

INSPECTION REPORT

St. Vincent's R.C. Primary School

Edenfield Rd

Norden

Rochdale

OL12 7QL

Inspection date	8 TH April 2014
Reporting Inspectors	Mr. A.J. Sowerby Lead Inspector Mr B. Hennessey Additional Inspector

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

Type of School	Roman Catholic Primary
URN	105831
Age range of pupils	3-11 years
Number on roll	420
Appropriate authority	The Governing Body
Chair of Governors	Mrs J. Harding
Headteacher	Mr S Callaghan
Religious Education Co-ordinator	Mrs J.Threfall, Mrs M Green, Mrs C. Thompson
Date of previous inspection	Spring 2008

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 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 AND CONTEXT OF THE SCHOOL DRAFT

St Vincent's Primary School is a larger than average sized primary school in Norden. It is situated in an area of mainly private houses but with some children coming from deprived areas within the borough of Rochdale. There are currently 419 children on roll, of which 82% of pupils are baptised Catholics. The indicative admission number is 60. The pupils who are aged 4-11 years are arranged in a range of single aged age classes. Most pupils 87.8 are from White British backgrounds, with a small number 12.2% who are from minority ethnic backgrounds, which is below the national average. There are currently 34 EAL children in school. The proportion of pupils supported at school action is below the national average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also below the national average. The proportion known to be eligible for pupil premium is 11.1% and those known to be eligible for free school meals is 6.4%. The needs of these learners range from moderate learning difficulties, to emotional and behavioural difficulties. Currently there are 9 children with a Statement of Special Educational Need who receives individual one to one support. The school has gained a number of awards, including Healthy School status, Eco Schools Silver Standard, International Schools Award, School Council Gold Award, "Sing Up" Gold Award and Food for Life Bronze Award. There are 13 full time members of the teaching staff of whom 12 are Catholic and 7 part time teachers 12 teachers have the Catholic Teachers Certificate. Level of attendance is high at 95.6% in 2013 and has been consistent for many years. No pupils have been excluded in the last 5 years.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL

St Vincent's is an outstanding Catholic Primary school. There is a wonderfully warm and friendly welcome given to all. All children are provided a Catholic education in a caring and supportive environment where differences are welcomed and celebrated. All children take a great pride in the school which is fully inclusive. The Word of God is central to the life of the school. The school works collaboratively with the parish priest where the whole Catholic community is seen as a united family. This ensures the pastoral and spiritual needs of all families and children are very well met. The dedicated Head Teacher, Deputy Head Teacher and Leadership Team have high expectations of adults and children. Together with the hard working staff they have created an ethos where everyone recognises the need to work together as a "family", showing love and concern for all its members. This work is further enhanced by the support of an effective Governing Body.

The children love coming to school and the school council, class representatives, chaplains, multi-cultural group and Eco Group groups all expressed how very proud they are of all the opportunities given to them. Pupils are friendly, polite and welcoming and their behaviour at all times is exemplary. They work hard to fulfil the high expectations of the adults who work with them. They enjoyed every opportunity to share with the inspectors their work. The staff and pupils demonstrate a very high level of respect, care and service to others. The very effective teaching and learning; the creative and imaginative use of the learning environment; as well as the high quality interactive displays which supports the children's faith journey; ensure that all children receive a vibrant Catholic Education. This is also enhanced by the many engaging and uplifting Acts of Collective Worship that the inspection team observed.

THE KEY STRENGTHS OF THE SCHOOL INCLUDE

- The effective and often creative teaching and learning opportunities
- The wide variety of the learning experiences provided for the children
- The high quality interactive displays
- The uplifting Acts of Collective Worship
- The inspirational leadership of the Head Teacher, Deputy Head Teacher and Senior Leadership Team supported by a highly effective Governing Body

THE QUALITY OF CATHOLIC LEADERSHIP

The quality of Catholic leadership is outstanding. There is excellent leadership at all levels of the school community which contributes significantly to the outstanding provision for Catholic Education that the school currently provides. The dedicated Head Teacher, Deputy Head Teacher and Senior Leadership Team

provide strong and decisive leadership by clearly living their vision for Catholic Education. They ensure that the development of the Catholic life of the school is at the forefront of the school's work. They are supported by a knowledgeable and effective Governing Body, and a parish priest who is a regular visitor to the school. They together with the other staff ensure that the teaching of R.E and the development of the Catholic Life of the School have an extremely high priority in school. The school has a clear plan for developing R.E across the school and this is reflected in the priority it is given. Evidence for this can be found in the school's clear self-evaluation plan, which is based on the 5Ws model. The school is aware of its next steps and has clear plans for implementing them. As a result the inspectors can verify that this evaluation is both accurate and reflective.

