding

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

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|----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Type of School | Catholic Primary |
| URN | 105516 |
| Age range of pupils | 3-11 years |
| Number on roll | 197 |
| Appropriate authority | The Governing Body |
| Chair of Governors | Mrs. L. Gonzalez |
| Headteacher | Mrs. Catherine Gordon |
| Religious Education Co-ordinator | Miss Marie Hackman |
| Date of previous inspection | October 2007 |

| 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 the Word of God community | 1 | |
| The quality of the Welcome community | 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 OF THE SCHOOL

Holy Name RC Primary School, Moss Side, is a Catholic primary school serving the inner city parishes of Our Lady's and St Alphonsus. There are 197 children on roll of which 30 are Nursery pupils. 84 are baptised Catholic. The school serves an area of high social deprivation and high mobility. The number of children eligible for a free school meal is well above the national average. 87% of children are from minority ethnic heritages and 32% have English as an additional language. There are over 20 first languages other than English in the school. The Headteacher has been in post for 12 years and she is supported by a stable and committed staff.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL

This outstanding Catholic school sits at the heart of its community as a haven of calmness and tranquillity. The school sees each and every child that enters its doors as a child of God. Their uniqueness is nurtured and treasured so that all children make outstanding progress in their learning, their personal growth and their readiness for the challenges of life. The children are a credit to their families and to their school.

The Headteacher has created an excellent team spirit and she is rightly held in high esteem by her colleagues, respected by parents and adored by the children. Correspondingly she values every person who shares in her work and so an atmosphere of contentment prevails. It is because of this that the school is so successful in meeting the aims of its mission statements and that the highest standards of work, prayer and friendship are evident. Underpinning the excellent work of the school are the commitment and devotion of the staff who consider their vocations as their life's work. Therefore all feel a deep sense of belonging and pride in what inspectors felt was an "oasis of hope". This is enriched in no small way by the active support of the Parish Priest who is a valued and respected member of the community. Great care is taken so that resources are managed to bring on the development of all at their own level.

And so Holy Name is a very happy school. Staff stay for many years and develop a true sense of belonging to the school. Families treasure the years their children have at the school because they see them grow in spirit and in friendship. Without doubt worship is a strength of the school and this shapes the outstanding behaviour of the children and the positive ethos of the school. Cultural differences enrich the day to day life of the school and the children, by the time they leave the school, are extremely well prepared to move forward with confidence to realise their hopes and dreams.

KEY STRENGTHS OF THE SCHOOL

- The inspirational leadership of the Headteacher and key leaders.
- The dedication and commitment of the staff to the Catholic nature of the school.
- The excellent provision of opportunities to praise God and to open one's heart and soul to listen to God.
- The outstanding behaviour of the children and the respect they show each other.
- The school's ability to reach out to those in need, both near and far.

AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT

To build on the significant strengths of the school by celebrating and evaluating the school's work under the 5Ws of Word of God, Welcome, Welfare, Worship and Witness.

THE QUALITY OF CATHOLIC LEADERSHIP IS OUTSTANDING :

Holy Name is an outstanding example of a school dynamically taking forward the Church's mission in education. Leadership from the inspirational Headteacher is central to school's vibrant faith life. There is a mutual support amongst all key leaders who inspire the excellent work that takes place here. Teamwork is central to the school's success and all staff willingly make key decisions with confidence because the direction of the school is well known, shared and unequivocal. The new RE Coordinator has great potential to provide energetic and inspirational leadership in her area and this is emerging in the confidence across the school in the teaching and learning in RE. The school has a passionate commitment to the most vulnerable and does everything possible to ensure systems and structures are in place to ensure the children live life to the full and thrive in a supportive and harmonious learning environment. Governors, under the considered guidance of the Chair of Governors, rightly trust the judgement of key leaders and actively support the excellent work taking place. They have an accurate measure of the school's strengths and keenly support the future direction of the school.

