

**INSPECTION REPORT**

**St Augustine of Canterbury RC Primary School, Burnley, Lancashire BB12 6HZ**

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Inspection date 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2016  
 Reporting Inspectors Brendan Hennessy  
 Anne Heard

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

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Type of School Primary  
 URN 119491  
 Age range of pupils 5 -11  
 Number on roll 215  
 Appropriate authority The Governing Body  
 Chair of Governors Fr Michael Haworth  
 Headteacher Sinead Baker  
 Religious Education Subject Leader Pamela Ratcliffe  
 Date of previous inspection March 2011

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<b>The Inspection judgements are:</b>	<b>Grade</b>	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	1	
The quality of the Welcome	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**

St Augustine of Canterbury Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary School serves the parish of St Augustine of Canterbury, Burnley. This is an average sized primary school, situated in a mixed urban area of Burnley. There are 215 pupils on roll: 65% of pupils are baptised Roman Catholic; 31% of pupils are have been identified as entitled to Pupil Premium, 17% have been identified with Special Educational Needs and 2.5% speak English as an additional language. On entry to the reception class the attainment of the majority of pupils is in line with the national average. Most pupils have made good or better progress in their learning by the time they leave at the end of KS2. There are 7 teachers currently in school: 5 of whom are Catholic - a new deputy head teacher will be starting in June; and 4 teachers and the lay chaplain have or are currently studying for the Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies. School provides extended provision for children both before and after school. The school holds a number of national and local awards recognising excellence including; Healthy Schools, Learning Excellence, ICT Mark and PE Mark.

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

St Augustine's is an outstanding Catholic school that offers a deep faith experience with Christ clearly at the centre of all aspects of school life. The strong Catholic ethos that is so evident throughout the school has helped to create a vibrant and inclusive community where the happy, confident children thrive as they learn, play and pray together. The inspirational headteacher has a clear vision and aspiration for the school. She is supported by a dedicated RE subject leader and enthusiastic staff who do all they can to ensure that the spiritual and pastoral needs of all are met. The parish priest and governors are very supportive and absolutely committed to ensuring that Catholic education of the highest standard is provided for all. Everyone in school understands and lives out the school's mission in all aspects of school life, ensuring all do indeed "Learn with Jesus as our inspiration". The gospel values are very evident across the school and underpin all that happens in this warm and friendly school. Prayer and worship are very much at the heart of the school enriching everyone's experience of God's presence and enhancing their individual faith journeys. The quality of teaching in Religious Education is always at least good and more often better, with creative and inspiring lessons observed. The friendly, well-mannered and extremely well behaved children have an excellent attitude to learning and are very proud of their school. Parents feel welcomed, included and valued. They appreciate all that goes on in school commenting that their children are very happy and are extremely enthusiastic about all that they do in school. School takes every opportunity to build on the excellent links with the parish and home. Effective monitoring, assessment and evaluation of Religious Education has ensured that the school has continued to develop since the last inspection.

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

- The spiritual leadership of the inspirational headteacher, who is very well supported by a dedicated and committed RE subject leader, staff team, governors and parish priest.
- The outstanding witness and confidence of the children in expressing their beliefs; and their enthusiasm, aspiration, exceptional behaviour and excellent attitude to learning.
- The commitment of all staff to providing a caring and nurturing school that has a positive impact on the well-being of all.
- The affirming atmosphere of teamwork coupled with a shared common mission among all the staff and governors to ensure that Jesus is at the centre of every aspect of school life.
- The welcome offered to all and the respect, dignity and care shown to each individual in the school community.

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

St Augustine's school is extremely well led by an inspirational headteacher who has a strong spiritual commitment, a clear vision for Catholic education and a sense of purpose for the education of the whole child. She seeks to provide opportunities for reflection and consideration so that everyone in the school community may come to a deeper awareness of this vision. The headteacher is supported by a dedicated RE subject leader and an enthusiastic and innovative staff team. The governors have a strategic plan for the school and are deeply committed to the success of the school. They are proactive in providing support and challenge. It is evident that the staff team and governors value the individual worth of every member of the school family. They do all that they can to ensure that the development of RE and the Catholic life of the school is at the core of the school's thinking and practice. The supportive parish priest is a regular visitor to school and all in school value his contribution to and impact on the spiritual life of the school. Pupil leadership has been established through the school council and pupil voice. It has been strengthened by the input from the vibrant and effective chaplaincy and GIFT teams. Staff, children and governors all have a voice in planning for future development. The quality of RE provision has been enhanced by self-evaluation that is rigorous, honest and accurate, combined with relevant professional development for staff. This has also ensured that the leadership team is clear about the strengths of the school and what needs to be done to develop even further. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural education was found to be outstanding and permeates all aspects of school life.

