

**INSPECTION REPORT**

Blessed Trinity Roman Catholic College, Lancashire, BB10 3AA

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Inspection date 13<sup>th</sup> March 2015  
 Reporting Inspector Sister Judith Russi  
 Mr Colin Mason  
 Inspection carried out in accordance with Section 48 of the Education Act 2005

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Type of School Catholic High School  
 URN 134997  
 Age range of pupils 11-16 years  
 Number on roll 1230  
 Appropriate authority The Governing Body  
 Chair of Governors Mr Kenneth Tyson  
 Head teacher Mr Richard Varey  
 Date of previous inspection October 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
Overall effectiveness of the school	1	
The quality of Catholic Leadership	1	
The quality of the Word of God community	1	
The quality of the Welcome community	1	
The quality of Welfare	1	
The quality of Worship	1	
The quality of Witness	1	
<i>The following pages provide reasons to support these judgements</i>		

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

Blessed Trinity Roman Catholic High School is an 11-16 fully oversubscribed comprehensive school serving the Catholic community across a large number of parishes. 54.6 % of pupils are baptised Catholics. 55.4% of teaching staff are Catholics; 56.6% of classroom support staff are Catholics. The school relocated to a new building in September 2010. 20.41% pupils are designated as Pupil Premium. 8.21% of pupils are from minority ethnic groups. 16.59% of pupils are SEN Support. 1.14% pupils have an Education, Health and Care Plan. 0.65% are Looked After Children. Prior attainment of pupils is broadly in line with the national average. Attendance is broadly in line with the national average.

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

Blessed Trinity is an outstanding Catholic High School which has significantly and rapidly improved since the last inspection. The mission statements call to *"Love God, serve others, work hard, value all"* provides the motivational energy and direction for the whole school.

The option for those in the greatest need is a priority which informs the decisions of the Governors and leadership of the school who give their explicit commitment to inclusivity, respect, acceptance, restorative justice, forgiveness and a love which recognises the presence of Christ in every person. The effectiveness of the school is further inspired by the commitment of all staff to providing an education which is, *"liberational; dedicated to transforming the life chances of all children"*. Parents said that they see their school as a beacon of hope for all in Burnley. The high levels of staff commitment, unity of focus and purpose are energised by the warmth of relationships across the school. Blessed Trinity is a place of learning which provides a living testimony to the vision and strength of the cohesive leadership which is successfully delivering the mission of the Church in education.

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

- The vision and commitment of the Governors, Head teacher and his leadership team in creating the climate for transformational education is inspirational.
- The relationship, behaviours for learning and warmth of welcome of the school is outstanding.
- The proclamation and witness to the centrality of Christ in the Church's mission in education is the unifying and energising driving force for excellence across the school community.

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

Blessed Trinity is led by an inspirational team of governors, head teacher and senior leadership team who seek to develop a deep understanding of *"the incarnational nature of the mission of the school"*. The leadership skills of staff and pupils are nurtured and developed so that they are continually sensitive to the fast changing needs of pupils and their learning. The leadership team actively promote creative innovation and risk taking across the school. The meticulous monitoring review and evaluation has significantly impacted on whole school progress. Governors are attached to each area of the life of the school and have a detailed understanding of its strengths and areas for development. The clarity of vision and sense of purpose recognises the dignity and value of every member of the community and sees that those in the greatest need receive outstanding care, support and an educational provision which challenges the individual to be the best they can be. A member of the senior leadership team has been appointed to ensure that the gap between high achievers and those who are performing less well is rapidly closing. The governors act as a very effective, reflective team who are not afraid to challenge and take risks in ensuring the promotion of

Catholic education through the provision of theological training sessions for governors and staff. Parents spoke passionately about the progress of the school and their delight in its clarity of mission and purpose.

Pupils were found to be confident and enthusiastic about taking on responsibility. Pupil leadership has been developed to a high level and is significantly impacting on the development of the young people, the environment and life of the school. The wide ranging and numerous tributes and awards which the school has received are all testimony to the outstanding leadership.

