



Inspection carried out Under Canon 804 and 806  
and in accordance with Section 48 of the Education  
Acts 2005 and 2011

DIOCESE OF SALFORD

Name of School                      Mount Carmel RC Primary School, Wilson Road, Blackley, Manchester  
M9 8BG  
Inspection date                      26<sup>th</sup> February 2020  
Reporting Inspectors                Helen Sullivan, Clare Campbell, Tina Birds

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Type of school	Primary
URN	105555
Age range of pupils	3-11 years
Number on roll	480
Appropriate authority	The Governing Board
Chair of Governors	Catherine Anderson
Headteacher	Jacqui Potts
Religious Education Subject Leader	Marie Hart
Date of previous inspection	27 <sup>th</sup> March 2015
Grade of previous inspection	Outstanding

Explanation of the Grades - 1 = Outstanding, 2 = Good, 3=Requires Improvement, 4 = Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of Mount Carmel RC Primary School	Overall grade	1
The Catholic Life of the school (incorporating Welcome, Welfare and Witness)	Grade	1
Religious Education (incorporating Word)	Grade	2
Collective Worship	Grade	1

## CHARACTERISTICS AND CONTEXT OF THE SCHOOL

Mount Carmel Roman Catholic Primary is a large, oversubscribed split site school located in Blackley, North Manchester, which serves the parish of Our Lady of Mount Carmel and St John Bosco. The percentage of children who receive pupil premium is above the national average at 21.1%. There are 14.1% of pupils with Special Educational Needs and 2.5% of these pupils have an Educational Health and Care Plan; both figures are above the national average. The percentage of ethnic minority pupils is 53% and 21% of the children have English as an additional language. The school is comprised of 96% Catholic pupils, 75% of the staff are baptised Catholics and 13 teachers have completed the Catholic Certificate of Religious Studies. The headteacher has been in post 3 years, after 6 years of headship in another school. She is supported by two deputy heads and an assistant head who have 32 years of senior leadership experience between them.

## OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

Mount Carmel RC Primary School continues to provide an outstanding Catholic education to its pupils. Leaders at all levels have worked tirelessly to build on the school's historic successes with a profound commitment to continual improvement. This has created a very positive climate whereby the children love attending this very effective Catholic school that has significant strength in all areas.

### THE KEY STRENGTHS OF THE SCHOOL INCLUDE:

- Charming, empathetic and impeccably behaved children who are justifiably proud to be a part of their vibrant and loving Catholic school community.
- Knowledgeable, committed and professional governors who are extremely supportive of the highly effective headteacher and senior leaders.
- The tangible and passionate sense of mission and faith from leaders at all levels, which is at the heart of every decision made both within and beyond the school.
- The positive impact of the exceptional levels of care the staff and children demonstrate towards each other.

### AGREED AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT

- To further develop children's independent planning and leadership of collective worship.
- To reflect upon and deepen the mission statement to ensure it is a clear and inspiring expression of the individual mission of Mount Carmel.
- To create further opportunities for children of all ages to have a deeper understanding of Sacred Scripture within their Religious Education lessons, through skilful questioning and highly engaging learning activities.

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

<b>The Catholic Life of the school (incorporating Welcome, Welfare and Witness)</b>	<b>Overall grade</b>	<b>1</b>
Outcomes - The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school		<b>1</b>
Provision - The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school		<b>1</b>
Leadership - How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school		<b>1</b>

Children are blessed to be part of this vibrant, joyful, Christ-centred school which envelops them in love, care and compassion. As a result of the way they are cherished as children of God by the staff, all children are active

advocates of love with one stating that ‘we embrace everyone with an open heart’. The multi-cultural nature of the school is celebrated and there is a profound sense of respect and consideration for others. This extends beyond the school as the children demonstrate their dedication to serve those in need through regular charity work to support local, national and international causes. Behaviour throughout the school, both within and outside of lessons, is exemplary as the children respond to the calm but skilfully conveyed high expectations of the staff. The outstanding care that the children and staff have for their most vulnerable pupils is a hallmark of Mount Carmel. This has created a culture where children are sensitive to the needs and feelings of others and they show respect for themselves, their school friends and the wider community.

The chaplaincy provision, which is passionately led, is highly regarded by the school community and provides further opportunities for children to be visible stewards of God. There is a deep commitment to serving the most vulnerable members of the school community to ensure all children can thrive. Pastoral care is afforded the highest priority by the headteacher and senior leaders as they recognise the changing demographic in recent years and respond with compassion to the increasing welfare needs. Due to these changing times, the leadership team accept the need to review the mission statement to ensure it reflects the distinctive nature of the school. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the powerful impact being a part of Mount Carmel has upon their children and express that they feel part of ‘one big, loving family’. Furthermore, they feel highly supported in their role as the first educators of their children and happily access a multitude of opportunities to be actively involved in the Catholic life of the school due to the genuine welcome they receive.