### **THE QUALITY OF THE WORD IS OUTSTANDING**

The importance of the Word of God is clearly demonstrated all around the school in the many thoughtful and enriching displays. The mission statement is at the heart of the school; it is understood, lived and witnessed by all in school. The Religious Education of the children is at the core of the curriculum and all staff place a high priority on the teaching of RE. This was demonstrated in their knowledge and understanding of RE and evident in the consistently high standard of the children's work and in their contributions to lessons. Teaching and learning in RE was found to be at least good, and more often better, with examples of creative and inspiring lessons that engaged and challenged the children's learning observed in all phases of the school. All of these lessons had many qualities in common; excellent teacher knowledge and understanding of RE, clear evidence of consistently high expectations, differentiated activities, challenge, good pace, engaging learning and practical concepts, all of which helped the children's understanding of RE. Thoughtful and effective questioning challenged the children and moved the learning on, including the effective use of 'big questions'. Teaching Assistants have a very good understanding of the teaching of RE, they effectively interacted with pupils to support their learning and pastoral needs. Children show a real interest and enthusiasm in RE, they have an excellent attitude to learning and were happy and confident to share their understanding of their faith. An excellent example of this was the key involvement of the children in the uplifting daily broadcast. They knew how to improve their work and constructive marking was used to help them reflect on and improve their learning. Sacred Scripture is a real strength of the school it is made relevant and meaningful to the children. It is known and understood by pupils and shared in many vibrant, joyful ways. The children learn about other faiths through religious education and assemblies, and this helps them to understand and respect the beliefs and cultures of others.

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

All visitors to St Augustine's are greeted with exceptional warmth from smiling adults and children. There is a genuine sense that "Christ at the centre" is the mission of the school. There is clearly a strong bond between parents, children, staff, governors and the parish community. This is a school that knows its children and families well. Evidence was witnessed of how the school supports individual and groups of families, enabling them to feel valued. On the day of the inspection two pupils were in school for 7:30 a.m. to take the inspectors on a tour of the school. They clearly took great pride in their school and spoke confidently about all aspects of school life. Older children are encouraged to lead younger children by example through the 'Seeds and Gardeners' initiative. Parents and children are welcomed at the school gate each day by the headteacher and staff, giving parents the opportunity to speak about their child at the start and end of the day. Parents feel valued and well informed about what is happening in school. They are happy to support their children at school assemblies, Mass and through the Sacramental Programme. St Augustine's is a very special school community; the children are happy, confident and truly welcoming. They have high aspirations for themselves and their behaviour is exemplary. They have a strong sense of ownership and are proud of their uniform and their school values. They enjoy each other's successes and

willingly support each other to do their best, living the phrase “What would Jesus do?” The talented and hard-working staff ensure dignity, safety and challenge are provided to all at St Augustine's. The children are very aware and knowledgeable about their mission to reach out to others in need.

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

All staff and children demonstrate an extremely high level of respect for and care of others in school and in the wider community. This is a fully inclusive school that does all it can to ensure that the needs of all children are met. It is clear that “respect for each other underpins everything within school”. Gospel values are at the heart of St Augustine's as all in this school community try to live out their mission to “follow Jesus' example in all we do”. The children have a real sense of outreach to the community and undertake local and international charity work including CAFOD, the local food bank and St Joseph's Penny. They demonstrate compassion towards others and view the world with care and concern. School successfully uses Caritas in Action to support the children's understanding of how they can help those in need. Relationships between adults and children are based on respect and dignity, as together they build on the gifts, talents and goodness of everyone in the school community. The behaviour of the children is exemplary in and out of the classroom. The Y6 pupils are enthusiastic and effective in delivering their responsibilities as “gardeners”, supporting younger children, “seeds”, and through the chaplaincy and GIFT teams. Pupil voice is a strength of the school helping the children to develop their leadership role in school. St Augustine's places the highest priority on the health, safety and well-being of all who work and learn in the school. There are effective safeguarding, SEND, SRE and behaviour policies in place. School holds weekly well-being meetings and employs a Family and Behaviour Support Leader whose contribution is greatly valued by families and staff. Breakfast and After School clubs are very popular with families. Pupil Premium funding allocation ensures equality of provision for all and vulnerable pupils are recognised as a priority. Learning support plans are child centred and the school works closely with external agencies to support individuals who need extra support.