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

The highly visible Mission Statement and the explicit proclamation of scripture provide the motivational drive for the educational endeavour of the whole community. The mapping, in-service training, monitoring, evaluation and delivery of spiritual, moral, social and cultural education across all key stages throughout the curriculum was found to be outstanding. Pupils were seen to be able to make high level connections and challenges to their learning which were drawing on the beliefs and values of Catholic teaching. All departments have selected their own scripture verses to demonstrate their distinctive contribution to the Catholic life of the school. These are beautifully displayed throughout. The inspirational leadership of the religious education department has resulted in RE being a driving force for high level learning. The distributive leadership style within the department has enabled the RE team to develop their skills and particular strengths to a high level. Pupils clearly enjoy RE and the department is recognised as a lead area for learning by pupils and staff. The governors have ensured that the environment for learning in RE is given a high priority and have also been attentive to the need to provide high quality specialist teachers. Religious Education is at the core of the curriculum and meets the RECD requirement for 10% at KS3 and 4. Teaching and learning in RE were found to be at least good and mostly outstanding. Expectations are high and higher order questioning, assessment for learning are strong features of the teaching and learning in the department. Pupils clearly knew what they needed to do to improve and in the main were responding effectively to the introduction of purple pen responses and challenges. The school is vigilant in its monitoring of any underachieving areas or groups of pupils through regular monitoring and action which is driving up pupil progress. Pupils spoke of their love of RE and in particular the relationships between staff and pupils as being in their eyes, exceptionally supportive.

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

The Blessed Trinity school community go out of their way to ensure that all pupils, staff, family members and visitors feel valued, respected and warmly welcomed. Staff welcome children at the door cheerfully and see that any pupil needing extra support or care is attended to immediately. The substantial and innovative transitional programme of support is exceptional. Primary Head teachers and parents gave testimony that *"the positive primary-secondary relationships energise our mutual commitment to the children we share and helps to make their progression from primary to secondary a reassuring and exciting experience"*.

Parents spoke of the impact of the personalised letter their children received through the post from the Head teacher welcoming them to the Blessed Trinity family as being evidence of how much the school appreciated their children. Parent forums are held half termly and they are appreciated by those who attend. Families of other faiths spoke of the many ways in which they felt they were welcomed and an important part of the Blessed Trinity family and in particular how much public perception of the school has changed. Catholic families are now sending their children to Blessed Trinity because of its high profile as a Catholic school. Families of other faiths were strong in their praise of the ways in which they are sensitively encouraged to share their customs, and religious beliefs. The induction programme for new staff and NQT's is a strength of the school. All staff are

inducted into the Catholic life of the school and have a personal mentor to help support them. The ethos of respect and inclusivity clearly enables both staff and pupils to quickly imbibe the values and culture of Blessed Trinity creating a truly Catholic environment for learning. Welcome can be beautifully summed up by a pupil who wrote a letter to the inspectors saying *"I hope that when you walk through our doors you feel welcomed and loved by Christ and everyone at Blessed Trinity"*.

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

The commitment of the governors and the senior leadership team to the welfare of all within the school is excellent. Pupils were keen to demonstrate to inspectors the many and varied ways in which they were being cared for, served and loved as valued members of the Blessed Trinity family. The overriding atmosphere of the school is one of calm and safety. The many social, medical and spiritual needs of the local community are recognised as being of the utmost importance if the pupils are to thrive. The governors have dedicated a significantly high level of the overall budget to supporting those in the greatest need. Behaviour for learning and safeguarding procedures are clearly known and tightly monitored. Pupils spoke of how they and staff respond swiftly to bullying or any inappropriate behaviour. They were particularly appreciative of the policy for restorative justice. SRE is delivered through RE and Science. The school engages a range of appropriate outside agencies to assist in the delivery of relationship education, self-esteem and personal safety. Pupil voice is encouraged in a variety of ways including informal discussions with pupils, School Council, Pupil Chaplaincy programme and regular meetings between senior pupils and the Head teacher to listen and learn from one another. Pupils voiced their appreciation of the many ways in which they were heard and recognised. As one senior pupil said, *"I came here because I was seen as a person and not a statistic. I was asked what I needed and what the school could do to help me to achieve."* The personal welfare of staff is given a high priority and the individual needs of staff are well supported. CPD has been significantly increased to raise staff competency and confidence. Local Children's Social Care have identified the school as being a centre for excellence in their care for children.