THE QUALITY OF THE WORD OF GOD is outstanding:

The Religious Education of the pupils is at the centre of the Core Curriculum. The staffing and resources devoted to RE are of the highest standard, reflecting its significance and importance in the school. Teaching is consistently good with some examples of outstanding practice across the school particularly in reception and Year 6. Pupils are challenged to engage with the Big Questions of the purpose and meaning of life throughout the curriculum. This could be seen particularly in those lessons where children were challenged to implement the gospel message in their own lives. Examples of this were seen in Year 6 where children were asked to reflect upon the examples of servant leadership given by Jesus at the Last Supper, in reception where the children were inspired to follow the example of the Jewish people welcoming Jesus into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday and in Year 4 where they were provided with the opportunity to understand the significance of the Passover Meal. Scripture is clearly known, understood and made relevant throughout the school. The staff and pupils demonstrate and can articulate the centrality and importance of the Word of God. There is evidence on the displays in the classrooms, corridors and halls of the importance of this. The home, school and parish links are inclusive, creative and effective. Pupils are actively trained in outreach to the local community. This can be seen in the vast number of charities that the school supports. These are not just the Catholic charities such as CAFOD and St Joseph's Penny but also the support the school gives to other local charities such as the British Heart Foundation, Children in Need and the Samaritans.

The Inspectors cite the following evidence to confirm their judgement:

Overall the standards of attainment, progress and hence achievement are outstanding. As the curriculum is based on the mission it is challenging, interesting and fulfilling. The children are developing the age appropriate knowledge and skills. The school has incorporated "The Way, The Truth and the Life" scheme. This is well supplemented by other R.E. resources so that as a result standards of teaching are good with many examples of outstanding practice.

Work in R.E is clearly as excellent as work in other subjects due to the high priority given to it in school. This was seen by inspectors in during the scrutiny of both the R.E and Literacy books. Marking was consistently good in R.E. The school has begun to develop a clear and coherent system for tracking the children's attainment in R.E. but it is not yet fully embedded in the school something which the school recognises.

Standards in RE are excellent. The children are encouraged to take the initiative and lead their own learning thereby developing their independence. This is evident in all classes. There are regular visits into and out of school to enrich the RE curriculum such as participating in joint Diocesan and parish masses.

The school has worked collaboratively to gather evidence so that the school has a clear strategy that includes all members of the school community in implementing the 5Ws across the school.

The introduction of a school chaplaincy team has further enhanced the development of the Catholic Life of the school and enabled children to take an active part in it. This was evidenced by watching a number of them lead a voluntary act of worship during the lunch time break which linked into the message given at the morning's assembly.

THE QUALITY OF WELCOME is outstanding:

There is a culture of welcome and all the pupils and staff demonstrate a very high level of confidence and outreach to all within the school community. Parents were keen to express their views by saying "You get a real welcome from the office staff every time you enter the school" whilst another commented on how well she had been supported by staff when she suffered a family bereavement. The Head Teacher has helped to create and maintain the lovely caring atmosphere that was evident throughout the school day. The

importance of the dignity of the individual is clearly evident at all levels. This could be seen in the way that all pupils and staff treated children with special educational needs. All members of the school community demonstrate a very high level of belonging and ownership of the school. Pupils are given a high level of responsibility in creating and sustaining the school's sense of welcome. Parents are very welcome into school and are encouraged to engage in their child's learning. This could clearly be seen in the way that staff from the reception classes met parents at the start of the school day and discussed with them any concerns that they had. The school have a very active P.T.A. who make very welcome members of the wider local community. Further evidence of this sense of welcome could be seen in the links that the school makes through its link with children in other schools and the parish.

