

INSPECTION REPORT

Telephone: 0161 817 2204

Email: education@dioceseofsalford.org.uk

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

Name of School **Holy Trinity RC Primary School, Halifax Road, Brierfield, Nelson BB9 5BL**

Inspection date 20th June 2019

Reporting Inspectors Anne Heard, Carl McIver

Type of school	Roman Catholic Primary
URN	119652
Age range of pupils	4-11
Number on roll	103
Appropriate authority	The Governing Board
Chair of Governors	Margaret Borman
Headteacher	Mary Lyle
Religious Education Subject Leader	Elizabeth Carney
Date of previous inspection	11 th July 2014

The Inspection judgements are:	Grade	Explanation of the Grades
Overall effectiveness of the school	1	1 = Outstanding 2 = Good 3=Requires Improvement 4 = Inadequate
Catholic Leadership	1	
The Catholic Life of the school (incorporating Welcome, Welfare and Witness)	1	
Religious Education (incorporating Word)	1	
Collective Worship	2	
The following pages provide reasons to support these judgements		

CHARACTERISTICS AND CONTEXT OF THE SCHOOL

Holy Trinity Roman Catholic primary school is a smaller than average primary school with 103 children on roll. The school serves the parish of St. John Southworth in Nelson, Lancashire. 70% of pupils are baptised Catholic and all teaching staff are Catholic. Four out of five permanent teaching staff have completed the Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies. The deputy headteacher was appointed in September 2018. There are currently five permanent teachers, one temporary teacher and five teaching assistants. Some classes are mixed age groups due to the number on roll. 9% of pupils are eligible for the pupil premium grant. 12% of pupils have been identified as having a special educational need. The number of children with English as an additional language has been slowly rising over the past few years. Currently 18% of children fall into this category, with many having an Eastern European heritage. Attendance in 2017/18 was 96.6%. The school has gained several awards including The Fair Achiever Award, The Gold Behaviour Quality Mark and The Silver Eco Award. There are plans to provide nursery provision at the school from September 2020.

THE KEY STRENGTHS OF THE SCHOOL INCLUDE:

- **Catholic leadership provides vision for ensuring all children receive a high-quality Catholic education.**
- **The catholicity, confidence and happiness of all pupils.**
- **The hard-working and dedicated whole-school team who ensure children grow and thrive in a loving community.**
- **The welcome offered to all in the school community.**

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL IS OUTSTANDING

Holy Trinity is an outstanding Catholic primary school. The school is led by an aspirational headteacher who, together with senior leaders, strive to provide the very best education for all pupils in their care. They have high expectations of all, and this is evidenced in the outstanding behaviour and attitude of the children. Pupils are confident, enthusiastic and show pride in the work they produce. This is a happy school where excellent relationships are fostered. Staff act as role models and the children respond positively to this. At the heart of the school is a true commitment to the teachings of Christ and this is evidenced in all aspects of school life. The committed, hard-working governors know the school well. They have been involved in the self-evaluation process and have an agreed, clear vision for the school. Governors and the parish priest share the leaders' commitment to the evangelization of the children and their families. A love of God is central to all aspects of the Catholic life of Holy Trinity. All pupils are loved and supported by the committed staff team who are true advocates in addressing the mission statement – 'To go forward together in Christ, respecting our neighbour and striving for excellence'. Welfare is a significant aspect of what Holy Trinity stands for. There are numerous examples that show how the staff support families with difficult issues to address. The teaching of Religious Education is confidently delivered by enthusiastic and knowledgeable practitioners who provide stimulating and engaging lessons which are well planned in order to meet the differing needs of all children.

THE QUALITY OF CATHOLIC LEADERSHIP IS OUTSTANDING

There is a strong sense of commitment, dedication and teamwork that is evident in all areas of leadership at this school. The enthusiastic and hard-working headteacher, supported by the deputy headteacher, shows a strong sense of moral duty and determination to provide the very best education for all pupils who attend Holy Trinity primary school. They work effectively as a team in ensuring the mission of the school is fully fulfilled in all aspects of school life. Their vision that all within the school and its community should grow closer to Christ is evident in the day-to-day life of the school and the interactions with pupils, parents and staff. Senior leaders act as positive role models, ensuring that Christ is at the centre of all decision-making. There are numerous pupil leadership roles, including the school council, eco team and GIFT pupil chaplaincy team. The children are confident leaders who are able to express their ideas and have an influence over decisions made in the school. Year 6 pupils are 'gardeners' to reception children's 'seeds', acting as role models and nourishers in teaching the youngest children about expectations at Holy Trinity. The GIFT pupil chaplaincy team take on

their roles with enthusiasm and vigour. They lead some acts of Collective Worship and are supported in this by a member of the staff team. The strong governing board play a pivotal role in the life of the school. Governors are regular visitors, providing written reports to the governing board about their findings by undertaking learning walks and meetings with subject leaders. Governors share a desire for the school to achieve success for all pupils in a truly Christ-centred school. They are knowledgeable about the school and are aware of the strengths and areas for development. They play an active role in the self-evaluation process and are therefore very knowledgeable about the unique nature of Holy Trinity. All leaders fulfil their roles in collaborating with each other to ensure excellence is achieved and that all pupils are loved and supported. In particular, the dedicated leaders ensure that the children and families that are more vulnerable than others are provided with a safe haven where they are valued and respected.