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

The leadership of the school take an active role in the provision and training of staff for prayer, worship and liturgy. Members of staff showcase best practice to assist colleagues in developing their understanding and confidence in leading prayer and worship. Extensive resources are available to assist with the development of pupil led, creative and innovative experiences and opportunities for prayer and worship. The Chapel is well used and provides pupils and staff with a wide range of experiences, times for prayer and meditation in groups or individually. The school Chaplain leads "Chapel lessons" to assist with the spiritual education and formation of all pupils. In the autumn term Year 7 take part in these lessons on a weekly basis to assist them in their understanding of the Catholic life, culture and practices of the school. The school Sacristans and the Pupil Chaplains play a key role in the development of the Catholic life of the school and are seen as integral to its leadership both in school and more recently in building supportive relationships with partner primary schools. The school is working hard to develop meaningful roles for their young people in their parishes. The school enjoys the support of 5 priests who in some cases are present in the school and actively working with pupils on a daily basis. The production of a student Way of the Cross with reflections was written by pupils and Fr Brian Kealey. A retreat programme is available for all Key Stage 3 pupils and the school is putting in place the same provision for Key Stage 4. Pilgrimages to Rome are open to pupils from Years 7-10. The leadership team are looking to extend this provision further so that more pupils are able to take part. Governors have raised the resourcing of worship considerably (£10,000 this year) so that it meets the needs of the whole community.

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

Blessed Trinity was found to be uncompromising in its witness to an incarnational approach to education. All senior leaders either are attending or have attended the diocesan Catholic leadership training. Governors lead reflective scriptural/theological training sessions for staff. Gravissimum Educationis (Vat II) underpins school policies and mission. The celebration of "Trinity Day" is enhanced by creative and innovative sessions on the meaning of the Trinity in the life of the school. Staff and pupils were found to be highly confident in sharing their faith, recognising that everyone is at a different point in their understanding of who God is for them. Pupils spoke confidently about the importance of being a person of faith and how it impacts on their life. Pupils of other faiths felt at home and safe in the knowledge that they were valued and respected. Pupils stopped inspectors on the corridors because they said they *"just want to tell you something about our school"*. They said that *"It is OK to be Catholic here"* and as one Year 11 pupil pointed out, *"I feel strong enough in my faith now so that when I leave I won't be shy about what I believe."* The proclamation of the gospel, the importance of scripture and the centrality of an incarnational faith was evident throughout all aspects of the school. Parents were particularly clear about the need for witness to faith in an increasingly secularised society. Parents, staff and pupils were clear in their understanding of the mission of the Church in education as the school strives to educate and form people who can challenge, change and make a difference. The school was clearly recognised as instrumental in achieving this mission. The outreach to people of other faiths and denominations is a strength of the school. The formation and activities of the Pupil Panel play a significant role in ensuring a preferential option for those in the greatest need within the school and local community.

## **AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT:**

- Build on the excellent initiative for the development of confidence and competency in knowledge and understanding of scripture across the school.
- Extend the retreat and pilgrimage provision further so that all pupils across the school can benefit from these opportunities.
- Continue the existing innovative initiatives to further develop the mission of the school as an incarnational place of learning for challenge, change and transformation of the person and society.

Monday 30<sup>th</sup> March 2015

Dear Pupils

Thank you so much for the wonderful welcome you gave us when we came to visit you. Together with your teachers, support staff and helpers you are an outstanding Catholic school. This is because you are really striving to live up to your challenging mission statement and recognise that you are all one family.

Your work is of a high standard and we could clearly see that you take your learning very seriously and are proud of your achievements. You have outstanding RE teachers who are clearly helping you to feel confident in your learning and ability to discuss complex religious and moral issues. We were particularly impressed by the ways in which you were able to discuss matters of belief and values in your different subjects.

Your governors and Mr Varey want to continue to take your knowledge and understanding of scripture further and see how the school can offer all pupils more opportunities to go on retreats and pilgrimages.

We were very impressed by many aspects of your school. The wall displays in classrooms and on the corridors and especially your beautiful chapel and the way you care for the school buildings. However, we were most impressed by how you care for each other as a community who "Love God. Serve others. Work hard. Value all".

God bless you all.

Yours sincerely

Sr Judith Russi

(Section 48 Inspector)

### **Summary Report to Parents**

On the 13<sup>th</sup> March 2015 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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