



DIOCESE OF SHREWSBURY

REPORT ON THE MONITORING INSPECTION OF OUTSTANDING SCHOOLS

THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

School: Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School
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Headteacher: Mrs J Bramhall

Chair of Governors: Mr P Nixon

Date of Inspection: 8 July 2015

Inspector: Mrs R Hedger

Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School continues to be an outstanding and effective Catholic school. The welcoming environment, the care given to displaying all pupils' work and the high quality of pupils' written work demonstrates day to day that the children feel valued and all their efforts are acknowledged.

Collective Worship is a strength of the school and has been extensively developed to enable all pupils to participate in meaningful Acts of Worship which engage and inspire them. Pupils are very proud of their ability to prepare and lead worship and are appreciative of the trust given to them by the staff. They spoke with confidence and enthusiasm about their preparations. Year 6 pupils were eager to talk about the Collective Worship they lead each week with the Reception class. Each class has a book recording the weekly class Collective Worship. These books are valued and displayed on the class altar. They record the planning, the preparation and the sequence of the prayer service, including notes and pictures and demonstrate that pupils are skilled in using a variety of ways and means to support their private and public prayer, including silent meditation. Since the last inspection, the school has developed a beautiful prayer garden for both pupils and staff, where there are opportunities for prayer and reflection. Pupils and staff are able to sit, relax and pray in this tranquil setting. Pupils say this is a favourite place for their Collective Worship. When asked "why is it important to pray?" one pupil replied saying "because it gives you a chance to take time to talk to God, and sometimes you can just listen." The school has successfully introduced the praying of the Angelus each day.

The inspector observed a whole school assembly lead by Year 5 pupils. The pupils have been studying "People of Other Faiths" and had worked together to plan and prepare the assembly. They used the story of the Good Samaritan to help us understand the importance of tolerance and respect for others. Throughout the assembly the children were attentive and prayerful. They sang beautifully with confidence and enthusiasm. This assembly was attended by the whole school, including all staff, some governors and parents. After the assembly the parents met with the inspector and were keen to talk about the Friday Mass. Each week two classes attend the Friday Mass in the parish church. The children work closely with the Parish Priest, they lead the prayer and the singing and this is very popular with the parishioners.

During the 'learning walk', the inspector visited every class. In each class, there was evidence of high standards of teaching and learning. Evidence of outstanding provision could be found in the children's books; in the quality of displays around the classrooms given to the children's work from 'The Way, The Truth and The Life'; in the conversations between the children and their teachers; and in the teachers' planning notes, which included clear differentiation based on previous assessments. The school makes good use of the 'I Can' statements for assessment. The Senior Leadership Team have established effective systems to monitor and moderate pupil progress. They are currently working together with staff to develop an improved tracking system for the school, in line with the literacy and numeracy systems, so that pupil progress can be better analysed.

The children are enthusiastic learners and are keen to talk about their Religious Education experiences. When asked about their lessons in Religious Education one pupil explained that "the teachers are really nice and they make every lesson fun, even the ones which could be boring are fun."

The energetic and dedicated Headteacher leads a highly motivated leadership team, which includes the Religious Education subject leader. They have a clear understanding of the school's Mission and together they strive to motivate and inspire the other staff. With the governors, they are passionate about the ongoing development of the entire potential of every person – children and adults alike. Professional development is seen as a key element in the success of the school and staff work collaboratively to share best practice. Non-Catholic staff are confident in their teaching and appreciate the support given by the Headteacher and the leadership team.

The School Council and the newly established Mini Vinnies are very proud of the contribution they have made to the school.

Areas of Outstanding Practice

Outcomes for pupils

The pupils value and respect the Catholic traditions of the school and through their presence at the Friday Masses have developed and strengthened the links with the parish and wider community. The pupils demonstrate a high level of religious literacy.

The newly established Mini Vinnies group have visited the Starlight Ward at Wythenshawe and have organised fund raising events in school and are very proud of raising their first £300. They are enthusiastically looking forward to their next event.

Leaders Governors and Managers

The leadership of the school is outstanding. The Catholic ethos of the school is paramount. The focussed and dedicated Senior Leadership Team together with the Governing Body ensures the school is an integral part of the community and of the parish. The school is looking to develop the success of the Friday Masses and introduce opportunities for parents to visit the school and experience a variety of ways to pray. Senior leaders recognise the importance of staff development and actively encourage and support staff to grow in their own faith. A retreat has been planned for all staff next term, and all staff will be attending training provided by the Diocese.

Provision

Teaching is consistently highly effective in enthusing pupils. Quality resources, including technology are used effectively and are visible around the school.

The quality of Collective Worship is outstanding. All children participate in Collective Worship with reverence and respect. There are opportunities for children to pray, reflect and meditate. All classrooms have an altar, which reflects the liturgical year and children are given responsibility for preparing and leading prayerful sessions throughout the week, in a variety of settings. Children are enthusiastic participants in prayerful Acts of Worship and liturgical celebrations.