The inspectors cite the following evidence to confirm their judgements:

New families are welcomed into the school with warmth by the opportunities which are created to visit the school and meet the whole team. Parents voiced to the inspector how the staff went out of their way to make them feel part of the community of St. Vincent's through the organisation of a variety of different social and fund raising activities. Parents are kept informed and up to date about the curriculum and events in school through the use of the school newsletter and school website. The school also ensures that the voice of the children is heard and respected. The School Council were keen to express their opinion about the changes they had brought about in school such as the provision of improved play facilities. Within school relationships are of the highest quality. The children in Year 6 take great care in looking after the younger children whilst one parent voiced the opinion of how the school went out of its way to make new parents welcome as well as making the children in Year 6 feel really special during their last year in the school. The school provides a wide range of fund raising and social activities to which all members of the school community are welcome. This has helped develop in both parents and children a great sense of social awareness and community spirit.

THE QUALITY OF WELFARE is outstanding :

The staff and pupils demonstrate a very high level of respect, care and service to others. This was witnessed in all classes where children feel confident and secure enough to tend to their personal needs without interrupting the learning of others. The structures and procedures ensure that all pupils and staff feel safe and are treated with respect and dignity. This was evidenced in the way that members of staff cared for children who were hurt or unwell. The Christ-centred ethos is loving, creative, highly positive and fosters understanding, empathy and forgiveness. All pupils and staff feel safe and free to express their opinions and know that these will be valued. Importance and recognition is given equally to all. The budget, staffing and resourcing decisions demonstrate a consistent commitment to Catholic stewardship throughout the school. The school is fully inclusive and lives out its mission to support all children by ensuring that all children receive additional support in order to fully access the whole curriculum.

The Inspectors cite the following evidence to confirm their judgements:

The physical, spiritual and mental well-being of each person is central to the school's mission. The school council discussed with the inspectors the need to reach out with kindness to others for example those less fortunate in the world. Children are caring and have a true sense of right and wrong.

The school is a very caring community where everyone is valued! Children during lessons listened respectfully to other pupils' ideas.

Calm support is offered by sensitive adults when children have difficulty remaining on task. Such role models ensure learning and good relationships develop. This could be seen in the way that children with special educational needs were managed within the classroom so that a purposeful learning environment was encountered.

The school stresses the importance of reaching out beyond its own community so that children feel part of God's world. The charity work is a living example of this as children support CAFOD, St Joseph's Penny and many other charities in special circumstances chosen by the children.

The children of the school council confirmed they feel very safe! The school goes to great lengths to ensure as far as possible children are free from worry and a happy, calm atmosphere is the norm. The school provides a wide variety of activities in order to ensure that this occurs. The mission is continued after school with a host of excellent clubs that are extremely varied hence meeting the needs and interests of all the children. Examples of this are the Rainbows Club, a variety of musical and sporting clubs as well as a Before and After School Club.

THE QUALITY OF THE WORSHIP COMMUNITY is outstanding:

The school provides a variety of worship opportunities for pupils throughout the school (prayer, reflection, liturgies) including small and large groups – which are appropriate to their backgrounds and faith experiences. All children are encouraged to participate in voluntary acts of worship which are appropriate to the Liturgical Year for example the children in both Key Stage 1 and 2 pray the rosary together during the month of October, whilst there is a voluntary act of worship on the first Friday of each month. The inclusive and reflective collective acts of worship help pupils to grow in confidence in prayer and develop a relationship with God. This could be seen in both the assemblies and the acts of worship where all the children were provided with the opportunity to reflect quietly upon the meaning of the gospel message. The provision of school retreats, the use of the Wednesday Word, and the provision and development of a variety of places for personal prayer across the school showed the whole school's commitment to the development of the Catholic Life of the School. The school has strong links with the parish of St. Vincent's where they participate in a variety of masses and other liturgical celebrations. One example of this are the class masses which are attended by both the children and parents.

The inspectors cite the following evidence to confirm their judgements:

The parish priest regularly celebrates Mass which the children attend in church. The school shares the celebration of mass with the parish. Key events are celebrated with special masses: the beginning of each school year, the parish and school feast day, Holy Days and at the end of the year.