THE QUALITY OF THE WORD OF GOD COMMUNITY IS OUTSTANDING :

Holy Name is true to its mission in that it strives to be a joyful, peaceful and supportive place. The children feel their school is a perfect, caring, loving and happy family.

Every step taken by the school is centred on the Catholic faith and how it is manifested in this thriving community. RE sits at the core of the entire curriculum. From an early age the children learn about the importance of the presence of God in our lives. They celebrate how lucky they are to be part of God's family. In the Foundation Stage the children were learning about children in Africa and how we can help those in need. In the lessons observed, children benefitted from thoughtful teaching and the exceptional use of support staff. Hence learning was of the highest order and cleverly enriched by the judicious use of music and outdoor activities. In a Key Stage one class the children extended their learning with excellent use of drama to understand Old Testament stories. They met the challenge of the activity with confidence. The oldest children considered aspects of justice linked to the life of Martin Luther King. Outstanding teaching brought the concept alive and the quality and contribution from the children was excellent and inspiring. They produced work of high quality, shared their views and listened to each other with respect and interest. They referenced all their learning to scripture.

Inspectors looked at various samples of children's work from across the school including both creative and written work. Marking was consistent across the school. In the best cases it took the form of a dialogue between teacher and child with comments about improvements and next steps. Work set was at an appropriate level of pupil development and standards were broadly similar to those of literacy. Links were being made with the Church's liturgical year and the Sacramental Programme. One class wrote enthusiastically about the class visit of Father Pat, who talked to them about Baptism. Another class had undertaken some excellent work on parables requiring children to search in depth for the meaning hidden within the text.

The school has an effective action plan for RE and has already identified several key areas for future development including the further development of assessment when using The Way the Truth and the Life scheme.

THE QUALITY OF THE WELCOME COMMUNITY IS OUTSTANDING:

This is a very welcoming community that actively reaches out with respect for diversity (with regard to cultural, ethnicity and disability). The school encourages full participation in every area of school life. Parents are welcome to attend assemblies and many relish the opportunity to be involved. One parent said 'As a child I attended a Catholic school myself – this school makes me feel that I have come home'.

The warm welcome given to visitors extends from the office staff into every part of the school. The entrance hall is thoughtfully decorated with colourful and informative welcome displays. The school's mission statements are on display around the school (adult and pupil versions).

The quality of relationships across all parts of the school leads pupils and staff to a profound feeling of belonging. Retired teachers return in new positions to further contribute to school community. The school is well supported by the Parish Priest who is a regular and popular visitor to the school. On the day of the inspection he formally opened the school's Peace and Reflection garden. This was a project shared with students from the Manchester School of Architecture.

Holy Name RC Primary School is a sign of Good News in this community. The building and its grounds are respected and in good condition. The children look after the school, children act as playground friends to help others to feel comfortable and safe when playing. They are delightful ambassadors for their school.

THE QUALITY OF THE WELFARE COMMUNITY IS OUTSTANDING:

The school ethos is evident in the attitudes and manner of staff and children around the school. There is a supportive and friendly atmosphere. The children are nurtured from breakfast club at the start of the day through their lessons, at break and lunch times, through the Praise worship assemblies and into the wide menu of extra-curricular provision that is on offer to all children at the end of the day. The children speak warmly of friendly teachers and support staff who help them with their work.

Lovely manners and excellent behaviour are evident everywhere in this busy school. Children move around the building in a calm and orderly way. The staff make themselves readily available to parents and relationships are excellent. Attendance rates are good and staff are proactive in ensuring good attendance and celebrate together the fact that attendance is high and increasing.

Support staff work hard to support children during lessons. They are a strength of the school, constantly watching and working hard to focus the attention of the children on the learning taking place. All adults cultivate an attitude of respect for each other. The caretaker welcomed children at the door and was in attendance at the morning assembly. The school's open door policy is appreciated by parents.