The headteacher has brought about improvements to the physical environment and is aspirational in her vision for future developments to enhance provision further. She leads with authenticity alongside a deeply devoted senior leadership team and is supported by ambitious and dedicated governors who demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of the Catholic life of the school. Resourcing decisions are always rooted in faith and there is a shared commitment from all leaders that reaching out and supporting other catholic schools is part of the mission of Mount Carmel; this is humbling to witness. A strong partnership exists between the school and parish with a great number of children carrying out the role of Altar Servers. Parishioners are welcomed into school openly, and each year the oldest children host a special ‘tea party’ for them. Professional development is given a high priority and newly qualified teachers are effectively supported by the experienced team around them.

#### **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (incorporating Word)**

<b>Religious Education (incorporating Word)</b>	<b>Overall grade</b>	<b>2</b>
Outcomes - How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education		<b>1</b>
Provision - The Quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education		<b>2</b>
Leadership - How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education		<b>2</b>

During their journey at Mount Carmel, children acquire the knowledge, understanding and skills that are required by the Religious Education Curriculum Directory. By the time they leave Year 6, outcomes are very high and books in Upper Key Stage 2 are exemplary; full of creative learning opportunities and significant amounts of extended writing. Children speak confidently about what they have learned in Religious Education, showing awareness of key concepts and using subject-specific vocabulary accurately. The children’s books, including EYFS floor books, show that they take great pride in their work and that Religious Education is a special subject. The quality of work and presentation is of a consistently high standard; consideration could now be given to providing further opportunities for more extended writing in lower Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 1 so the work reflects the children’s extended writing in their English books. They are proud of their learning, with the oldest children stating that they ‘love Religious Education because we have the freedom to express ourselves creatively’.

In the best lessons observed, teachers used visual aids to stimulate curiosity and encourage the children to be active participants. This was evident in Key Stage 1 where children were encouraged to reflect on

how they can be ‘a light in the world’ by creating their own chrysalis to hang on a prayer tree. Levels of concentration in all lessons were excellent and children clearly value their Religious Education curriculum. Teachers’ subject knowledge is impressive and as a result they have the expertise to plan and deliver effective lessons based upon accurate assessment. To further develop the quality of Religious Education, teachers need to ensure that children can regularly evidence their understanding of sacred scripture at an age appropriate level. Deeper, more challenging open questioning by teachers in lessons to elicit more considered responses from children would enhance the learning experience further. Prayerful reflection during lessons was seen right across the school, from EYFS to Upper Key Stage 2 and this allowed children the time and space to truly contemplate how their curriculum learning links to their own lives, thus enhancing their moral and spiritual development.

The leadership and governors clearly consider Religious Education as a priority curriculum area in terms of resourcing, timetabling and staffing. The long term absence of the passionate subject leader has been effectively managed in the interim period by senior leaders through a team approach to secure a continual cycle of monitoring and evaluation. This ensured that the school’s self-evaluation in this area was accurate and evidence based. Going forward, the anticipated return of the subject leader will allow for even further development of Religious Education provision so therefore, the capacity to be outstanding in all aspects is strong.

## COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

Collective Worship	Overall grade	1
Outcomes - How well pupils respond to and participate in the school’s Collective Worship		1
Provision - The quality of Collective Worship provided by the School		2
Leadership - How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship		1

Collective Worship at Mount Carmel allows the children space in their own hearts to give thanks, praise and worship to God and to grow in friendship with Him. Children of all ages and abilities play a part in liturgy and worship and are rightly proud of their roles as Prayer Leaders and Scripture Champions. The children are attentive, thoughtful and contribute well to a wide range of acts of worship; from prayerful reflection in Lower Key Stage 2 to passionate singing and dancing in Upper Key Stage 2! They are engaged in worship in a variety of settings from class and key stage to Mass.

Many of the staff are catechists and support the children every step of the way through their journey of faith. The children of Mount Carmel know that worship is a condition of the heart, of love and awe for God who gives us more than we can ever hope for or imagine. Dedicated and hard-working staff provide the children with a wealth of opportunities to find the inner calmness that allows them to find peace in their busy lives. Children regularly have time in the school day for golden moments of stillness, individual reflection and silent prayer. Children benefit from living as part of a faithful, praying community and they are all included and supported to develop both spiritually and morally. All learners, including those with additional needs are invited to take part in acts of worship and they are fully included and engaged which is beautiful to see. Leaders acknowledge that the next step for the school is to further increase all the children’s opportunities to plan, lead and evaluate collective worship in age appropriate ways, utilising the skills of the dedicated GIFT team to support their fellow pupils. Leaders lead by example; they live out their faith and mission on a daily basis and they demonstrate this through the prayer life of the school which is a celebration of all. Collective Worship is rooted in the Gospel and leaders know the Church’s liturgical year and use this well in the school cycle of prayer and reflection.

Senior leaders and governors recognise the importance of worship when budget setting and allocate quality resources. Staff development has been given high priority and recent training on sung liturgy, the Jesuit Values and whole staff retreats have been very well received; they have made a clear and positive impact on Collective Worship across the whole school family. Parents are grateful for their many opportunities to attend whole school celebrations and welcome the joy of being involved in the worshipping life of the school.