There are strong links between the parish and the school particular with regard to the preparation of the children for the Sacraments of Initiation.

During Advent, Lent and the Easter season the school holds assemblies, liturgies and times of reflection/reconciliation that are all shared by the whole school community. The children are encouraged to voluntarily say the rosary during the month of October

There is a daily act of collective worship. These take place in a variety of formats but also are linked clearly to the Liturgical Year. Children pray in classes, small groups and individually with great reverence, respect and thought.

Pupils are comfortable with their feelings and have a good and knowledgeable vocabulary. Each class has a special area of focus. The children know many school prayers and compose powerful prayers for themselves. In many classes there were examples of displays of the children's own prayers.

Attractive displays which were seen around school are used to show and stimulate prayer opportunities. Hymns, music and singing enhanced the quality and enjoyment of prayer in school

The Gospel values are clearly evidenced throughout all the policies and procedures and have a significant impact on learning and the life of the school.

THE QUALITY OF WITNESS is outstanding:

All staff act as excellent role models for the children and help them in recognising that God is with them in every aspect of school life. Adults and pupils witness to the Mission Statement of the school, which informs everything and is explicit in policies and the lived experience of the whole community. Adults act as role models of the school's mission and values and as key promoters of the ethos of the school for the pupils and the school community's witness to the wider community. The staff and pupils feel confident and secure in their witness to Christ, the Gospel and the teachings of the Church. Pupils are confident in witnessing to the

beliefs and values of a Catholic community and are actively encouraged and supported in being pro-active citizens who participate in the decision-making processes at a local and national level. This is seen in the way the school promotes support for various charities so as to promote support for the Common Good. An explicit Catholic culture permeates the whole of school and is clearly identifiable through relationships, decision-making and actions.

The Inspectors cite the following evidence to confirm their judgement:

The entire school community recognises that God is at the heart of the school in their actions and their relationships. All live the word of God. The mission statement is the powerful tool which is used to demonstrate how the school bears witness to a loving God. All members of the school family meet God each day and strive to meet all the challenges involved in this witness.

The school mission is known and understood by all at appropriate levels. Relationships are outstanding at St Vincent's and a strong sense of teamwork and belonging exist.

The children have a highly defined sense of fairness and justice. They know their responsibilities in terms of equal opportunities, stewardship and reconciliation.

The inspectors noted at all times behaviour was outstanding. Children are respectful of each other. Adults working as a committed team have high expectations of the children and in this atmosphere the children thrive.

AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT:

To further enhance the development of assessment in R.E.

Dear Pupils

Thank you for making our visit to St. Vincent's so enjoyable when we came to inspect your school for the Bishop. We really enjoyed being with you. Thank you for looking after us so well and helping us to feel very welcome. St. Vincent's is an outstanding Catholic school.

We enjoyed being part of your lessons and were sorry not to see everyone. Thank you for showing us so much of your work and activities. We could see that you are very proud of your school and all that you have achieved together. We were particularly impressed that you thought that the most important part of your learning and life together was that you 'felt connected to one another as all part of God's family'. I know the Bishop will be delighted to hear this.

Your teachers are really helping you to learn very well and we were very impressed by your excellent relationships and behaviour. It was good to see so much of your Mission Statement coming through everything you are learning; your relationships and the special way you make everyone feel valued. It is wonderful to see a school made up of pupils and adults who get on so well together so that everyone is cared for as a member of God's family. This is a true reflection of being part of a Catholic community where everyone is welcome and has a place.

You have started using your new RE programme and are doing very well. You are a very creative school and we were most impressed by the way you work together so co-operatively in your lessons. The prayer services we saw were very good and uplifting experiences. Your teachers have started to develop an excellent way of assessing your knowledge of R.E. and we have asked them to continue to develop this with you.

God bless you all and have a really happy Easter holiday.

Yours sincerely,

Mr A.J Sowerby
Mr B. Hennessey
(Section 48 Inspectors)

Summary Report to Parents

CHARACTERISTICS AND CONTEXT OF THE SCHOOL DRAFT

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