

**INSPECTION REPORT**

St Gilbert's, Winton, Eccles, Salford

Inspection date Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> October 2013

Reporting Inspector Mrs Susan Gedzielewski  
 Mr Brendan Hennessy

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

Type of School Primary  
 URN 105954  
 Age range of pupils 3-11 years  
 Number on roll 263  
 Appropriate authority The Governing Body  
 Chair of Governors Mrs Anne Marie Horrocks  
 Headteacher Mrs Cheryl Fox  
 Religious Education Co-ordinators Miss Laura Deasy  
 Date of previous inspection March 2007

<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	1	
The quality of the Word of God community	2	
The quality of the Welcome community	1	
The quality of Welfare	1	
The quality of Worship	2	
The quality of Witness	1	
The following pages provide reasons to support these judgements		

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

St. Gilbert's is a Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary School in the Diocese of Salford situated in the Winton area of Eccles, Salford. It serves the parish of Holy Cross, St Matthew's and St Gilbert's. This is an average size primary school serving an area of increasing social and economic disadvantage. There are 263 pupils on roll including 30 full time children in the nursery. 96% of the children are baptised Roman Catholic. Over the last two years the school has increased their admission number into the Reception class due to pressure for places. Since the last inspection the school has experienced significant changes in leadership and teaching staff.

Attainment on entry is well below national average but children leave having made very good progress and results are significantly above national average. The school is predominantly White British although there are an increasing number of children in the EYFS from different ethnic groups. 9.5% of the children have English as an additional language which is below national average. 13% of the children are entitled to Free School Meals. The school currently has 14% of children on the Special Needs Register. The school has been awarded the International Schools Award, Geography Mark and Dyslexia Friendly School Award.

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

St Gilbert's is a good Catholic school and there are examples of outstanding practice. Strong leadership from the Headteacher has been central to the school sustaining and building upon good practice. The senior leadership creates an ethos which is inclusive, welcoming and prayerful; with high expectations of staff and pupils. The school community, including the governing body, work very hard to ensure the pastoral and spiritual needs of all learners are met. As a result, the children receive a Catholic education which enables them to understand their place in the world as future stewards who can influence, change and contribute to the common good for all people. The Religious Education Coordinator effectively leads the subject with enthusiasm and vision. Monitoring of the Religious Education curriculum has ensured that there has been significant development since the last inspection.

The celebration of Mass, prayer services and assemblies are well prepared and give the children many opportunities to develop and enrich their prayer life. There is a very good relationship with the parish and the parish priest is a regular visitor. Parents were extremely appreciative of all the things the school does to make them feel welcome and informed about their child's progress. Pupil voice and responsibility is actively promoted and pupils take their responsibilities seriously. Pupils are extremely proud of their school.

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

- **The spiritual leadership from the inspirational Headteacher is outstanding. Staff and governors share a collective vision and demonstrate a deep commitment to the Church's mission in education.**
- **Relationships, behaviour and care for all within the school is outstanding.**
- **Welcome for all member of the community is outstanding and the outreach to parents / carers is exemplary.**
- **Enthusiastic leadership from a dedicated Religious Education Co-ordinator has led to important improvements in Religious Education and the spiritual life of the school.**

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

St Gilbert's is led by a dedicated and inspirational Headteacher with the help of a very competent governing body. Since the last inspection the school has experienced significant changes in staff. During these many changes, its core mission has remained at the heart of all it does due to the Headteacher's effective leadership. New teachers have been effectively inducted and mentored to ensure standards in Religious

Education are maintained. The governors are supportive, proactive and committed to the aims of the school. Their responsibilities are undertaken effectively and they ensure that the mission of the Church is evident in school policies and practice. They have been instrumental in shaping the vision of the school especially in the development of the new Mission Statement. The Chair of Governors works closely with the Headteacher to ensure all the governors are aware of current issues and educational developments and views of the parents are sought through informal discussion and questionnaires. Strong leadership from the Religious Education coordinator has ensured that there has been significant improvement since the last inspection. Over the last two years several new initiatives have been introduced to strengthen the Catholic life of the school and address areas for improvement. Rigorous monitoring has led to improvements in curriculum RE, learning, marking and assessment. SMSC education is fully embedded across all areas of the curriculum. The sacramental programme is delivered by catechists from the parish extremely effectively. The school is very supportive and attends all the sacramental celebrations in the parish. All members of the school are committed to the parish and the local community.