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

The welfare of all at Holy Trinity is a priority. Senior leaders ensure policies and procedures are in place to provide a safe environment for all stakeholders. Children talk about how they feel listened to and are confident to approach adults when any type of difficulty arises. Three members of staff are trained to deliver bereavement support through Rainbow Groups. The staff are all committed to ensuring that they create an environment where children and adults develop excellent relationships, following Christ's teaching and Gospel values. This is an outward-facing school that has links with both local Catholic primary and secondary schools and works collaboratively with the local community academy. Children as well as staff are involved in these initiatives where schools work together to enrich and enhance learning opportunities. Holy Trinity is a happy, friendly school where all are welcomed and made to feel valued. One child talked about how she joined the school in Key Stage 2 and she has not forgotten the welcome she received on her first day. The school sets out to ensure all children have their needs fully met. Children are supportive of their peers who sometimes find it difficult to conform to expectations. They have a warmth and genuine respect for each other, and this was clearly demonstrated in observations of the children and their interactions with each other. Gospel values underpin all aspects of school life. Older children are able to explain eloquently how they try to live their lives following the teachings of Christ. They take on roles and responsibilities ensuring that they act as role models for others. Older children spoke about their concerns for the environment and are confident to act as stewards for change. From an early age, children are encouraged to think of others and numerous fundraising activities and acts of charity take place throughout the year. Every child attending Holy Trinity is given the opportunity to grow in the teachings of Christ through the experiences they have and the role models they encounter.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (incorporating Word) IS OUTSTANDING

The Religious Education subject leader has ensured that the teaching of Religious Education is given the highest status. The purchase of the 'Come and See' scheme, alongside 'The Way, The Truth and The Life', ensures that a deep and varied curriculum is used to develop and enrich the children's learning in Religious Education. Lesson observations and discussions with the children showed that staff are confident in their delivery and knowledge of the curriculum. Differentiated tasks and outcomes provide challenge across all age groups. In particular, children at an early stage of learning are provided with exceptional learning opportunities which allow both targeted and continuous play learning opportunities to develop their Religious literacy. Inspectors witnessed excellent relationships between staff and pupils. Children listen attentively and are fully engaged in their learning. They reported that they enjoyed Religious Education lessons because the teachers made them fun and interesting. Whilst big questions are used, the inspectors believe that the children are able to delve even further into the purpose and meaning of life by engaging in more abstract questions, where they would be further challenged in their thinking. Senior leaders have ensured that funding is available to support the subject. Every child in Key Stage 2 has access to a Bible and in all classes high quality resources and artefacts are used as aids to learning. Parents commented positively on their children's knowledge of the Catholic faith and referred to how they were eager to talk about this at home. The majority of parents have nothing but praise for the school and the standards achieved by pupils across the curriculum. Artefacts around the school as well as the display of the Mission statement in all areas helps to reinforce the Catholic faith and its teachings. Further evidence of this are the numerous Sacred Scripture quotes that the children made reference to. The inspectors were very impressed with the depth of knowledge of the pupils in Religious Education.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP IS GOOD

Regular acts of Worship - both whole-school and class-based - provide opportunities for staff and children to build their relationship with God. The parish priest is a weekly visitor and frequently celebrates Mass at the school. The GIFT pupil chaplaincy team are given opportunities to lead acts of Worship for the whole school. They are very confident in this and would now benefit from gaining more independence in planning, structuring and delivering prayer and worship sessions. Similarly, they could have a more prominent role across the school, where they are recognised as GIFT pupil chaplains. During the acts of Collective Worship observed, the children were very attentive and prayerful. They are building up their knowledge of traditional prayers and some opportunities are given to write their own prayers. The school is committed to developing worship in all its forms and recognises the role of the GIFT pupil chaplaincy team in this. The Sacramental programme offers opportunities for the parish and school to come together. Whilst the programme is parish-based, the parish priest is very keen to engage with families in developing their spiritual life and enriching their relationship with God. The school, staff and parish priest work closely together with this goal in mind. Parents receive regular newsletters and texts about assemblies and Masses and are warmly invited to attend. Similarly, the school reaches out to involve parishioners in school life. Newsletters contain a Scripture passage and each Monday's assembly is themed around the Gospel readings from Sunday's Mass. The school has purchased a wealth of materials and artefacts for both classroom prayer areas and for prayer and worship opportunities, and it is very clear that all members of the school staff confidently act as role models in how they help to develop the prayer life of the school and the spirituality of the children and their families.

AGREED AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT

- **To further develop opportunities for pupil-directed acts of worship within the classroom and beyond.**
- **To ensure all children are consistently challenged throughout the curriculum to engage with the 'big questions' of the purpose and meaning of life.**
- **To fully develop independence in the roles of the GIFT pupil chaplaincy team.**
- **To ensure consistency in subject leadership following the imminent change of the Religious Education subject leader.**