### **THE QUALITY OF WORSHIP IS OUTSTANDING**

Prayer and Worship is a very important aspect of St Augustine's school life, from the morning broadcast, to class and whole school acts of worship. Worship is an integral part of the school day. Throughout the inspection exceptional examples of worship were witnessed. Child-initiated acts give the pupils the opportunity to deepen their relationship with God. Key Stage 2 children are given the opportunity to express their thoughts and feelings through prayer and worship; they take ownership of this and it is clearly embedded throughout the school. The children are taught formal prayers as they progress through the school, including the responses to the gospel readings. They are very familiar with words of the Sacred Scripture. The school ensures that prayer and worship opportunities are well-resourced and planned for. Simple but effective displays are used as outstanding features of child-initiated and child-centred approaches to developing the prayer life of the school. These displays highlight both seasonal aspects of the liturgical year and words of Sacred Scripture that reflect how the school community should follow the gospel values. In each classroom a prayer table relevant to the age of the children is used effectively as a focal point for prayer. A sense of joy and a sharing of God's love permeates all areas of the school. Parents are encouraged to attend assemblies, Masses and acts of worship. The Parish Priest is a regular visitor to the school and this strong link enhances the excellent provision for prayer and worship. The Sacred Space is used daily by classes to pray and worship through a variety of ways. The exceptional chaplaincy team lead sessions throughout the week which help to support children in their faith journey. Reverence and respect was witnessed throughout the variety of worship opportunities observed. A Key Stage 1 class re-created the last supper and imagined what it would have been like to be at the Passover Meal with Jesus. The commitment of staff to complete the Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies and attendance at other religious based courses gives the staff a knowledge and confidence in their shared vision to develop the school's Catholic faith life. Prayer is developed throughout the children's school years, from the ‘Seeds’ in the Foundation Stage to the ‘Gardeners’ in Year 6.

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

It is clear that all members of St Augustine's school family demonstrate outstanding witness to the church's mission in education and do all they can to meet the challenges involved in this witness. The mission statement is at the heart of the school; it is a powerful declaration of how all in school give witness to the beliefs and values of the Catholic faith in their day to day lives. The school community is guided in all their actions by their motto “Christ Yesterday, Today, Always”. RE is at the core of the school curriculum. It is the

foundation block that allows the children to develop their sense of identity and demonstrates how they can have a positive impact for good in the wider community. They are encouraged to reach out to those in need through their wonderful support for local, national and world charities. Observations and discussions confirmed that children treat each other with care, respect, compassion and dignity. Relationships are excellent between all members of the school community and all are able to talk openly and confidently about their faith. The children have trust in the adults who support them and know that any difficult issues will be dealt with fairly. There are strong home, school and parish links which are enriched by the regular visits of the parish priest. All staff are positive role models for the children. They promote the ethos and values of the school helping the children to recognise that Jesus is with them in all aspects of school life. There is a great sense of teamwork, enthusiasm and celebration of success at all levels among the staff, children and parents. This gives the school a true family feel and helps the children to become well rounded individuals. An atmosphere of calm and a sense of belonging permeates the whole school creating a pleasant working environment for everyone in school. The school fosters a spirit of awe and wonder through RE and the broader curriculum. The children know that they have a vital role to play in looking after God's world.

**AGREED AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT:**

- To continue the development of creative and innovative ways of engaging pupils, staff, parents and other members of the community in collective worship.
- To continue to share good practice, innovative ideas and opportunities for exceptional teaching which inspires and engages all.

22<sup>nd</sup> March 2016

Dear Children,

Thank you for the very warm welcome you gave us and for making our visit to St Augustine of Canterbury RC Primary School such a joyful occasion. We really enjoyed our time with you. You and all the adults in school are indeed living your school's mission and doing your very best in all aspects of school life, and because of this your school is an outstanding Catholic school.

We really enjoyed seeing your lessons and learning about all the wonderful things you do in St Augustine's. Thank you for sharing your work with us. We were very impressed with the standard of work in your RE books, your contributions in all the lessons we saw and in your wonderful displays around school. It was clear to us that you have an excellent knowledge and understanding of our Catholic faith and that you all really try your best in all of your lessons.

It was lovely to see so many happy, smiling faces. You are clearly very proud of your school and all that you have achieved together. We were also very impressed by the way you all really want to succeed in school and how well you look out for each other. You were so well behaved, and your politeness and manners were simply superb.

It was so pleasing to see how attentive and confident you were in the acts of worship and the wonderful assembly we saw. Everyone showed great respect and reverence, your behaviour was excellent, your singing and prayers were uplifting. The chaplaincy and GIFT teams are a great asset to the school as they set such a wonderful example for you all to follow.

The staff, the school governors and your parents are extremely proud of all of you and of what you have achieved over the years, well done and keep it up!

All the adults in school want to work with you to build the Catholic life of your school even further so that you can continue to grow as leaders of prayer and worship in school.

God bless you all, enjoy the rest of the school year.

Yours sincerely,

Brendan Hennessy and Anne Heard  
(RE Inspectors)

## Summary Report to Parents

On 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2016 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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