### **THE QUALITY OF THE WORD OF GOD COMMUNITY IS GOOD**

The school is continually developing the RE scheme, The Way, The Truth and The Life through creative approaches to teaching. Teaching and learning across the school was found to be good. Religious language was promoted in the best lessons and pupils were confident in their use of religious terms. Teachers have strong subject knowledge and lessons are effectively organised and managed. Pupils are well motivated and engaged, and are very proud of their books and the tasks they undertake. During the inspection, a lesson in Year 6 began with a reading of gospel from the previous Sunday. The children then very competently discussed the miracle of Jesus and how these stories could be relevant in our lives today. This led to a drama activity that presented the children with greater opportunity to lead their learning. Year 5 pupils reflected upon their own talents and gifts from God. In Year 2, the children examined how people feel in times of difficulty. They wrote a prayer in the character of Daniel, thanking God for his help. In the EYFS, the Reception children created a visual image of the story of creation on the hall floor using fabrics and toys. The children were able to talk about God's world and the need to look after it.

In all year groups, lessons moved forward quickly and pupils achieved the learning objective. Teaching Assistances effectively interacted with pupils and supported their learning to a high standard. Standards and expectations in Religious Education are at least as good as those expected in literacy and teachers are always looking for ways to challenge high achieving pupils as well as supporting those with additional needs. Marking is moving the learning on and pupils are given time to respond to teacher comments. Pupils Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural education was found to be outstanding and throughout all aspects of the school. Pupils learn about other faiths through the RE scheme, assemblies and a multi-faith week. The Religious Education budget is set according to the needs of the curriculum and the Catholic life of the school and is adjusted on a yearly basis in line with other core subjects. The school intend to review timetables to ensure a minimum of 10% curriculum Religious Education is spread across the week.

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

The welcome extended to all pupils, parents, visitors and staff is underpinned by a common vision built on Gospel Values and the Mission Statement. The pupils and staff clearly understood the importance of welcoming others into their community. The School Administrator is friendly, efficient, professional and helpful. Parents feel able to come into school to discuss concerns both informally and at the parents' meetings arranged by the school. Outreach and support for EAL families is exemplary. Morale is high across the school, because staff are effectively led, coached and nurtured.

Parents were extremely appreciative of all the things the school does to make them feel welcome and valued. As one parent said "I love this school", stating that everyone is made to feel valued and equal. New families and pupils are welcomed into the school community through a variety of activities to ensure a smooth induction. The vast majority chose to send their child to the school because they know from other

parents that as well as high academic standards their children will be cared for in an atmosphere of love and inclusion. All members of staff demonstrate a keen sense of community affiliation and the quality of relationships exemplifies respect for all members of the school community. Children are happy and proud to be a member of St Gilbert's.

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

Parents spoke highly of the pastoral support their child receives in school. Staff have high expectations of all groups of children and encourage them to fulfill their maximum potential. Throughout the inspection the staff and children demonstrate respect and care for each other. Behaviour in the classrooms and around the school is exemplary. Comments about the behaviour of the children from visitors and places visited are very positive. Forgiveness, reconciliation and living life to the full is encouraged. Pupils are very happy in school and feel safe and secure. Pupils are confident that teachers will treat their concerns seriously. All staff follow procedures set out in the schools behaviour policy and there are a various reward schemes in operation and celebrated in assembly. The school promotes high attendance and punctuality.

The quality of transition is such that all children quickly feel part of the school community. Excellent attention is given to all aspects of care, guidance and support. The provision for SRE and drugs education is through the school's nurse for Y6 pupils, although the school is working alongside various partners to source a new scheme of work for all year groups. Teachers are approachable and parents feel able to talk with them about issues that concern them. The school works closely with external agencies to support those parents who need extra support. For example, a child was collected from home when the family struggled to get her to school and another child received a free place at breakfast club in order to support the family. All statutory policies and procedures are in place and rigorously adhered to due to regular training for staff and monitoring of practice. The before and after school club is well attended and praised by parents. The level of support provided by staff at lunchtime play was outstanding.

Pupils within the school clearly have a voice and are listened to through School Council and other initiatives. Staff and Year 6 pupils have been trained by outside agencies to act as 'Peer Mentors' to other pupils using the 'restorative justice' approach. The 'eco warriors' group helps to make decisions about how to make the school greener and more environmentally friendly.