The classrooms are nurturing places. Teachers speak quietly to children, no shouting or raised voices were heard during the inspection. This contributes significantly to the welfare and well being of the children. As a result children look up, acknowledge visitors and appear at ease with each other in school.

The school undertakes charitable work to support a variety of causes including CAFOD and CARITAS – St Joseph's penny. As an international school they have good links with people working in the missions. One such visitor, a worker in a deprived district of San Paulo, was in attendance on the day of the inspection.

THE QUALITY OF THE WORSHIP COMMUNITY IS OUTSTANDING:

Without doubt this is a strength of the school. Inspectors saw an excellent Collective Worship school assembly on the theme of the 'Year of Faith' at the start of the day. Prayer, in all its richness is at the heart of this community. Staff and pupils are confident and skilled in planning and leading prayer and worship. The children respect the moments of silent reflection and meditation beautifully. There was excellent use of music as children gathered and pictures and images were used creatively to help children focus on the wonder and beauty of God's creation.

A high level of creativity was evident in a Foundation stage assembly. This was a wholesome and special experience for all the younger children. Children were sent out into the school grounds with staff to collect items that became an offering to God.

The 'Praise' assemblies that have come to be such a joyful expression of our love for God are having a high level of impact on spiritual development in the school. These sessions, born from a parish link, are helping to shape the outstanding behaviour of the children and the positive ethos of the school. The gifted member of staff who has devoted so much of her time to helping children access the wonder of meditation and the joy of being close to God has given all staff and children confidence to be at ease in prayer. The school should actively seek ways to share this kind of worship with other schools across the Diocese.

Children pray at key points during the day. Each classroom has developed an RE focus point. Children pray with reverence and have confidence to share their joy in praising of God. The RE Coordinator is very enthusiastic about the development of RE and Spirituality in the school. She runs a popular prayer group and numbers of voluntary participants are high.

THE QUALITY OF THE WITNESS COMMUNITY IS OUTSTANDING:

As one enters Holy Name Primary School it is immediately apparent that this is a place where great efforts are made to nurture the spiritual development of all who learn and work here.

The children, many of whom start their journey from a starting point that is far from advantaged, are taken by the hand and led with profound commitment and love. Hence they meet God each day in the wonderful role models that every adult portrays and in the warm and tolerant friendships they bestow on one another. Every person is considered precious. The school sets out by its clear mission statements to be far more than a place of learning. It is a place where the progress of each child, in every conceivable facet, is celebrated and praised. The children know what makes their school thrive and enjoy its many successes. They have their own mission statement that they proudly bear witness to. Decisions about day to day life of the school are shared and everyone has a voice. Hence an ambience, steeped in the school's Catholic nature, is a strong feature. The children are proud that justice and equality are highly valued and they treat one another with exceptional compassion. They look to value God's creation and they have an impressive understanding of the diversity and richness of the world around them. One parent, whose children had been recently welcomed to the school, said 'Our lives were in a dark place but now we feel that the sun shines again – this school has turned our lives around!'

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**HOLY NAME RC PRIMARY SCHOOL
DENMARK ROAD
MOSS SIDE
MANCHESTER
M15 5JS**

Friday, 19 October 2012

Dear Children,

Thank you so much for making us so welcome when we visited your school last week. We will never forget your kindness and your smiling faces.

You will be very happy to know that we think you have an outstanding school. This is because you make everyone feel so welcome, you work very hard to be the best you can be and you look after one another in a very special way. You also give praise to God beautifully. This is what is expected in a Catholic school and therefore we are very proud of you and so is the Bishop.

We also think that the teachers and all who help them are very special too. They care for you so well and they want every one of you to do well. Mrs. Gordon and her team have a special job to do at Holy Name and we think they do it brilliantly.

We know your parents are very proud of you too! They know your excellent behaviour and your hard work help Holy Name to be a very happy school.

So well done to you all and please make sure to keep smiling – you have lots to be proud of!

God Bless

Mr Harrison and Mr Golding