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

The spiritual life of the children is held in high regard with pupils afforded opportunities every day to be involved in collective worship. All classes pray together in the morning, at lunchtime and at the end of the day. Significant improvements have been made since the previous inspection to make prayer and acts of worship more child-focused. Pupils are encouraged to write their own prayers and place them into the class 'prayer box'. Each day, one prayer is taken from the box and read. During the inspection, children in Year 2 were invited to say a thank you prayer spontaneously using their own words. Children are reverent and respectful during prayers. All children are encouraged to speak to God in their own way. There are focal points in classrooms for prayer.

The school Mission Statement is a prominent feature for reflection and is written as a prayer. There are KS2 masses weekly to which families and parishioners are invited and these are prepared by children. Parishioners have been extremely complimentary about the weekly mass and the children's behaviour during the service. Whole school assemblies reflect on personal faith, moral issues, festivals, special occasions and other religions and cultures. Children respond in an extremely positive way to collect worship opportunities. During inspection the assembly led by Year 4 was reflective and presented with confidence and clarity. Through drama and prayer, the Old Testament story was related to the pupils' every day experiences. The choir enhanced prayer during this assembly and the choir frequently sing at masses and in public. Teachers are confident in planning and leading prayer and worship. Year 1 and Year 5 came together during the inspection for a joint class liturgy; this is common practice in school.

The school actively prepares pupils to take a leadership role in engaging with families and the parish in prayer and worship. Key times are celebrated with special assemblies, services and masses. A child-friendly 'order of the Mass' is used to engage and help build an understanding. The religious life of the school has been enhanced this year with the introduction of a 'Minnie Vinnie's' prayer group. This initiative actively supports prayer and worship, witness, community and 'pupil voice'.

### **THE QUALITY OF THE WITNESS COMMUNITY IS OUTSTANDING**

All members of staff and governors are active in shaping the school as a Catholic learning community. Gospel values were clearly evident in policies, procedures and relationships. There was frequent reference to the mission statement in school life. Witness to Christ and the values of the Gospel are evident in displays and children's work. The school is very effective in encouraging and supporting its pupils to develop a relationship with God. Holy Week is the highlight of the school year with all members of the school community bearing witness and taking part in collective and reflective prayer sessions including The Stations of the Cross and a Passion Play. It fosters a spirit of awe and wonder through religious education and the broader curriculum. The newly established 'Minnie Vinnie's' group are positively supporting the spiritual life of the school and could easily be incorporated into a chaplaincy team.

The children clearly demonstrated justice, compassion and love in their daily lives and it is clear that they are witnesses to Christ's forgiveness and reconciliation. The school works hard to develop children's empathy for others and care for the wider community. The pupils are keen supporters of local and international charities. The support for vulnerable families is exceptional. Observations during the inspection showed that children treated each other with respect, care, patience, concern and with dignity. Close links with the parish are enhanced with visits of the Parish Priest and the work of the catechists for the sacramental programme.

### **AGREED AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT**

- **To explore different approaches to teaching Religious Education in order to challenge the most able: empowering pupils to be creative, independent and reflective learners.**
- **Continue to improve reflective and meditative prayer life within the school and links with the parish.**

Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> October 2013

Dear Pupils

Thank you so much for the wonderful welcome you gave us when we came to visit you. We really enjoyed learning about all the wonderful things you do at St Gilbert's. You and your teachers are working hard to always do your very best and as a result your school is good.

We enjoyed being part of your lessons and were sorry not to see everyone. Your work is of a high standard and I could clearly see that you have good knowledge of bible stories and the Church. We particularly enjoyed talking to you about your wonderful school and looking at your work. Thank you for showing us so much of what you have been doing.

It was wonderful to see how you participated in Collective Worship and the way you link year groups for Class Liturgy. Your behaviour was exemplary and your prayers were uplifting.

You are obviously proud of your school and the uniform you wear. Your school is beautiful and the displays are outstanding. It was good to see so much of the Mission Statement coming through everything you are learning; your friendships and the special way you make everyone feel valued.

Your teachers are keen to help you develop the Catholic life of your school even further by exploring different approaches to teaching Religious Education in order to challenge you even further to be creative, independent and reflective learners. They would also like to continue improving reflective and meditative prayer life within the school and links with the parish.

God bless you all and have a really happy term.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Susan Gedzielewski and Mr Brendan Hennessy

(Section 48 Inspectors)

 **DIOCESE OF SALFORD**  
Department for Formation, Office for Education

**Summary Report to Parents**

On 17<sup>th</sup> October 2013 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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